

Town & Village of Hyde Park, Vermont Comprehensive Development Plan (2012-17)

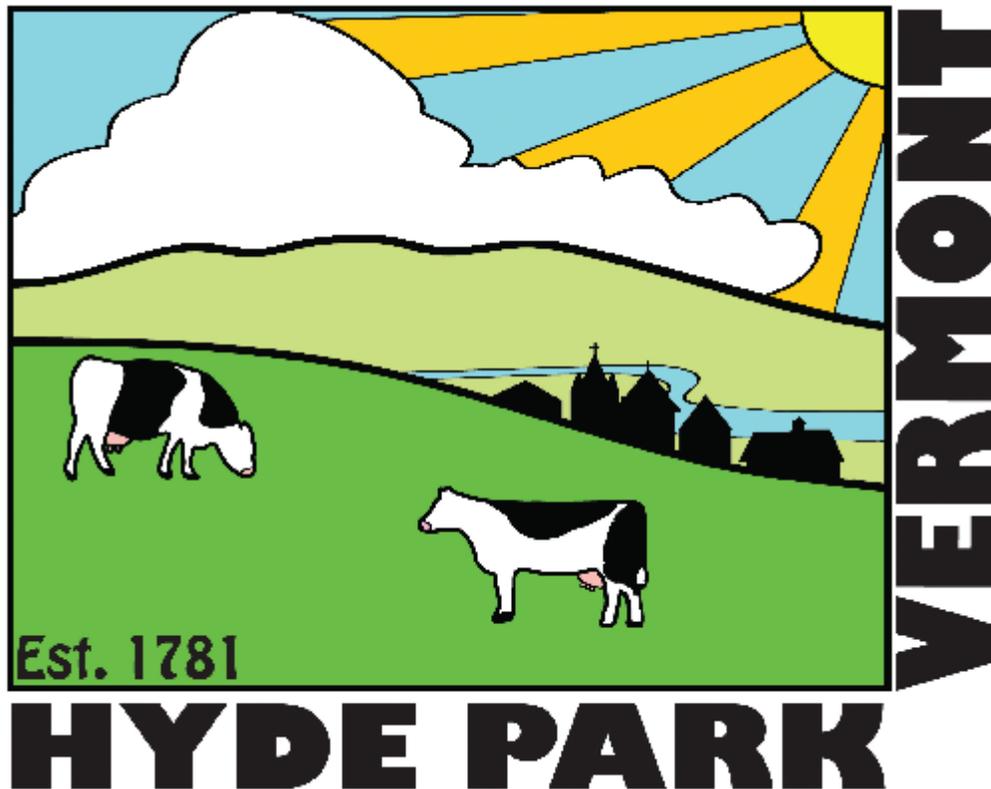


Prepared by the **Hyde Park Planning Commission**

With technical assistance from the **Lamoille County Planning Commission**

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Introduction: A Vision for Hyde Park

Hyde Park is a family-oriented place, where people feel a strong sense of community and pride in the local history. Residents enjoy the scenic and historic character of Hyde Park's landscape and seek to preserve these unique attributes for future generations. To do so, it is important to ensure that growth and development occur in a thoughtful manner.

Members of the community recognize the need for a balanced and diverse economy, so that Hyde Park may continue to be a desirable and affordable place to live, work, play and raise a family. To achieve this vision, residents wish to plan for orderly and managed growth, to allow Hyde Park to continue to provide essential services, while preserving the community's natural environment, historic character and working landscape.

An Overview of the Comprehensive Plan

The Hyde Park Comprehensive Development Plan is a thorough, long-range guide for future development within the Town and Village of Hyde Park, Vermont. The plan provides a basic framework of goals and policies to guide public and private investments, and is intended to assist elected officials and other partners make decisions that are consistent with residents' vision for the future. The plan will also help preserve the character of the community and provide a degree of certainty and predictability for those who live, work, visit or invest in Hyde Park.



Hyde Park's scenic landscape in spring

Authority

In Vermont, municipalities are authorized to adopt a Municipal Plan under Chapter 117, Title 24 of state statute (the Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act). Per Section 4382 of the Act, municipal plans are expected to address eleven required subject areas and be compatible with Vermont's Statewide Planning Goals (established under Section 4302). Among others, these goals include:

- To plan development so as to maintain the historic settlement pattern of compact villages and urban centers separated by rural countryside;
- To encourage the efficient use of energy and the development of renewable energy resources;
- To provide for safe, convenient, economic and energy efficient transportation systems that respect the integrity of the natural environment, including public transit options and paths for pedestrians and bicyclers; and,
- To maintain and improve the quality of air, water, wildlife and land resources.

Per Section 4832 of the Act, Municipal Plan must include the following elements (paraphrased):

- 1) A statement of objectives, policies and programs of the municipality to guide the future growth and development of land, public services and facilities, and to protect the environment;
- 2) A land use plan;
- 3) A transportation plan;
- 4) A utility and facility plan;
- 5) A statement of policies on the preservation of rare and irreplaceable natural areas, scenic and historic features and resources;
- 6) An educational facilities plan;
- 7) A recommended program for the implementation of the objectives of development plan;
- 8) A statement indicating how the plan relates to development trends and plans for adjacent municipalities, areas and the region;
- 9) An energy plan;
- 10) A housing element that shall include a recommended program for addressing low and moderate income persons' housing needs; and,
- 11) Effective July 1, 2012 all plans are also required to include an economic development element that describes present economic conditions and the location, type, and scale of desired economic development.

It is the intent of this plan to fully address each of the required elements to the extent it is applicable to Hyde Park, while analyzing a range of additional community development related variables. For ease of reference, the plan's eleven unique subject areas are organized by chapter.

Jurisdiction

Hyde Park—as it is referred to within this plan and as it exists in the minds of residents—is a single, unified community that includes both a chartered Town and incorporated Village. For political purposes, both the Town of Hyde Park and Village of Hyde Park are independent, sovereign municipalities under state statute. The Town is governed by a five-member Board of Selectmen; the Village is governed by a five-member Board of Trustees. Each board has the authority to execute administrative, legislative and quasi-judicial functions within its respective municipal boundaries (see **Appendix III**). Historically, across the state and region, many incorporated villages were established for the purposes of creating municipal water and light districts. It was to this end that the Village of Hyde Park was incorporated in 1895, more than 100 years after the Town was chartered in 1781.

While the Town and Village remain separate political entities, they in fact share many public services and governing functions, including local planning. The Hyde Park Planning Commission is an appointed body with authority to prepare municipal plans and bylaws, and participate in state permitting processes (Act 250 and Section 248), as enumerated under statute. The Hyde Park Planning Commission is delegated this responsibility jointly by the Town Selectboard and Village Trustees to plan for all of Hyde Park. Members of the Planning Commission include residents of the village and various other neighborhoods throughout the community. Ultimately, residents of the town frequent businesses and public facilities within the village, while residents of the village likewise enjoy the scenic character and rural amenities available throughout town. Citizens do not identify as a resident of one municipality over the other, but rather as residents of Hyde Park—singularly.

Until now, the local planning process involved maintaining separate municipal plans for the Town and Village. However, in recognition of the long-term vision for prosperity and sustainability shared by all Hyde Park residents, the Planning Commission, Selectboard and Village Trustees agreed to establish a single, comprehensive plan for the community. Going forward, this unified document will be updated with input from both municipalities to promote consistent, community-wide development goals for all of Hyde Park.

The Community Planning Process

The concept of a joint Town and Village comprehensive plan is not a new idea; in fact, the first development plan for Hyde Park was entitled *Municipal Development Plan for Town and Village of Hyde Park* (1972). In the ensuing years, however, the Town and Village came to maintain separate planning commissions and thus, separate plans. Returning to a joint plan is an idea that has been considered for several years, as a more efficient approach for community-scale planning. It was again revived in late-2010, while the Town was in the process of updating its Town Plan, only months before the Village Plan was set to expire. Following a series of discussions among members of the Planning Commission, Village Trustees and Selectboard a two-part process was established for completing the plan consolidation:

- 1) In the summer of 2010, the Planning Commission initiated a thorough re-write of the Town Plan to address changing economic and development conditions, and enhance sections on energy and transportation;
- 2) Following the Selectboard's adoption of the updated plan in November 2011, the Planning Commission and Village Trustees proceeded to incorporate elements of the expiring Village Plan, emphasizing areas of unique importance to village residents, and expanding sections on utilities, public facilities and historic resources.

The planning process was managed by the Hyde Park Planning Commission, with technical assistance provided by the Lamoille County Planning Commission (LCPC)—one of eleven regional planning commissions (RPCs) in Vermont, responsible for coordinating planning activities at the regional scale and supporting municipal planning. Each phase of the plan consolidation process was also funded by a Municipal Planning Grant (MPG) from the Vermont Department of Economic, Housing & Community Development.

Overall, the content of this Comprehensive Development Plan was presented and discussed during regular public meetings of the Hyde Park Planning Commission over the course of nearly two years (July 2010 – May 2012). At various junctures, the Planning Commission also invited public comment through specially warned meetings, announced in local newspapers and by direct mailings to residents.

It is the intent of this plan to take a comprehensive approach, incorporating a coordinated method of problem solving that weighs demographic, economic, social and environmental considerations simultaneously. This broad scope is necessary to adequately address the variety of land use and service-related issues that face residents of Hyde Park, both now and in the future. While this plan is substantially different than previous Town/Village plans in both its depth and structure, it does build upon the groundwork established in prior local planning efforts, most notably the revisions of 1995 and 2005.

Adoption & Revision

The Town & Village of Hyde Park Comprehensive Development Plan shall remain in effect for five years, commencing on the date it is adopted by the applicable legislative body. As a joint plan, it must be adopted by the Selectboard and Village Trustees to take effect in both municipalities. Throughout the plan's effective period, it should be used continuously by the Planning Commission and other Town and Village boards to carry out the stated goals of the community. While planning goals are usually enduring and seldom change over time, policies should be updated at least every five years, to adapt to changing development trends. Amendments to this plan must consider community-wide interests and should be enacted with broad public participation. Ultimately, community priorities are determined by the Hyde Park's willingness and ability to pay for facilities and services.

How to Use the Plan

This plan should be used to establish programs that help residents achieve their vision for the future of Hyde Park. To facilitate the implementation of these programs, the Planning Commission will review development proposals with potentially significant local and regional impacts for conformance with broader community goals. The goals, policies and other recommendations specified within this plan should also be implemented through both regulatory and non-regulatory means. Examples of regulatory tools include zoning and subdivision bylaws, and other regulations such as health and road ordinances. Alternatively, non-regulatory implementation tools include capital budgeting, public outreach campaigns and grant writing efforts.

Elected officials and municipal staff should promote cooperation among local governments and assist other communities in understanding Hyde Park's long-term development goals. This plan should be made available to private developers, landowners, and residents to help voluntarily guide proposals in a way that will bring Hyde Park closer to its vision for the future. Planning is a continuous process. The Hyde Park Comprehensive Development Plan should be consulted frequently in decision-making and made widely available to promote public knowledge of, and support for, the goals of the community. Further, it should be updated regularly and used continuously to promote sound planning for the future of Hyde Park.

Statement of Objectives

In addition to the statewide planning goals outlined in statute, the Town and Village of Hyde Park have identified several local planning objectives that this plan is intended to help achieve. These objectives are organized as goals, policies and recommendations for future inquiry. Goals can be defined as desired future conditions; policies describe the conditions or standards by which a development proposal can be evaluated for compliance with a goal. Recommendations, on the other hand, are suggested steps for achieving stated goals. A chapter-by-chapter summary is included below:

Population & Growth

- Hyde Park should grow at a slow-to-moderate rate, to enable the Town and Village to recognize and, if necessary, adapt to demographic shifts.

Community Facilities & Services

- To efficiently maintain high-quality, environmentally sound and affordable public services and facilities.

- To plan investments in infrastructure to support the local economy, while mitigating negative environmental and social impacts.
- To maintain the Village of Hyde Park as the residential, commercial and civic center of the community, as well as the County Seat of Lamoille County.

Utilities & Energy

- For citizens to utilize locally generated energy from renewable sources for heating, electricity, and transportation.
- To promote energy efficiency and conservation in the design, construction, and use of municipal, industrial, commercial, and residential structures.

Transportation

- To provide a safe, efficient and diverse transportation network for the benefit of the community.
- To maintain a safe, pedestrian-oriented village that will support a vibrant local economy.

Education

- To plan for growth and development in a way that allows the Town and Village to provide quality educational services and adequate facilities for all, without placing an undue burden on taxpayers.

Housing

- To maintain the character of Hyde Park's neighborhoods and provide for orderly growth, compatible with the physical capabilities of the land and existing public facilities and services.
- To provide opportunities for residential development that accommodates a diversity of ages, income levels, and housing preferences, without compromising water quality, conserved lands or creating strip development (suburban sprawl).

Economic Development

- To develop a healthy, diverse and sustainable economy within the physical constraints and existing character Hyde Park's natural and built environment.
- To promote a mix of residential, retail and commercial land uses within the village, to allow residents to satisfy their day-to-day purchasing needs locally.

Natural & Productive Resources

- To promote public awareness and appreciation of Hyde Park's natural resources, while balancing conservation with ecologically sound development practices and economic needs.
- To retain working farm and forestland as a viable part of Hyde Park's economy, landscape and culture.

Scenic & Historic Resources

- To manage growth in such a way that protects and promotes Hyde Park's historic and scenic assets without unduly infringing upon the rights of landowners.

Land Use Plan

- To promote orderly growth, while maintaining the rural character of the community and the quality of the local resource base.

Chapter 1: Community Profile

Hyde Park is located in east-central Lamoille County and is comprised of approximately 24,960 acres (39 square miles) along the northern edge of the Lamoille River. Bordering towns include Eden to the north, Morristown to the south, Craftsbury and Wolcott to the east, and Johnson to the west. Hyde Park closely resembles a traditional Vermont community, with a compact village center surrounded by rural countryside.

Historical Census Counts

Since 1791, the U.S. Census Bureau has conducted a decennial count of persons living in each jurisdiction in the country. To help organize this data, the Census classifies various political entities including towns, boroughs and gores as “County Subdivisions.” For statistical purposes, these County Subdivisions include any villages located within their boundaries. Thus, data attributed by the Census to the Town of Hyde Park includes both the Town and Village (although data for incorporated villages or other political units is available separately). Within this plan, any statistic attributed broadly to “Hyde Park” should be assumed to mean the Town and Village collectively, unless otherwise noted.

According to the 2010 Census, Hyde Park had a population of 2,954 residents, which is approximately 12-percent of the county total. After reaching a historical peak in 1880, Hyde Park’s population decreased or remained stagnant through the end of World War II. The second half of the 20th Century, however, was a period of sharp population growth for much of the town, especially between 1970 and 2000. During this half-century of growth, population within the village remained roughly flat. This is largely attributable to the fact that the majority of land within the village was developed during the early-1900s, leaving limited opportunities for expansion in the downtown area. As a share of Hyde Park’s overall population, the village peaked at nearly 39-percent in 1960, declining to its current level of 16-percent in 2010.

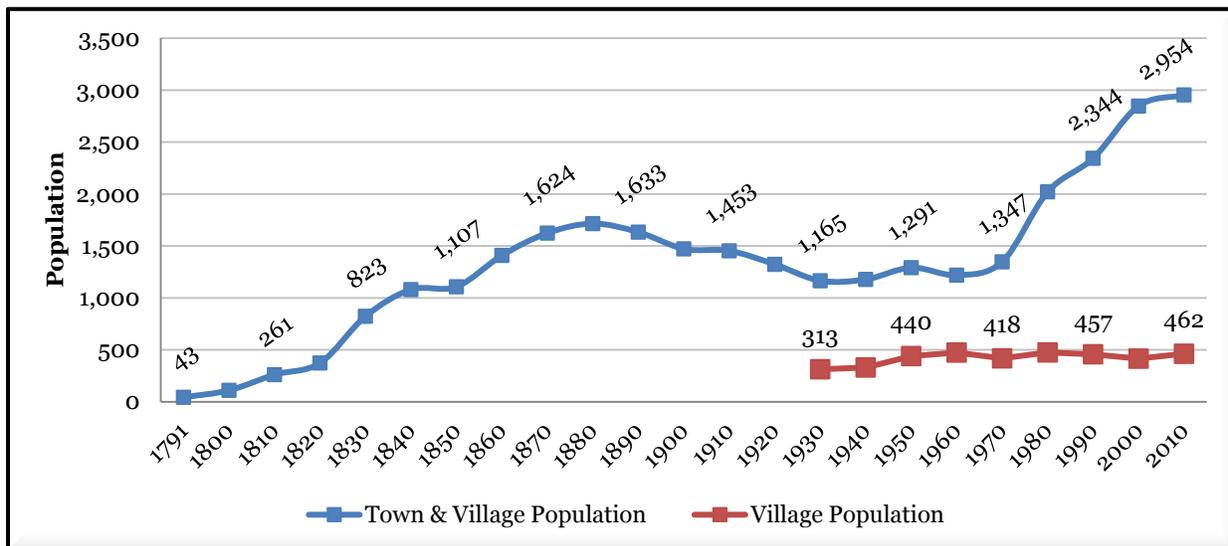


Figure 1: Population estimates from the decennial Census for Hyde Park and the Village of Hyde Park from 1791 to 2010; **Source:** U.S. Census Bureau

Components of Population Change

As cited in the previous section, Hyde Park's population has increased substantially in recent decades. This trend, in both raw population and percentage growth, is shown in **Table 1**. Population change is the result of two factors: natural increase and net migration. Populations increase naturally when more people are born than die over any given period of time. The Vermont Department of Health has kept birth and death statistics for each town since 1857; **Table 2** shows the number of recorded births and deaths in Hyde Park between 2000 and 2008 (the last year data was available at the time of this update). One observation that can be drawn from these data is that the share of growth fueled by natural increase in Hyde Park is declining, as family sizes across the country decrease.

Net migration is the second factor influencing population change. This variable is calculated by subtracting natural increase from the total change in population over a period of time. During the 1970s, for example, 465 more people moved into Hyde Park than moved out, accounting for most of the decade's population growth. Net migration slowed during the 1980s, but increased again in the 1990s. Because complete vital records are not yet available for the period of 2008-10, we cannot calculate the precise level of net migration for the decade. Nonetheless, the available data, as well as trends observed both locally and statewide suggest that Hyde Park's growth during the 2000s was also fueled by net migration. Comparatively, net migration is likely to have a far greater impact on future population trends than natural increase, due to the demographic composition and available build-out capacity of the town.

Age Distribution

According to the 2010 Census, the median age of Hyde Park residents was 41.4 years, which was 0.1 years older than the state average and 1.7 years older than the county average. Overall, Vermont ranks as the second oldest state in the country, behind only Maine. It is important to closely monitor this trend going forward, as shifts in the local age structure greatly influence demands for housing, education, employment and other public services. Age distribution also impacts both the human and financial resources available to meet these needs. **Figure 2** illustrates the population distribution of Hyde Park residents by age cohort, according to data from the 2000 and 2010 Censuses.

Table 1: Raw and percentage population change by decade in Hyde Park, 1980-2010

Period	Raw Change in Population	% Growth Over Previous Decade
1980-1990	323	16.0%
1990-2000	503	21.5%
2000-2010	107	3.8%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau		

Table 2: Number of births, deaths, and net population change by natural increase in Hyde Park 1980-2008

Period	Births	Deaths	Nat. Increase
1980-1989	349	149	200
1990-1999	352	223	129
2000-2008*	301	217	84
Source: VT Dept. of Health			

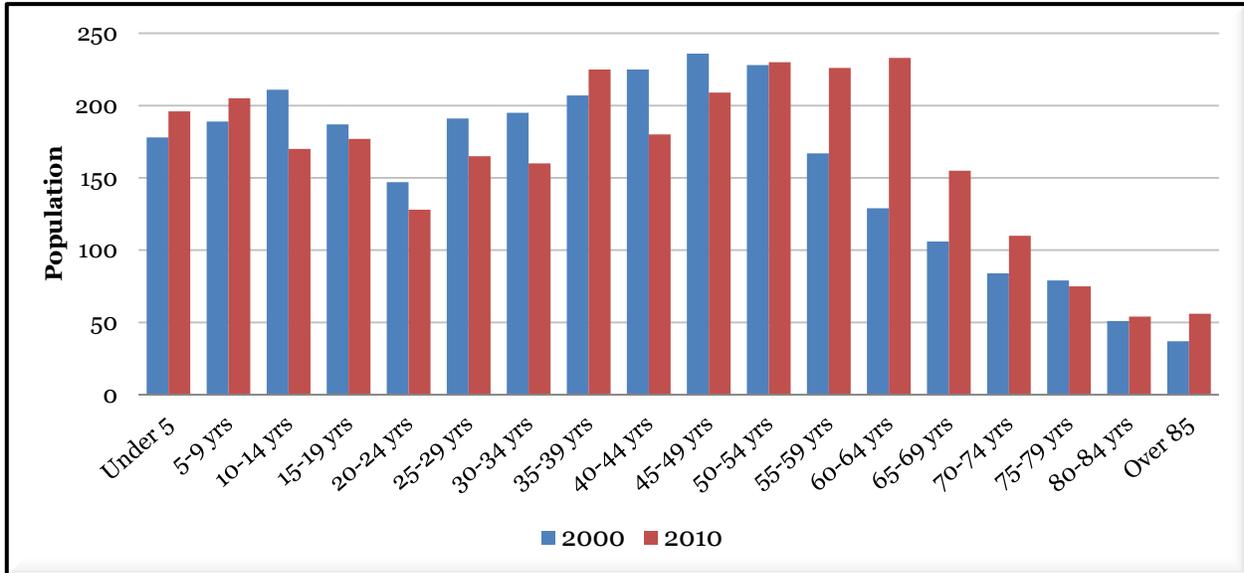


Figure 2: A comparison of Hyde Park's population sorted by age cohort, between the 2000 and 2010 Censuses;
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

As shown above, the largest area of growth from 2000 to 2010 was in the age 55-59 and 60-64 cohorts. This group of residents, born between 1946 and 1954, are among the first wave of the “Baby Boom” generation (born 1946-1964), which will begin reaching retirement age over the next ten years. A 2006 report by the Vermont Housing Finance Agency identifies several planning and growth-related challenges that accompany this demographic trend. Among the concerns cited were the fact that residents are living longer into retirement, increasing healthcare costs leave retirees with less disposable income for housing, and a projection that Vermont's seniors will constitute nearly one-quarter of the state's total population by 2030. Thus, while the number of children and young adults remained relatively stable in Hyde Park between 2000 and 2010, the growth in the retirement age cohorts is a trend that is expected to continue well into the future.

Regional & Neighboring Populations

Hyde Park is surrounded by rural and urban communities, most of which are also expecting population growth, albeit at rates slower than in previous decades. As a basis for comparison, the Vermont's population is estimated to have grown by 2.8-percent between 2000 and 2010, down from an 8.2-percent growth rate during the 1990s. Generally, during the previous decade the state was characterized by localized pockets of growth, with most regions experiencing only slight gains or losses. **Table 3** compares population trends in Hyde Park and its neighboring communities between 2000 and 2010. As these statistics indicate, Lamoille County's population grew faster than Vermont at-large, ranking second in rate of growth among Vermont counties, behind only Chittenden County.

Table 3: Net and percentage population change in Hyde Park, Lamoille County, the State of Vermont, and neighboring towns, 2000 to 2010

	2000	2010	Percent Change
Craftsbury	1,136	1,206	6.2%
Eden	1,152	1,323	14.8%
Hyde Park	2,847	2,954	3.8%
Johnson	3,274	3,446	5.3%
Morristown	5,139	5,227	1.7%
Wolcott	1,456	1,676	15.1%
<i>Lamoille County</i>	<i>23,233</i>	<i>24,475</i>	<i>5.3%</i>
<i>State of Vermont</i>	<i>608,827</i>	<i>625,741</i>	<i>2.8%</i>
Source: U.S. Census Bureau			

Future Population Projections

Various agencies in state government periodically supply population predictions, based on models that weigh expected fertility, mortality and net migration. It should be noted that population projections are only expectations of what might occur. As with any prediction, their accuracy depends on the validity of the underlying assumptions upon which they are based. While imprecise, these models can provide a general forecast of where populations are likely trending. Naturally, mathematical projections cannot anticipate unforeseen events, such as war, recession or natural disasters, which could drastically alter a community's growth trajectory.

Since 1980, there have been four official population forecasts for the state that have also supplied projections for Hyde Park (**Figure 3**). The earliest projection in 1983 predicted growth too aggressively, whereas the revised 1989 projection was too conservative. To date, it appears the 1993 and 2003 predictions were more accurate. Using a regression-based extrapolation model, the Lamoille County Planning Commission can project Hyde Park's population out to the year 2030, estimating populations of 3,340 in 2020 and 3,613 in 2030 (**Figure 4**). Although mathematical extrapolations are a commonly used community planning tool, they are best consulted for advisory purposes only and should not replace more state-specific projections, such as those cited above.

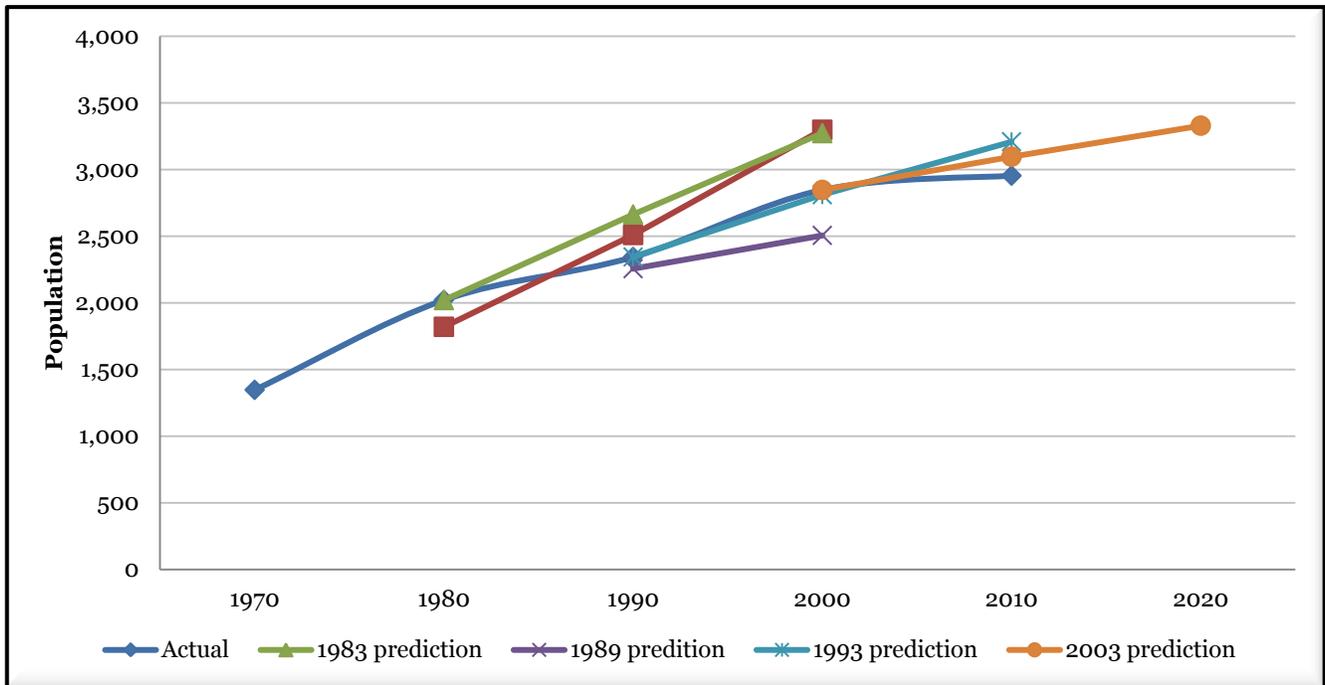


Figure 3: A comparison of Hyde Park’s actual population with projections released by the state between 1983 and 2003; **Source:** VT Dept. of Health, Office of Policy Research and Coordination, VT Health Care Authority.

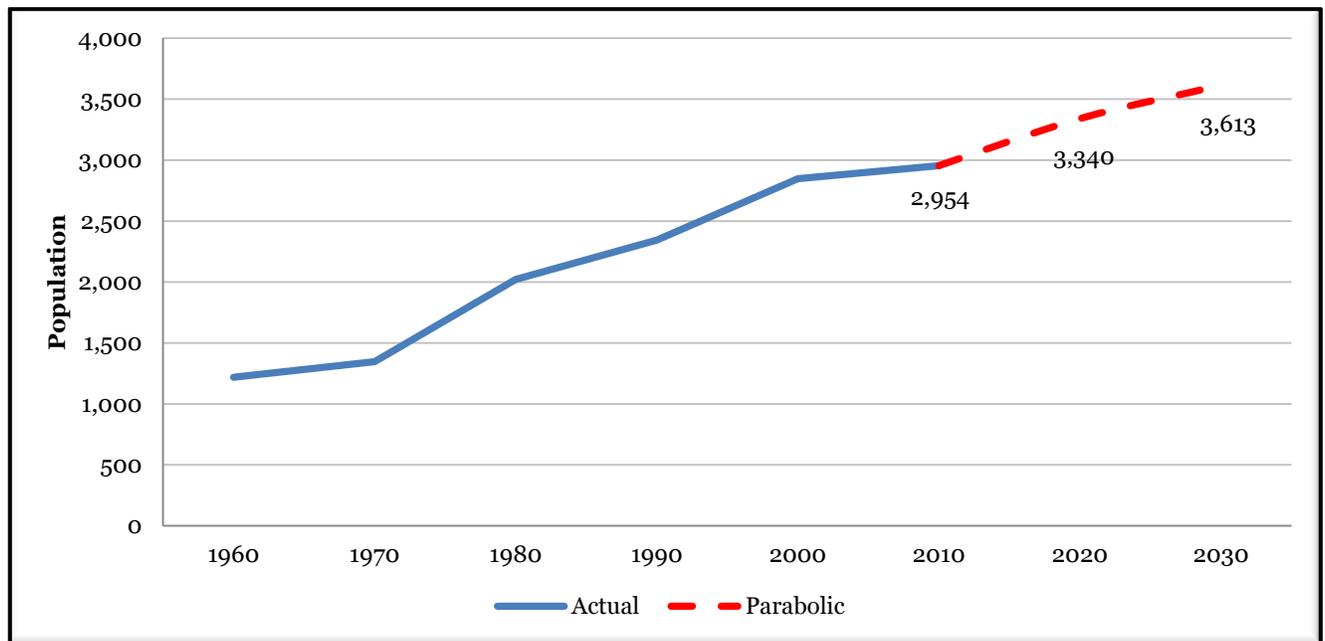


Figure 4: Hyde Park’s population growth between 1960 and 2010, extended by a projection using a mathematical regression model; **Source:** Lamoille County Planning Commission

While all predictions are inherently flawed, the fact that Hyde Park and Lamoille County have experienced population growth at a rate faster than the rest of Vermont for four consecutive decades is reasonable evidence to suggest the community will continue to grow in the future. Over the next five

years—as updated demographic estimates are released and more information regarding the health of the economy becomes available—Hyde Park should have a clearer idea of where development trends are pointing. In the meantime, monitoring new construction will be the most accurate predictor of abrupt population growth.

Goals, Policies & Recommendations

Since the 1960s, Hyde Park has experienced a sharp population increase. In the future, it will be essential to manage growth, so that the Town and Village can efficiently maintain and extend public services. Therefore, Hyde Park will need to continue to monitor demographic and development trends, in order to anticipate capacity issues and other impacts associated with a growing population. State population forecasts may provide useful projections, but as previously noted, they do not offer guarantees on the extent of local growth.

Goal

- For Hyde Park to experience a slow-to-moderate rate of population growth, to enable the Town and Village to recognize and, if necessary, adapt to demographic shifts.

Policies

- The Town and Village have not developed policies regarding population growth. Growth, in itself, is not considered positive or negative. Changes in population will be interpreted as they apply to the community's ability to provide services.

Recommendations

- The Planning Commission should continue to review annual population estimates released by the Census Bureau and other state agencies to ensure growth does not far exceed expectations.

Chapter 2: Public Services & Community Facilities

This chapter provides a description of the public services and community facilities available to residents of Hyde Park. A more detailed inventory of public infrastructure within the Town and Village is described in the *1990 Hyde Park Utilities and Facilities Report*, prepared by the Lamoille County Planning Commission (LCPC). A copy of this report is available for review at the Municipal Offices and from the Lamoille County Planning Commission (www.lcpcvt.org). Given the age of this publication, Hyde Park should consider pursuing grant opportunities to fund updated planning and engineering studies on the condition of municipal infrastructure systems in the coming years.

Wastewater Systems

The Village of Hyde Park maintains a municipal sewage treatment system available to village residents and businesses, consisting of two centralized septic tanks and leach field, located between West Main Street and Railroad Drive. The system currently has capacity to accommodate new residential and commercial connections, which are permitted by the Village Trustees on a case-by-case basis. The Village Water & Light Department is responsible for maintenance of the municipal sewage infrastructure.

Outside the village, there are no public sewage treatment facilities available. All sewage must be handled by a private, on-site system. Under regulations that came into effect in 2007, permitting for septic systems, leach fields and wells is now delegated to the state. To comply with state regulations, individuals must apply for a Wastewater and Potable Water Supply Permit from the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). Municipalities retain the right to adopt and enforce a local ordinance, provided it meets or exceeds state standards and can be administered by a licensed engineer. To this point, Hyde Park has not sought this delegation and therefore does not have the authority to review or permit wastewater systems. Any complaint or discovery of a failed system should be referred by the local Health Office to DEC, who can provide instructions on how to bring the system back to operating condition. All new and replacement wastewater treatment systems must receive both a state wastewater and a local zoning permit prior to construction. To protect the rights of neighboring property owners, all facilities must also meet any applicable setback requirements for the zoning district in which they are located.

Water Supply

In Vermont, any water system with at least 15 connections, or which services 25 or more individuals for at least 60 days per year, is officially classified as a “public water system” and subject to regulation by the Vermont Department of Health. In Hyde Park, there are three regulated public systems—two municipal suppliers and one privately operated system.

Village of Hyde Park Municipal Water System

The Village of Hyde Park operates a municipal water system for village residents, with additional connections located along the supply line from Fitch Hill Reservoir (the spring-fed source, located between Centerville Road and Vermont Route 100). The well-head protection area (WHPA) for this reservoir is aggressively protected by local zoning, which restricts the character and density of development within the well-shield.

Hyde Park Fire District #1

Municipal fire districts may be created by the legislative body of a municipality, upon the application of 20 or more residents, to provide for a variety of fire protection needs, including the construction and maintenance of water works. By statute (20 V.S.A §171), municipal fire districts are operated by a Prudential Committee, elected by vote of the district members. Established in 1958, Hyde Park Fire District #1 services a limited area within the unincorporated village of North Hyde Park (the North Village), including several residences and businesses in the North Hyde Park Industrial Park.

The well-shield for Hyde Park Fire District #1 is located across six zoning districts and three different towns. The district owns approximately 33.85 acres of this land (Sheet 1, Lot 84), thereby limiting development activities on the parcel. Hyde Park strictly regulates all other land uses within 200-feet of the well, to preserve the quality of the water source. However, portions of the well-shield located in the towns of Johnson and Eden are unprotected by zoning bylaws. The Planning Commission recognizes that development in these areas will not be required to meet the strict standards established for uses within the Hyde Park WHPA and may negatively impact water quality.

The greatest apparent risks to the quality of Hyde Park Fire District #1's well source are nearby residential septic facilities, which could potentially leach into groundwater. A 1989 study of the well-shield by the LCPC noted that significant growth potential exists in the surrounding Rural Residential zoning district. It was also revealed that a large portion of the well-shield is used for livestock grazing, and thus contamination from animal waste is possible.

Sterling View Mobile Home Park

The Sterling View Mobile Home Park has a privately operated community water system, operating an on-site well for approximately 85 residences. This well is protected by a radius-based well-shield. The owner/operator of the system is responsible under state law for developing plans and programs to ensure the future integrity of the water source.

Private Wells & Springs

A majority of Hyde Park residents are served by private wells and springs. Similar to wastewater facilities, any new or replacement water system must receive a State Wastewater and Potable Water Supply Permit and a local zoning permit prior to construction (likewise meeting all building setback requirements for the zoning district in which they are located).

Stormwater Systems

The term "stormwater" applies to rain and snowmelt that runs off impervious surfaces, including roofs, driveways and paved streets, rather than infiltrating into the ground and natural water cycle. As it flows into streams and lakes, stormwater runoff often picks up pollutants such as oils, fertilizers and sediment. Excess stormwater also contributes to erosion and increases stream volumes during peak storm events. Larger municipalities may attempt to mitigate the negative impact of excess stormwater runoff through the creation of storm sewers, and even stormwater treatment plants. Hyde Park's stormwater drainage system consists of series of drainage inlets within the village, as well as a network of culverts and ditches along the town highway network.

The Planning Commission encourages new residential and commercial development to implement stormwater mitigation strategies, otherwise known as Low Impact Development (LID). Common LID techniques that mitigate the adverse impacts of stormwater runoff include on-site rain gardens and

grass swales; the utilization of cisterns and rain barrels; and the installation of pervious pavement and sidewalks.

Hyde Park's zoning and subdivision regulations allow the Development Review Board (DRB) to exercise discretion in requiring stormwater runoff and erosion control as a condition of site plan approval. Development proposals with greater than one acre of new impervious surface are also required to obtain a state permit from DEC's stormwater division.

Solid Waste Facilities

Hyde Park is a member of the Lamoille Regional Solid Waste Management District (LRSWMD), chartered in 1989 to serve Lamoille County and the neighboring towns of Craftsbury and Worcester. Funding for LRSWMD expenses is covered entirely by user and service fees. As required by state law, the LRSWMD has devised a 20-year plan for the management and disposal of all types of solid waste generated in its member communities, last updated and adopted in 2006. Town and Village residents may bring solid waste to the Casella Hyde Park Transfer Station on Route 100, or the Johnson drop-off site located on Wilson Road, just south of the North Village. The March 2012 Facility Management Plan for the Hyde Park Transfer Station indicates there is no plan to close the facility; eventually, closure costs will be covered by a bond held by Casella Waste Management, Inc.

From Lamoille County, waste is transported to a landfill in Coventry. The life of this facility depends greatly on the amount of waste generated within the district. Through education, recycling, composting and other initiatives, LRSWMD strives to reduce the overall volume of waste sent to the landfill. Hyde Park supports these waste diversion efforts, which ultimately require the participation of all residents and businesses within the district to be effective.

Law Enforcement

There are three levels of law enforcement coverage in Hyde Park: two locally elected Constables, the Lamoille County Sheriff's Department (LCSD) and the Vermont State Police (VSP). The local Constables have the same authority as any police officer in the state within the boundaries of Hyde Park; however, constables do not have the authority to pursue a violator into a neighboring municipality.

The LCSD provides enforcement of all applicable laws, emergency dispatch services and support during emergency incidents, in accordance with a patrol and communications contract signed annually with the towns of Hyde Park, Johnson and Wolcott. The remaining municipalities in the county receive dispatch and emergency response coverage only. The LCSD is managed by a Sheriff, elected to a four-year term by county voters. LCSD is also responsible for coordinating the Enhanced 911 (E-911) system now in place throughout the state; all new construction is required to have a registered E-911 address.

During the last five fiscal years, the cost associated with the LCSD's patrol contract with Hyde Park has increased 10.9-percent, while the communications assessment decreased 3.8-percent. Overall, the total amount spent by Hyde Park residents on LCSD services increased by 7.9-percent between the 2009 and 2013 fiscal years (**Table 5**).

Table 5: The Lamoille County Sheriff Department's assessment for service in Hyde Park (FY 2009-13).

Year	Patrol Contract		Communications Assessment		Total	
	Funds	% Annual Change	Funds	% Annual Change	Funds	% Annual Change
2009	\$257,363	--	\$66,509	--	\$323,872	--
2010	\$257,363	0.0%	\$68,539	3.1%	\$325,902	0.6%
2011	\$257,189	0.0%	\$65,502	-4.4%	\$322,691	-1.0%
2012	\$280,210	9.0%	\$65,222	-0.4%	\$345,432	7.0%
2013	\$285,300	1.8%	\$64,000	-1.9%	\$349,300	1.1%

Source: Hyde Park Town Reports

In 2007, the state legislature created the Lamoille County Special Investigations Unit (LCSPI), a multi-disciplinary taskforce that conducts criminal investigations and provides victim services in response to reports of sexual abuse, domestic and child assault, as well as abuse of vulnerable adults and the elderly. The LCSPI team consists of two full-time detectives (one assigned to LCSD and one assigned to the VSP), a prosecutor with the Lamoille County State's Attorney's Office, a victim advocate and administrative staff. LCSPI headquarters are co-located with the State's Attorney's Office in Hyde Park Village.

Finally, the VSP provides a third level of police protection for Hyde Park residents, offering emergency law enforcement support (as requested by the LCSD), criminal laboratory services, and specialists trained in a variety of subject areas (e.g. homicide, arson, and drug enforcement). Hyde Park is within the jurisdiction of VSP Troop A and the Williston Barracks.

Fire Protection

Hyde Park is served by two volunteer fire departments: the Hyde Park Fire Department (HPFD), a municipal department, and the North Hyde Park/Eden Fire Department (NHEFD), a member-owned non-profit. Administratively and financially, the HPFD is responsible to the Town, while the NHEFD is responsible to Hyde Park Fire District #1's Prudential Board. The NHEFD is ultimately funded by an equal share of appropriations from the towns of Hyde Park and Eden.

Operationally, both the HPFD and NHEFD are managed by Fire Chiefs. The NHEFD Chief is elected by a vote of its members; the HPFD is recommended by its members, though appointed by the Selectboard, as head of the municipal fire department. Hyde Park is also authorized to appoint a Fire Warden, responsible for issuing burning permits and monitoring forest and wildland fire vulnerability in town. Fires are reported using the E-911 system through dispatch at the LCSD office.



Hyde Park Fire Station on Centerville Road

Fire Protection Concerns

One issue identified by both fire departments is an inability to access outlying structures once an emergency incident has been reported. This challenge is attributable to the character and location of residential development that has occurred in Hyde Park and Eden over the last two decades. During this period of growth, many homes have been built in rural areas and at the end of long, narrow driveways, which fire engines often cannot traverse. Accessing these structures can be difficult during warmer months, but is even more challenging in winter, when roads can be icy and narrower (hemmed-in by snow banks).



North Hyde Park/Eden Fire Station on Rt. 100

Currently, the Hyde Park zoning bylaws require that any proposed conditional use within the Shoreland and Conservation (10/27 acre) districts must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the DRB that the site is accessible to emergency service vehicles. Additionally, the local subdivision regulations require that any cul-de-sacs or dead-end roads be designed with a minimum radial width, thereby allowing emergency vehicles to turn around safely. There is also a provision within the subdivision regulations authorizing the DRB to require, as a permit condition, that a developer to upgrade roads deemed inadequate to accommodate emergency service vehicles. In future revisions to the zoning and subdivision regulations, the Planning Commission should engage the local fire chiefs to discuss access-related challenges and consider incorporating firmer language, authorizing emergency service providers to review and comment on new subdivision proposals.

Another cause for concern among the local fire departments is the limited access to a stable water source. Even where roads and driveways can be maneuvered by tanker engines, the lack of an additional on-scene water supply can be a major hazard. Firefighters have stated that residential developments could greatly improve their overall fire safety by constructing fire ponds and “dry hydrants” in rural areas. Essentially, dry hydrants are threaded PVC pipes installed along the banks of streams and ponds, from which a pumper engine can draw water. Besides their fire protection value, dry hydrants are also appealing to property owners, as their installation often reduces insurance premiums. Presently, there are 20 dry hydrants dispersed throughout Hyde Park. Current subdivision regulations also allow the DRB to require a dry hydrant or fire pond be built at any new development that is more than one mile from the nearest rural water source. To work towards addressing these concerns—and to ensure adequate coverage during the weekdays, when many volunteer firefighters are at work—the departments entered into a joint response agreement, which was presented to the Hyde Park Selectboard on April 9, 2009.

Library Facilities

There is one public library in Hyde Park, Lanpher Memorial Library, located at the corner of Church and Main Street. Lanpher is owned by the Town and administered by a five-member Board of Trustees. The Library Trustees are elected on a rotating basis, with one elected each year at Town Meeting and each Trustee serving a five-year term. Operating independent from the Selectboard and Village

Trustees, the Library Trustees meet monthly (or as necessary) to conduct library business; they also set policies, development budgets, volunteer in the library and advise librarians. While Lanpher is a municipal library, it does receive some private funding. As Hyde Park's population grows, library use is expected to increase proportionally. In 2002, the library broke ground on a new addition, which was completed in 2003. The Library Trustees continue to work with a fundraising committee to make progress on other aspects of their long-term expansion plans.

Alongside books and periodicals, Lanpher offers a collection of DVDs and videos to borrow; an audiobook service, which allows patrons to download content to their computer or digital audio player from home; free wireless internet service (WiFi); five desktop and two laptop computers for public use; a community meeting space; as well as a variety of year-round children's programs. Lanpher is also a participant in the state inter-library loan program, which allows patrons to borrow paper and digital media from other participating libraries across Vermont. In addition to traditional library services, Lanpher displays artwork from local artists on a rotating basis and offers discount passes to various educational programs, such as the ECHO Lake Aquarium in Burlington. The library is presently open 25 hours per week, although the Library Trustees are working to increase hours of operations.



Lanpher Memorial Library in Hyde Park Village

Hyde Park residents also have access to the Johnson State College Library and Learning Center, located on the school's campus in Johnson. The Library and Learning Center allows the general public to access circulation and reference services. Additional features include a 24-hour study room; three media booths for use of videocassettes, vinyl recordings and compact disks; a two-story reading room; six study offices; a children's room; and two seminar rooms.

Health Facilities & Services

The primary healthcare providers servicing Lamoille County and the surrounding region are Copley Hospital and Community Health Services of Lamoille County (CHSLV), both headquartered in Morrisville. Copley Hospital is a 25-bed critical access facility that serves as an emergency care center, while providing in-patient and out-patient services, a family oriented birthing center, and physical therapy and rehabilitation services.

CHSLV, a federally qualified health center, also offers quality medical, dental and behavioral health services to residents of Lamoille County, including the uninsured and under-insured. Their primary and specialty care practices include Morrisville Family Health Care, Stowe Family Practice, The Women's Center, The Neurology Clinic, The Behavioral Health & Wellness Center and the Community

Dental Clinic. Other local health service agencies include Lamoille Valley Community Connections, The Manor Nursing Home, The Lamoille Family Center, The Clarina Howard Nichols Center, Lamoille Home Health & Hospice and the Vermont Department of Health (Morrisville District Office). For more information on health and human service providers within the community, residents are encouraged to dial 2-1-1 from their phones, or visit www.vermont211.org.

Cemeteries

In Vermont, authority to manage public cemeteries is vested with the local legislative body. However, the day-to-day maintenance and care of these facilities may be delegated to various associations or commissions. Currently, there are eight cemeteries in Hyde Park, with oversight from four cemetery associations (organized as non-profits) and one Cemetery Commission. Members of these organizations are responsible for cemetery layout and site maintenance, the sale of lots, and the maintenance of records.



Saint Theresa Cemetery in Hyde Park Village

Recreation

The Hyde Park Recreation Fields Committee is a volunteer organization dedicated to fostering recreational activities and opportunities in the community. The group focuses on project development, fundraising and grant writing. The committee's inaugural project was the development of new fields for baseball, softball and soccer. With funding from the Lamoille Area Chamber of Commerce (LACC), the State Land & Water Conservation Fund, the Vermont Recreation Facilities Grant program and many generous donors, the community celebrated the grand opening of the Hyde Park Recreation Fields on May 6, 2006. Current facilities include youth baseball, softball and soccer fields; a walking path; volleyball pit; restrooms; and a concession stand. Along with seasonal youth and adult sports leagues, the recreation fields are utilized for kickball and wiffleball tournaments, and winter snowshoeing. Field maintenance and youth programming are supported by the Hyde Park Baseball/Softball Association and Hyde Park Elementary School Soccer.



*Hyde Park's Recreation Fields in Autumn
Photo by: Over and Above Aerial Photography*

Hyde Park is also home to the Cricket Hill Trails system—a network of all-season trails, located on 82 acres adjoining the Lamoille Union Middle and High School campus. The trails were built after the founding of a non-profit corporation in 2002, the Friends of the Cricket Hill Recreation Area. Developed in phases between 2002 and 2005, the Cricket Hill Trails system is home to the Lamoille Union Nordic skiing and cross country running teams, and is maintained by community volunteers. The area is available to the public for non-motorized recreation.

Telecommunications

Two wireless telecommunication towers are operating in Hyde Park at the time of this plan's adoption: one at the LCSD office within the Village of Hyde Park, and a second sited on Davis Hill, north of Garfield. In September 2011, the Hyde Park Planning Commission signed a Memorandum of Understanding granting consent with the LCSD's proposal to construct a new 90-foot communications tower on Carpenter Hill (after tearing down the existing) to better serve the region's emergency service providers. The new structure, pending receipt of a Certificate of Public Good from the PSB, would be located at 125 Garfield Crossroads.

To guide the future development of telecommunications facilities, Hyde Park has adopted strict standards within the zoning bylaws to regulate the height and aesthetic impacts of towers. The Selectboard, Village Trustees and Planning Commission may also participate in state permitting proceedings (including Act 250 and Section 248), which evaluate proposals for compliance with applicable local and regional plans, among other criteria.

Goals, Policies & Recommendations

The goal of any public service is to protect public health and safety, or improve the quality of life for local residents (and ideally, both). Maintaining roadways and managing a local school district are expected functions of most municipal governments. Providing funding and support for other amenities, such as recreational facilities is not required, but greatly enhances the experience of residents and visitors.

Goals

- To efficiently maintain high-quality, environmentally sound and affordable public services and facilities.
- To plan investments in infrastructure to support the local economy, while mitigating negative environmental and social impacts.

Policies

In this chapter, policies are specific to the various elements discussed, including water, sewer and solid waste. Growth, in and of itself, is not considered positive or negative; changes in population will be interpreted as they apply to Hyde Park's ability to provide services.

Public safety

- Hyde Park supports the public safety activities of the Hyde Park and North Hyde Park/Eden Fire Departments, the Lamoille County Sheriff's Department and other local emergency response agencies.
- All new development should be accessible to emergency vehicles.
- Large developments should be designed to include fire ponds and dry hydrants to aid in fire-fighting, where similar water resources are not available nearby.

Recreation

- Hyde Park supports landowners who generously keep their lands open to traditional recreational uses such as hiking, hunting and fishing.

Telecommunication facilities

- In order to minimize tower proliferation, it is the policy of the Town and Village to encourage developers to exhaust all reasonable options for sharing space on existing towers or tower sites, prior to proposing new towers and related facilities. The principle of co-location is the favored alternative. In making such a determination on the feasibility of co-location, applicants shall evaluate space available on existing towers; the tower owners' ability to lease space; geographic service area requirements; mechanical or electrical incompatibilities; the comparative costs of co-location and new construction; and regulatory limitations.
- One of Hyde Park's principal scenic qualities is its ridgelines and mountainsides. These areas are significant features of the community's scenic, rural character. Local ridgelines are predominately undeveloped and provide unbroken views of the Green Mountains from the valley floor. The use of Hyde Park's ridgelines for telecommunication towers and related facilities must be approached in a manner that will not unduly detract from, nor adversely affect, these scenic values. Accordingly, protection of these areas from insensitive development is a

matter of public good. To minimize conflict with scenic values, facility design and construction shall employ the following principles:

- a. Where feasible, be sited in areas not highly visible to the traveling public, or from residential areas, historic districts and public lands and outdoor recreation areas, including hiking trails and beaches;
 - b. Be located in forested areas, or be sufficiently landscaped to screen the lower sections of towers and related ground fixtures from public vantage points, such as trails, roads or water bodies;
 - c. Utilize materials, architectural styles, color schemes, lighting fixtures and other design elements to promote aesthetic compatibility with surrounding uses and to avoid adverse visual impacts;
 - d. Where prominent views of a site exist, be located downgrade of the ridge so as not to exceed the elevation of the immediate ridgeline;
 - e. Where constructions of access roads are involved, to minimize visibility, be situated to follow the contour of the land and to avoid open fields or meadows;
 - f. To avoid peaks and ridges which function as regional focal points; and
 - g. No external lights.
- In planning for telecommunication facilities, consideration shall be given to the environmental limitations of a given site. Impacts of the use on wildlife habitats, soil erosion, forestry and agricultural lands, and similar resources should be carefully addressed. Projects that adversely impact these resources are discouraged.
 - Towers, antennae and related fixtures that fall into disuse or are discontinued shall be removed by the facility owner to retain the values set forth above. Owners may be required to post bond for removal.
 - Hyde Park shall continue and expand communications between local departments, councils, associations and elected officials in order to better coordinate planning to serve needs for facilities and services.
 - Hyde Park encourages prospective applicants to meet with the Planning Commission prior to filing Section 248 or 248a materials with the Public Service Board, to initiate a dialogue on potential local and regional impacts.

Recommendations

Ultimately, long-term public service and community facility needs of the Town and Village are tied to local population growth and regional economic growth. In order to prioritize costs and opportunities for financing essential services, Hyde Park should update the *1990 Utilities and Facilities Report*, especially data pertaining to the municipal water and sewer systems, which are major factors in encouraging economic development within the village. Potential grant sources to fund these studies are outlined within the Implementation chapter. Moreover, the following steps are recommended:

Water Supply

- The Planning Commission should reach out to the Prudential Board of Hyde Park Fire District #1, to discuss long-term land use planning considerations associated with the district's water system and WHPA.

Solid Waste

- The Planning Commission should consider the adoption of a salvage yard ordinance to mitigate visual blight resulting from junk storage.

Telecommunication Facilities

- The Planning Commission should regularly review the telecommunication tower provisions of the zoning and subdivision regulations, particularly in light of the fact that the governing state statute (Section 248a) will sunset on July 1, 2014, absent action by the Vermont legislature.

Chapter 3: Education

The Town and Village of Hyde Park belong to the Lamoille North Supervisory Union (LNSU), a regional cooperative serving the towns of Belvidere, Cambridge, Eden, Hyde Park, Johnson and Waterville. Students within each town attend one of five local elementary schools, prior to advancing to Lamoille Union Middle and High School, which are located alongside the District's business office at a shared campus on Route 15, south of the village center.



*Hyde Park Elementary
Photo by: LNSU*

Elementary Education

Children of Hyde Park residents, from pre-kindergarten through 6th grade, may attend Hyde Park Elementary School (HPES), located on a 33 acre parcel between Depot and East Main Street. The school is operated by a five-member School Board, elected to staggered three-year terms. During the 2011-12 school year, HPES had an enrollment of 254 students, an increase of 12-percent from the 2008-09 school year (**Figure 5**). As a general trend, school enrollment has increased over the last decade, although the majority of growth was concentrated within a three year span (2008-11).

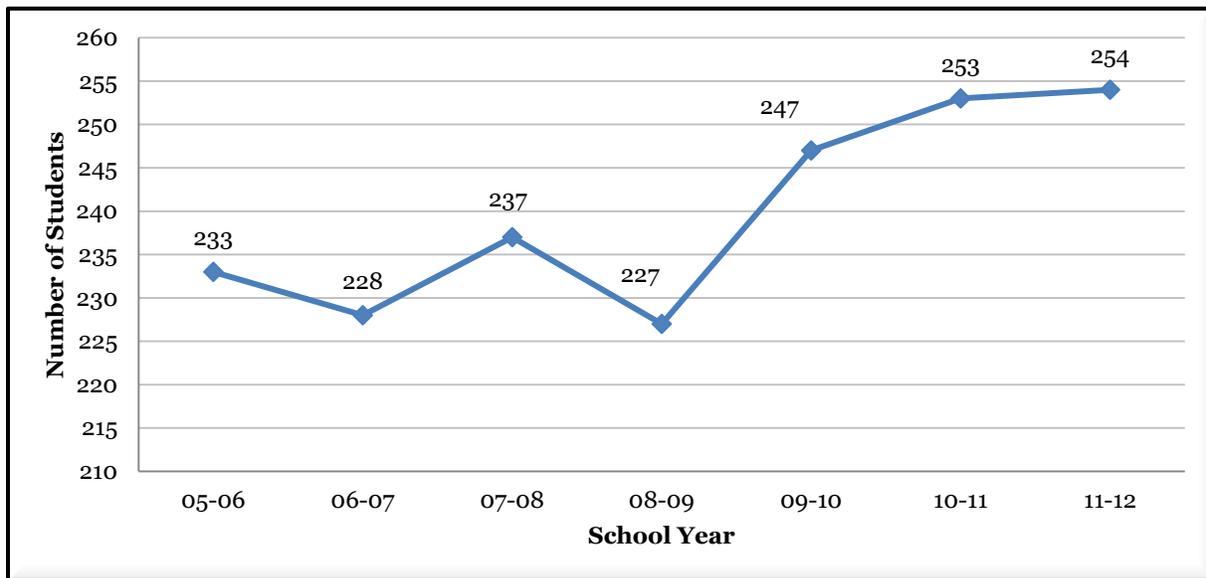


Figure 5: Student enrollment at HPES between the 2005-06 and 2011-12 school years; **Source:** Hyde Park Elementary School

HPES occupies the former Lamoille Central Academy building (constructed in 1897), along with a larger addition completed in 1952. The facility has since been renovated numerous times—including an expansion in 1994, which added four classrooms and a library. As of the 2011-12 school year, HPES has two classrooms each for kindergarten and grades 1 through 6. There are also two half-day pre-kindergarten classes (one in the morning and one in the afternoon). In addition to class and library space, the school has a multi-purpose gymnasium for athletics and physical education, which doubles as

a cafeteria and also contains a stage for plays and hosting other events. Outside the building, facilities include two playground areas and a recreation field for soccer.

Recent increases in enrollment have created traffic and congestion issues in the area surrounding HPES, especially at the beginning and end of the school day, when school buses, parent drivers and pedestrians all converge on a small parking area. To this end, in 2010 Hyde Park voters approved funding to study long-term facility issues and plan for future renovations. As part of this process, HPES has contracted with a local firm to re-design the school parking lot and circulation system, to improve pedestrian safety and reduce congestion.

Middle & Secondary Education

As noted above, students living within the LNSU district may attend Lamoille Union Middle (grades 7-8) and High School (grades 9-12). As of the 2011-12 school year, the combined district-wide enrollment of grades 7 through 12 is 869 students. Since opening a new wing of the building in 2002, the facilities are considered to have sufficient capacity to accommodate reasonable growth projections across the district. Current amenities at Lamoille Union Middle and High School include an auditorium, library, gymnasium, outdoor athletic fields and the previously noted Cricket Hill Trails network. Over the last six school years, the number of middle and high school students enrolled in LNSU from Hyde Park has generally declined (**Figure 6**). However, recent growth in the enrollment at HPES suggest this trend is likely to reverse course in the coming years.

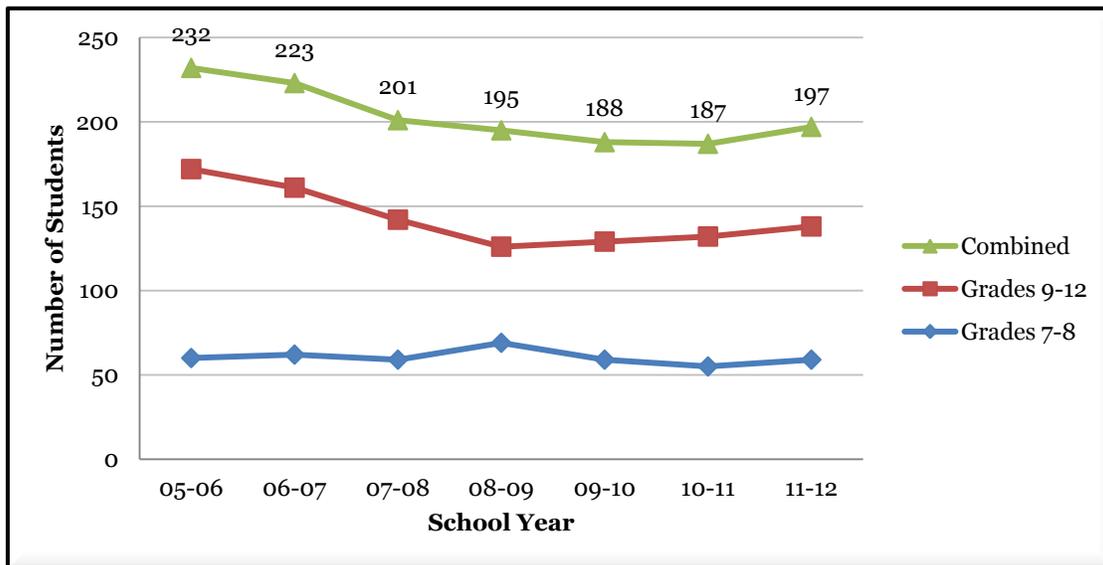


Figure 6: A parallel comparison of the enrollment of students from Hyde Park at LUMS, LUHS and combined middle and high school enrollment between the 2005-06 and 2011-12 school years; **Source:** LUHS & LUMS

High school juniors and seniors, as well as a limited number of adult learners, also have access to career training and educational opportunities at Green Mountain Technology and Career Center (GMTCC), located on the same campus as Lamoille Union Middle and High School. GMTCC offers technical programs in thirteen areas of study and is accredited through the Association of New England Schools and Colleges. Noteworthy and award-winning programs include forestry and land management, automotive technology, culinary arts and HVAC.

Outside the local public school system, residents may elect to send their children to one of several area private schools—most notably the Bishop John A. Marshall School, a Catholic school in Morrisville offering pre-kindergarten through 8th grade. Some residents also choose to home-school their children, or customize an education plan that allows for a mix of home-learning and school participation.

Post-Secondary & Adult Education

Along with GMTCC, which offers multiple courses eligible for college credit, there are two other local institutions offering college-level instruction in Lamoille County. Johnson State College in neighboring Johnson offers a variety of graduate and undergraduate degree programs, as well as continuing education services. The Community College of Vermont (CCV) also operates a campus in Morrisville, offering Associate Degrees, certificate programs and online instruction in various pre-professional concentrations. Finally, additional educational opportunities are available at Central Vermont Adult Basic Education (CVBAE) in Morrisville, which offers free literacy programs to adults and out-of-school youth.

Future Concerns

The quality of instruction and educational facilities offered at local public schools are in many ways a reflection of a community's vibrancy. Hyde Park seeks to balance the need to maintain high-quality educational services, within a tax structure that is not burdensome to current and prospective residents. Therefore, the Town and Village must carefully monitor demographic trends, to ensure that future residential growth does not overwhelm the capacity of the local school system. At the time of this plan's update, Hyde Park faces the following concerns with regard to its educational services and facilities:

Elementary School Capacity

The 2011-12 school year marked a ten year enrollment high for HPES. Presently, the building is at full-capacity—if enrollment continues to increase, action will need to be taken to expand the facilities. Due to a combination of Hyde Park's aging population and other demographic variables, raw population growth has not directly correlated with increased enrollment at HPES. As a result, the Town and Village should closely follow both annual enrollment figures and the turnover of students entering and leaving the school district each year.

Busing & Travel Costs

Previous municipal plans identified transportation costs and travel time as strains on both the student population and school budget. During the 2011-12 school year, HPES provided five separate school bus routes, with pick-ups beginning as early as 6:55 am and making final drop-offs as late as 3:55 pm; students riding the bus from the Garfield area of town could spend more than an hour in transit each school day. On most days, these buses run at half-capacity, due to the increasing number of parents that elect to drop their children off at school. Accordingly, the Town and Village encourage exploring alternative student busing plans, to adapt to resident's changing needs and to conserve energy and tax dollars. At least part of the increase in both the cost and time associated with student busing is caused by the growing number of housing units built in outlying rural areas of town. As Hyde Park continues to grow, encouraging more compact development patterns will contribute to lower school district transportation costs, increase carpool opportunities and lessen the amount of time students spend riding the bus.

Early Childhood Education & Child Care

According to the Lamoille Family Center, in 2011 there were nine registered in-home child care operations and one licensed child care center in Hyde Park. Early childhood education and childcare currently represents a major service void across the state. According to a 2002 report, *The Economic Impact of Vermont's Child Care Industry*, the existing regulated child care system meets only 65-percent of estimated need. It should be noted that, while Hyde Park is fortunate to have half-day pre-kindergarten available at HPES, parents of children enrolled in the program must make transportation and childcare accommodations for the remaining part of the day.

By Vermont statute, a family child care operation serving six or fewer children is to be treated as a permitted single-family residential use within local development bylaws. Operations of up to six full-time and four part-time attendees are also considered a permitted single-family residential use, but subject to local site plan review. Any child care operations with more than six full-time and four-part attendees are left to the discretion of municipal bylaws. Under the current Hyde Park zoning regulations, a licensed child care facility would be treated as a conditional use in most districts. To better accommodate working families, the Planning Commission encourages the siting of child care and early childhood education facilities throughout town, provided steps are taken to ensure any potential traffic and pedestrian safety concerns are addressed within the neighborhood.

School Budget Trends

Overall, the cost of providing education has continued to increase throughout Vermont since the last plan update. Due to a multitude of changes to state funding formulas, it is difficult to make accurate comparisons of local tax assessments and per-pupil costs across school budget years. As a point of reference, in terms of Gross Act 68 Budget¹, the Hyde Park School District experienced an increase of 14.7-percent between FY2009 (\$3.04 million) and FY2012 (\$3.49 million).

Goals, Policies & Recommendations

Hyde Park is committed to providing high-quality instruction and educational facilities to all school-aged residents. In the previous decade, even as Hyde Park's population grew, school enrollments were manageable and within the constraints of existing facilities. Within the last three school years, however, rising enrollments at Hyde Park Elementary School have raised space and facility concerns. In the years ahead, the Town and Village should closely monitor school enrollments to determine whether action is needed to expand Hyde Park's educational service capacity.

Goal

- To plan for growth in a way that allows Hyde Park to provide quality educational services and adequate facilities, without placing an undue tax burden on residents.

Policies

- Hyde Park recognizes the importance of high-quality child care and early childhood education within the community and supports the expansion of these services, as permitted under state law and by local zoning regulations.
- Hyde Park recognizes that its K-12 educational system is central to the community's family oriented identity, and is critical to the Town and Village's continued prosperity.

¹ According to the Vermont Dept. of Education, this includes local budget, special programs, full technical center expenditures, and any Act 144 expenditures.

- Hyde Park supports GMTCC in its efforts to broaden access to education for adult learners and provide vocational opportunities for high school students.

Recommendations

- The Selectboard should weigh the impact of increased school busing costs when considering taking over private roads.

Chapter 4: Energy & Utilities

The Town and Village of Hyde Park seek to expand upon past energy planning efforts to emphasize the relationship between energy, land development patterns, transportation decisions and overall quality of life. This Energy & Utilities chapter will inventory current energy consumption, outline opportunities for greater efficiency and conservation, and lay out strategies to economize the Hyde Park's long-term energy profile.

Electricity

According to data from the *Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan*², electricity accounts for approximately 40-percent of energy consumption across the state. Presently, Vermont is served by eighteen different electricity providers, which include fourteen municipal utilities, three member-owned cooperatives and one shareholder corporation. Each utility services an exclusive franchise area, with oversight from the Vermont Public Service Board (PSB), a quasi-judicial entity that supervises the rates, quality of service and overall financial management of the state's public utilities (including electricity, telecommunications, and water/wastewater systems).

Village of Hyde Park Electric Department

The Village of Hyde Park Electric Department (HPED) is one of the state's fourteen municipally owned utilities, providing electricity to approximately 1,300 customers within the village and western half of town. The Village Trustees are responsible for oversight and operations of the electric department, and employ a public works supervisor and two electrical linemen to maintain the transmission and distribution system (who also maintain the Village water and sewer infrastructure). Billing and customer service inquiries are coordinated through the Village Clerk's office.

HPED maintains an approximately 54-mile network of transmission lines, which are in good physical condition and comprise a modern and reliable distribution system. HPED does not own or operate any electric-generating capacity. Rather, the Village purchases all of its electricity from short-term bilateral contracts and long-term Purchase Power Agreements (PPA). Major electricity sources throughout Vermont include a statewide contract with Hydro Quebec, the McNeil Generating Station in Burlington, and the Seabrook Station nuclear plant in New Hampshire. According to the PSB's 2011 *Utility Facts* report, a large share of the HPED's portfolio is purchased from Hydro Quebec and other renewable energy sources. Vermont's municipal utilities (excluding the Burlington and Stowe electric departments) are also jointly represented by the Vermont Public Power Supply Authority (VPPSA), an organization which provides bulk purchasing and other services, such as rate studies, load forecasting and financial guidance.

In recent years, the state has experienced a trend toward utility consolidation; at the time of this plan's adoption, the state's two largest providers—Green Mountain Power Company and Central Vermont Public Service—have submitted a merger petition to the PSB. Proponents of merging some or all of the state's electricity providers argue that utilities are more efficient when operated at a larger scale, where redundant operational and administrative functions are removed. However, there are some widely cited benefits of operating a municipal utility, including:

- Generating additional revenue for the municipality;

² Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan 2009, Public Review Draft
<<http://publicservice.vermont.gov/planning/CEP/>>

- Superior customer service; and,
- Local control and accountability for energy investments.

While there are inherent economies of scale for larger utility providers, the Hyde Park Electric Department provides competitive rates to its customers, despite its small size. According to 2009 data from PSB, residential customers paid \$0.155 per kWh, while rates of adjacent utilities ranged from \$0.142 to \$0.173 per kWh. One challenge associated with Hyde Park's electric service area is that the vast majority of customers are residential, which are more expensive to serve than commercial sites. This is due to the fact that residential demand generally consists of a large number of dispersed customers, consuming relatively small amounts of electricity, whereas commercial and industrial sites are primarily clustered and consume significantly larger amounts of electricity. The fact that Hyde Park provides customers with competitive rates, despite this inherent disadvantage, speaks to its efficiency as a small utility. Hyde Park also scores well in a metric known as the System Average Interruption Frequency Index (SAIFI), which is the quotient of number customer outages divided by the total number of customers served. Between 2007 and 2009, the Hyde Park Electric Department ranked sixth of eighteen utilities in SAIFI.

Ultimately, the Hyde Park Electric Department is the third smallest electricity provider in the state in terms of sales and revenue. In the coming years, as the state anticipates further utility consolidation, the Village will have opportunities to assess the logistic and financial viability of owning an electric utility. In the meantime, the HPED continues to deliver reliable service to its customers at competitive rates.

Other Electric Service Providers

In addition to HPED, four other utilities have franchise areas in Hyde Park:

- The Village of Morrisville Water & Light (MWL) Department is a municipal utility based in neighboring Morrisville, providing service in southern and eastern Hyde Park. MWL operates one hydro-electric dam in Hyde Park—the Sanders Plant at Green River Reservoir (c. 1946), with an installed capacity of 1,890kW.
- Vermont Electric Cooperative (VEC) is a member-owned cooperative providing electric service across northern Vermont, including north-central Hyde Park. VEC also does not operate any power-generating facilities in Hyde Park.
- Additionally, Central Vermont Public Service (northwest border with Johnson) and the Hardwick Electric Department (eastern border with Wolcott and Craftsbury) each have small service areas in Hyde Park.

Due to the limited share of electricity generated locally, transmission costs are among the largest and fastest-rising expenses to utilities and their electricity customers. The state's electric transmission network is operated by the Vermont Electric Power Company, Inc. (VELCO), which was organized in 1956 to develop a regionally integrated grid. VELCO functions as a regulated utility, and is owned and controlled in various percentages by the state's electricity providers³. At present time, Hyde Park

³ Vermont Public Service Department (<http://publicservice.vermont.gov/electric/electric.html>)

appears to have sufficient electric transmission capacity to accommodate any reasonable growth projections. The VELCO 2009 Long-Range Transmission Plan does not identify any reliability concerns within Lamoille County; high voltage transmission lines (greater than 234,500 kV) cross Hyde Park in multiple areas. Three-phase power—which is necessary to support many types of industry and manufacturing—is also available in various locations throughout town, including the North Village. In 2011, the Hyde Park Electric Department entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with Green Mountain Power Company to take over the Village’s three-phase transmission in the North Village. Any resident or business (current or prospective) interested in three-phase power should contact their electricity provider directly for more information.

Electricity Demand

The Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund (VSJF) provides a wealth of data on energy supply and demand, through the Vermont Energy Atlas (www.vtenergyatlast.com)—an interactive mapping tool that allows the public to query and analyze information on a local, regional and state level. This includes trends in electricity consumption, as shown in **Figure 7**.

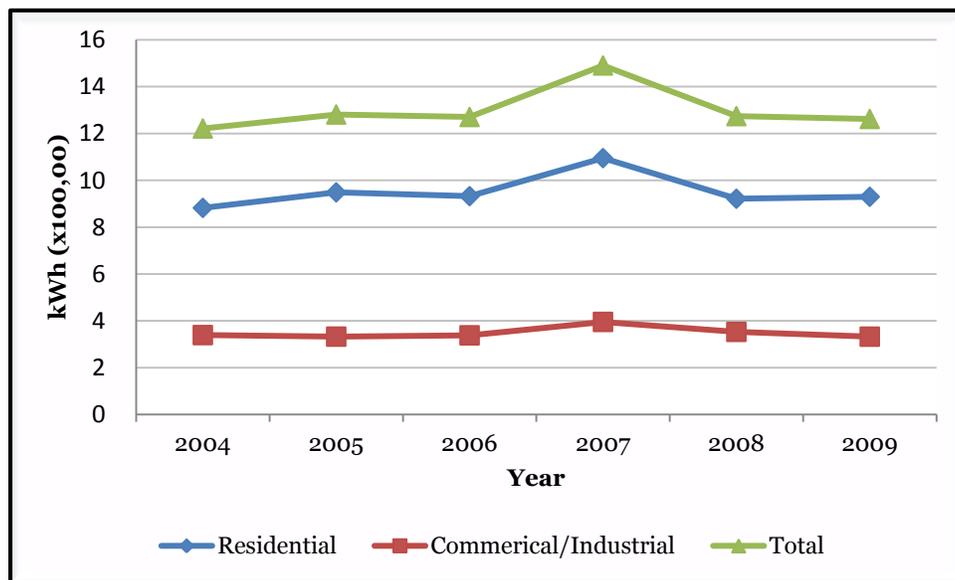


Figure 7: Annual electricity consumption in Hyde Park by kilowatt-hour (kWh) between 2005 and 2009;
Source: Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund, 2012

As shown in **Figure 7**, annual electricity consumption in both the residential, as well as the commercial and industrial sectors, remained relatively flat between 2004 and 2009. There is no conclusive explanation for the temporary peak observed in 2007. Generally, during the previous decade, Vermont electric utilities observed gradual increases in per-capita electricity sales. The apparent decrease observed from 2007 to 2009 could be attributable to the economic recession, which negatively impacted incomes and business revenues, and in-turn lead to cutbacks in consumption of goods and services (including electricity). Moreover, with rising global energy costs and increasing interest in environmental stewardship, citizens are increasingly conscious of ways to be more energy efficient in their daily lives, resulting in reduced consumption.

Heating

The demand for thermal energy accounts for approximately 27-percent of statewide energy consumption. Across Vermont, a vast majority of homes are heated with fuel oil, otherwise known as #2 home heating oil. On a dollar-per-MMBtu basis, fuel oil is among the least efficient heating sources available. Since it is delivered by truck, it also burdens local transportation infrastructure and increases carbon emissions. As shown in **Figure 8**, Hyde Park generates more than 80-percent of its residential heat from fuel oil and propane—each of which are petroleum-based. With the recent volatility of petroleum prices and the adverse environmental impacts associated with burning fossil fuels, this profile is unsustainable.

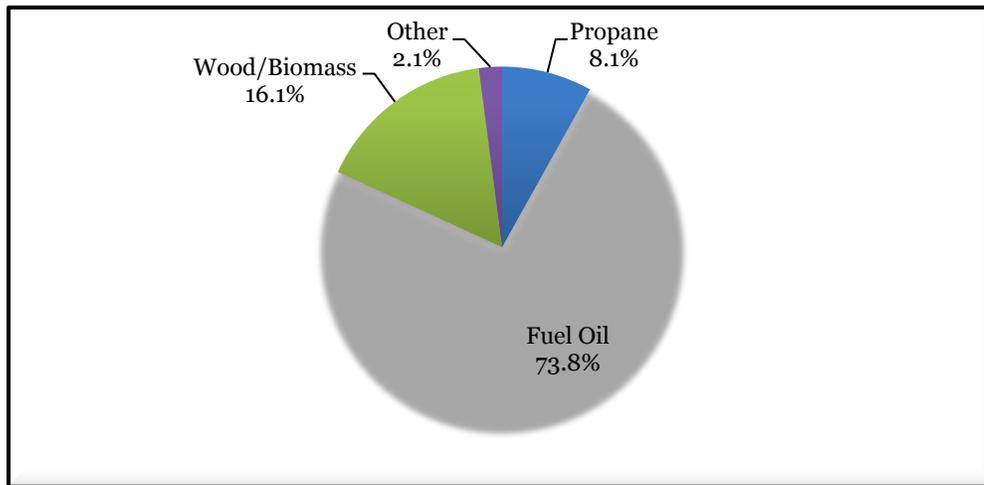


Figure 8: Primary home heating fuel used by households in Hyde Park (2006-10 estimates); **Source:** U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

Heating Fuel Demand

Similar to electricity, there are a broad range of programs in Vermont targeted at home heating efficiency and conservation. However, managing demand for home heating fuel is generally more challenging than for electricity, as consumption is largely tied to the weather: colder winters necessitate the use of more fuel. With most homes heated by petroleum, residents have been exposed to abrupt price increases over the last two decades (and particularly within the last five years). For reference, in January 1992 the average price of fuel oil in Vermont was \$0.96 per gallon, representing a cost of \$624.00 for a household that consumes 650 gallons per year. By January 2012, fuel oil prices across the state averaged \$3.85 per gallon, for an equivalent cost of more than \$2,500.

With the increasing volatility of petroleum prices, residents can expect the cost of heating their homes and businesses to continue to increase over the long-term. To offset rising heating fuel costs, the Town and Village should collaborate to distribute information on available efficiency and conservation programs, as described later within this chapter.

Transportation

Transportation accounts for approximately one-third of energy consumption across the state. Due to the rural nature of the region, transportation in Hyde Park and throughout Vermont is highly

dependent on the personal automobile. According to estimates from the Census Bureau's American Community Survey (2006-10), approximately 75-percent of Hyde Park residents commuted to work alone, with an average daily commute of more than 22 minutes each direction.

The use of an automobile is a near necessity for households in rural Vermont. Unfortunately, similar to petroleum-based heating sources, gasoline is subject to major supply shocks (such as those experienced in the summer of 2008 and spring 2012) and is highly polluting. At the local level, Hyde Park seeks to enable residents make the most economical transportation decisions that fit their respective lifestyles. In relation to transportation and energy, this means expanding opportunities for residents to utilize alternative modes of transit, when feasible.

Local & Renewable Energy Sources

Local energy production amounts to only a tiny share of Hyde Park's gross energy demand. By encouraging more local renewable energy generation and use, the community can reduce its dependence on non-renewable energy sources. In the process, residents would benefit from lower energy costs and a healthier environment.

Wood Products

The burning of wood possesses tremendous energy-generating potential, especially in regions with high heating demand and an abundance of low-grade hard and softwood forests. Currently, an estimated 16.1-percent of Hyde Park households utilize wood as a primary source of heat, compared with 13.2-percent statewide (2010 Census). Given the forest resources that exist within Lamoille County, there is clearly potential to increase the burning of wood and biomass as a thermal energy source. Provided sustainable forest management practices are in place, the consumption of woody biomass can help support local industries, reduce fossil fuel dependence and also lower consumer energy costs.

As show in **Figure 10**, the per-unit cost of heating with wood products is substantially lower than prevailing fossil fuels. When combined with other weatherization measures, the investment in a wood-burning stove can yield efficiency returns in as little as 2-5 years over a conventional fuel oil furnace. On a larger scale, Lamoille Union Middle/High School has a 7-million BTU-per hour capacity wood-fired system that consumes more than 1,200 tons of woodchips annually. Installed in 2007, this system has generated an annual savings of \$80,000 to \$100,000 over previous fuel oil costs (according to the Lamoille Union Facilities Director, 2012).

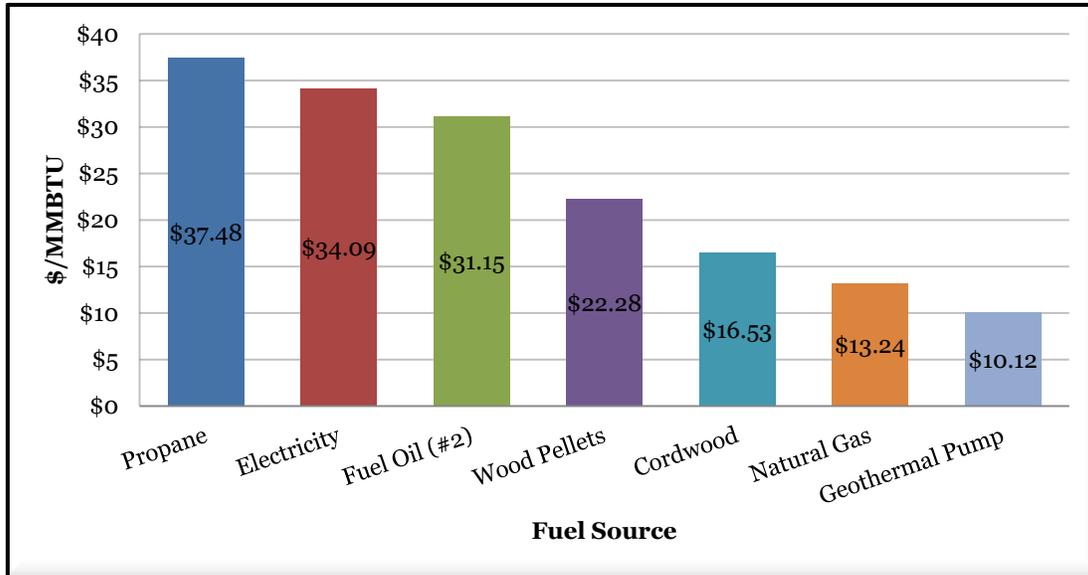


Figure 10: A comparison of prevalent home heating fuels, based on dollar-per-million BTU costs; **Source:** U.S. Energy Information Administration, January 2012

A second high-capacity option for the burning of wood products is a combined heat and power (CHP) biomass co-generation facility. Biomass power facilities burn wood to generate electricity—a process which in and of itself is highly inefficient. However, when coupled with a mechanism to capture the excess heat associated with producing electricity, such facilities represent a local, renewable source of heat and power. CHP systems can also be equipped to operate using natural gas, greatly increasing the efficiency of conventional gas-powered turbines.

In order to be cost-effective, CHP facilities typically require a large consumer of heat. Within Hyde Park, the growing North Hyde Park Industrial Park and planned Army Readiness Center on Route 100 represent a location with the combination of density and heat demand to benefit from biomass co-generation. On a smaller scale, municipal buildings within the village center could also be recipients of heat from a local wood-burning plant.

In 2010, the Hyde Park Planning Commission authored a position paper in favor of CHP within the community. The paper notes that CHP systems have been successfully installed at industrial sites for many years and are increasingly viable in smaller applications. On top of the economic benefit of producing electricity for onsite consumption, these distributed power systems also help protect local users from blackouts and brownouts. Looking forward, the paper explains:

The Vermont Yankee nuclear reactor produces nearly a third of our state's electric energy. The generating station's operating permit expires in 2012. Renewal of their operating permits is very controversial due to violations of operating conditions. Should the permit be allowed to expire, the price of electricity in Vermont will most probably rise extensively. In this event it would be very much to our credit if the Town of Hyde Park was producing a significant share of its own electrical power through a number of local combined heat and power installations.

Solar

The generation of heat or electricity from solar panels is another potential renewable energy source for Hyde Park residences and businesses. Because solar panels harness the unlimited energy of the sun, solar is considered among the cleanest renewable energy sources in existence. However, due to high start-up costs and relatively low per-unit efficiencies, solar is not generally regarded as a viable primary fuel source for most Vermont homes. Still, when coupled with tax credits or other incentives, solar can be utilized as a non-polluting supplemental energy source.



*Solar panel installations in Lamoille County
Photo by: Over and Above Aerial Photography*

According to the Vermont Energy Atlas, as of January 2012 there are thirty-seven net metered solar-electric sites in Lamoille County, with a total installed capacity of 249kW. During the update of this plan, the state legislature enacted the Vermont Energy Act of 2011, which generally encourages new renewable energy generation, with a particular emphasis on solar. New provisions of the act include:

- A streamlined permitting exemption for small solar installations (less than 5kW), whereby applicants must “register” proposals with their municipality, electric service provider and the Public Service Board, but are not subject to the full Section 248a notice and review process;
- The establishment of a statewide solar credit, requiring utilities to offer a standard benefit of 20-cents-per-kWh to solar generators; and,
- Expanding the state’s net metering program, by increasing the per-project cap from 250kW to 500kW and overall allowance per electric utility provider from 2-percent to 4-percent of service capacity.

The latter provision is of significance to all types of small-scale renewable energy development in the state. Under Vermont’s net metering statute (30 V.S.A. §219), renewable energy projects must be credited for electricity sold back to the grid up to the amount of their annual consumption. No credit is given for any amount generated beyond annual on-site electric consumption. The expansion of the net metering program is aimed to incentivize more small renewable energy projects. For larger systems, developers may negotiate tariffs or other rate agreements directly with their electricity provider.

Wind

The use of wind turbines for commercial energy production has limited potential within Hyde Park. According to data produced by Vermont Environmental Research Associates, the town primarily consists of Class 1 and 2 wind zones, whereas wind classes of 7 and 8 are sought for large-scale wind farms. As a general policy, large-scale commercial wind generation is not permitted in Hyde Park. There may, however, be areas in town where small, private wind generation is viable and this should be

encouraged, provided safety and aesthetic considerations are met. The Town and Village of Hyde Park, and the Hyde Park Planning Commission, reserve the right to review and comment on all wind turbine proposals on a case-by-case basis, as regulated by the PSB under Section 248a.

Other Renewables

Alongside those mentioned above, several other alternative fuel sources appear viable in Lamoille County, albeit on a smaller scale. Potential untapped renewables include: geothermal, anaerobic digesters and biodiesel. Hydro-electric dams, such as the Sanders Plant, are also a widely utilized source of renewable energy. While there are multiple potential hydro sites within Hyde Park, HPED has not owned any generating capacity since 1961. There is one noteworthy private hydro site—the Woodside Plant—located on the Gihon River, off Power Plant Road. Operated by the Village of Hyde Park from approximately 1895 to 1950, the Woodside Plant was sold to a private owner in 1966 and eventually refurbished in 1987. It now operates with a 125kW capacity and is licensed to operate through 2017.

Efficiency & Conservation

In addition to expanding its portfolio of renewables, Hyde Park can reduce its overall energy footprint by placing a greater emphasis on efficiency and conservation. Recent spikes in energy prices and greater awareness of fossil fuel-related environmental impacts have created a high level of interest in lowering energy demands throughout the country. Vermont has long been considered to be at the forefront of promoting energy efficiency, through the efforts of Efficiency Vermont and other public, private and non-profit organizations. Established by the Vermont legislature in 1999, Efficiency Vermont is the nation's first ratepayer-funded energy efficiency utility, providing valuable information on efficiency, conservation, rebate programs and other incentives to the general public.

According to data produced by Efficiency Vermont, registered energy efficiency improvements saved Hyde Park households nearly 270,000 kWh of electricity in 2009, the equivalent of more than \$40,000 at retail electric rates. Since the organization was first established in 2000, Efficiency Vermont reports the cumulative lifetime value of its efficiency investments across the state at \$643 million.

Municipal Consumption

With the Municipal Offices are heated with electricity, the majority of other public buildings in Hyde Park, including the Elementary School, Lanpher Memorial Library, the Town Garage, the Hyde Park Fire Station and the North Hyde Park/Eden Fire Station rely on fuel oil as a primary heating source. With skyrocketing fuel prices over the last five years, this has created a major strain on municipal budgets. According to annual Town Reports, the fuel oil budget for Hyde Park Elementary School increased more than 71-percent from the 2004-05 budget year to the 2010-11 budget year. Similarly, the electric budget nearly doubled over the same time span. While these increases may be partially attributable to higher enrollments, they are largely a function of the rising cost of non-renewable energy sources.

In order to reduce energy expenditures, Hyde Park should consider energy audits and life-cycle cost analyses for all major purchases and renovations. This would include, but is not limited to: buildings, recreational fields, vehicles, heavy equipment, street lighting and any other publicly owned infrastructure. In 2011, Hyde Park received funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, through the Vermont Clean Energy Development Fund and Lamoille County Planning

Commission, to purchase nineteen new LED streetlights in the village and install high-efficiency lighting in the Municipal Offices and Highway Garage. By investing in energy efficient building supplies and designs, Hyde Park will achieve long-term cost savings. Other smaller-scale measures, such as the replacement of incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescents and the utilization of advanced power strips in municipal buildings can result in additional savings to taxpayers.

Existing Residences & Businesses

The Town and Village do not have direct influence on household energy decisions. However, the Hyde Park Planning Commission does seek to assist interested residents and businesses in obtaining the information they need to make sound, economical choices. To promote broader energy efficiency and conservation, and to advise the Selectboard and Village Trustees on municipal energy decisions, the Planning Commission supports the appointment of an Energy Coordinator and, if sufficient interest exists, an Energy Committee. According to 24 VSA § 1131, the duties of a Municipal Energy Coordinator include:

- Coordinating existing energy resources in the community and cooperating with the Planning Commission and with those federal, state and regional agencies of government which are responsible for energy matters; and
- Studying and evaluating alternate sources of energy with a view toward the more efficient and economical utilization of existing and potential energy resources.

The Planning Commission believes consolidating each of the abovementioned duties under an Energy Coordinator could help encourage a more forward-thinking approach to local energy decisions. In this capacity, the Energy Coordinator could also serve as a resource to the Town and Village and provide future input in the update and implementation of this plan and other local bylaws.

Additionally, the Town and Village can encourage efficiency and conservation in the private sector by participating in various incentive programs subsidized by the state and federal government. To this end, at Town Meeting 2012, Hyde Park voters approved the creation of a town-wide Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) district, as authorized under the Vermont Energy Act of 2009. Through this program, municipalities may designate an area, wherein property owners can borrow money to pay for energy efficiency improvements and eventually re-pay the loan through a special assessment on property tax bills, typically for a period of 15-20 years. Funding is generally secured by the municipality through a bond. Participation within a designated PACE district is strictly voluntary. Further examples of available grants and programs are discussed within the Implementation chapter.

Residents of Hyde Park should also be advised that in 2011, the state amended the Vermont Residential Building Energy Standards (commonly known as the “Energy Code”) to promote higher levels of energy-efficiency in buildings throughout the state. The Energy Code applies to all new residential construction less than three stories in height, as well as additions and renovations. Builders have a degree of flexibility in how they meet specific ventilation and efficiency standards, but must ultimately exceed a minimum rating. After this calculation has been verified, a certificate of compliance must be completed, filed with the local Town Clerk and posted in the structure. More information on the Vermont Energy Code available online at the website of the Vermont Public Service Department (<http://publicservice.vermont.gov>).

Finally, the Planning Commission can promote energy-efficiency in new construction and renovations of existing buildings by distributing information on third-party certification programs, such as Energy Star and LEED. Besides the benefits inherent in more energy-efficient construction and design, these certifications provide a branding and marketing value to residential and commercial properties, that has been demonstrated to increase re-sale prices.

Land Development & Municipal Bylaws

Alongside the energy choices made by current residents, future development trends will have a pronounced impact on the long-term energy profile of Hyde Park. With a population that has more than doubled in last four decades, the community can reasonably anticipate continued residential growth. As additional housing is built to accommodate new residents, Hyde Park should consider ways to encourage the implementation of efficiency and conservation strategies through local development standards.

In general, dispersed settlement patterns demand more transportation infrastructure and make the delivery of essential services—including electricity and heating fuels—more expensive. The Planning Commission supports the permitting of Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) and other land use approaches that facilitate a more efficient provision of utilities. The development review process can also be adapted to encourage energy efficient site designs, including south-facing building orientation and the use of trees for shade and wind buffering.

Goals, Policies & Recommendations

Improving energy efficiency and conservation is critical to the continued prosperity of the economy and local environment. Across Vermont, electricity is primarily supplied from nuclear and hydro-electric power generators. On the other hand, the energy that supplies local heating and transportation needs is overwhelmingly derived from petroleum. Hyde Park is unique, insofar as the Village manages a municipal electric department with discretion on where electricity is purchased and, to an extent, how it is generated. Future decisions on the operation of HPED should be geared toward providing residents with reliable service at competitive rates, thereby ensuring the village remains an affordable place to live and conduct business.

While residents do not control the price and availability of energy resources, there are an abundance of money-saving efficiency and conservation measures that can be implemented to lower household energy costs. Moreover, the Town and Village should work with the appropriate state, regional and non-profit agencies to promote rebates, incentives and weatherization workshops that may be helpful to residents. Municipal government should also act as a model for the economical use of energy by incorporating the strategies of this plan into public buildings and infrastructure.

Goals

- For citizens to generate energy locally from renewable sources for electricity, heating and/or transportation needs.
- To promote energy-efficiency and conservation in the design, construction and maintenance of all municipal, residential, commercial and industrial buildings.
- To achieve a more economical community-wide energy profile, by reducing the consumption of expensive, non-renewable energy sources.

Policies

- Hyde Park supports the broader use of residential-scale solar power for local electricity generation, provided scenic and aesthetic concerns are addressed.
- Commercial wind generating facilities are not permitted in Hyde Park.
- Hyde Park supports efforts to build a clean, low-emission wood-burning or co-generation power facility in Lamoille County.
- All planning for electric transmission lines should be strongly weighed in favor of underground placement to preserve Hyde Park's scenic landscape.
- The Town and Village should promote the use of energy-efficient appliances and materials in municipal buildings.
- Outdoor lighting cutoff fixtures should be installed on municipal buildings to reduce light pollution and allow for the installation of lower wattage bulbs.
- Hyde Park supports the efforts of residents to partner in the installation of micro-grid and residential-scale distributed energy systems.

Recommendations

- In developing bylaws, the Planning Commission should provide accommodations for alternative energy adaptations.
- The Planning Commission should revise the local zoning bylaws to ensure that provisions pertaining to the siting of energy systems are consistent with this plan, in light of recent amendments to statute and emerging technologies.
- The Selectboard and Village Trustees should pursue opportunities to conduct energy audits for all municipal buildings.
- The Selectboard and Village Trustees should appoint an Energy Coordinator for the Town and Village.
- The Planning Commission should promote educational opportunities that further energy awareness among residents.
- The Selectboard and Trustees should evaluate the energy-related lifecycle costs of all renovations and capital expenditures.
- Builders and homeowners should inquire with Efficiency Vermont for energy-saving opportunities.

Chapter 5: Transportation

Located at the juncture of Vermont Routes 15 and 100, Hyde Park is readily accessible to all of north and central Vermont. To provide residents with the ability to safely and conveniently travel to their desired destinations, the Town and Village maintain a local highway network of greater than 72 miles. As a complement to these roadways, Hyde Park also strives to provide a walkable, bicycle-friendly environment that supports the goals of the Land Use chapter and encourages a vibrant downtown with businesses, services and residential uses.

State & Local Roads

Local roads in Hyde Park are maintained by the Hyde Park Highway Department; numbered state highways are maintained by the Vermont Agency of Transportation (AOT) Districts #6 and #8, with garages located in Morrisville and Eden, respectively. Three municipally owned roads are known to serve as regional collectors: Depot Street/Cady's Falls Road, Church Street and Main Street. Each relieves traffic from Route 100 and helps circulate automobiles around congestion in downtown Morrisville. When complete, the construction of the Route 100 Alternate Truck Route in Morristown—a planned limited access highway, also designed to bypass downtown Morrisville—should reduce traffic on Hyde Park's collector streets.

Local Highway Policies

The Town Highway Department is responsible for maintaining municipally owned transportation infrastructure, such as roads, bridges and culverts. Hyde Park may elect to assume control of new private roads, upon application by the property owner. In order to merit consideration, the road must be built to standards established in Hyde Park's adopted Road Guidelines (1992), which include minimum dimensions and requirements for construction materials and storm drainage. Within the town, private roads and driveways seeking to access public highways must be granted an access permit by the Selectboard. The Village Trustees do not, however, currently require access permits inside the village. Access to state highways may only be granted by AOT.

Consistent with state statute (19 V.S.A. §302), the Hyde Park Road Guidelines classify all municipal highways as Class 1, 2, 3 or 4, according to their importance and general use. The purpose of each class and the municipality's responsibility thereto are as follows:

- *Class 1 highways* are those roadways that, while remaining the responsibility of the municipality to maintain, form extensions of the state highway system and bear a state route number. There are no Class 1 highways in Hyde Park.
- *Class 2 highways* include major transportation corridors between towns, which consequently carry a large volume of local and regional traffic. An example of a Class 2 highway in Hyde Park is Centerville Road.
- *Class 3 highways* are all other publically traveled highways, generally carrying only local traffic. The vast majority of roads in Hyde Park are classified as Class 3. When assuming responsibility of a private road, Hyde Park must ensure that it complies with local Road Guidelines, to allow for winter maintenance and proper storm drainage.

- *Class 4 highways* are other private and otherwise unmaintained roads, which typically provide access to only a small number of residential structures. It is the policy of the Hyde Park Highway Department not to maintain any additional Class 4 roads, beyond those exceptions that are currently being maintained. Class 4 roads should also not be improved, above necessary maintenance of bridges and culverts.
- *Trails* are rights-of-way owned by the Town or Village that are not considered highways. Hyde Park is not responsible for any maintenance of trails, including culverts and bridges.

The Planning Commission encourages a review of the existing Road Guidelines to allow for greater flexibility, especially in residential subdivisions. Current standards mandate that streets be built and maintained at a width far exceeding their functional necessity. Where appropriate, the benefits of narrower streets include: traffic calming, lower maintenance costs, as well as reduced impervious surface area and stormwater runoff. Within the village, street right-of-ways could be narrowed with the installation of curb extensions, which in addition to calming traffic, also widen sidewalks and reduce pedestrian crossing distances. The intersection of Main and Church Street is one area that curb extensions could be beneficial, for the aforementioned reasons. The review of Town road standards must be coordinated with the local Fire Chiefs and emergency response officials to ensure safe, continuous access by emergency vehicles.

In 2011, Vermont endured an unprecedented year of flooding, with some areas experiencing the equivalent of two one-hundred year storm events within less than six months. Two separate federal disaster declarations were extended to Lamoille County, associated with flooding in April and in late-August (Tropical Storm Irene). While Hyde Park was fortunately spared the worst of these storms, the damage sustained in neighboring communities underscores the importance of hazard mitigation planning, especially in road construction. The Planning Commission encourages new and improved road culverts be sized above minimum standards, to mitigate potential road washouts and prevent downstream erosion. Ultimately, small investments in mitigation can pay long-term dividends during these increasingly frequent severe storms.

Local Highway Mileage

A breakdown of local highway mileage in Hyde Park by classification is shown in **Table 6**. Nearly 30-percent of local roads are paved, requiring new blacktop every 7-to-10 years at an estimated cost of \$38,000-per-mile. As petroleum prices increase over the long-term, so too will the cost of asphalt paving projects. In 1994, voters approved the creation of a highway equipment fund to enable Hyde Park to reduce the sum of highway equipment loans and interest charges. At the 2012 Town Meeting, voters also approved the creation of a sidewalk and pedestrian improvements reserve fund. These budget items allow the Town and Village to save for long-term transportation projects and leverage local funds toward other state and federal grants.

Classification	Mileage
Class 1	0
Class 2	16.19
Class 3	52.20
Class 4 (not maintained)	8.78
State Highways	9.50
Total Maintained Mileage	77.89
Source: Vermont AOT	

Highway Department Facilities & Equipment

As previously noted, local highways are maintained by the Hyde Park Highway Department, staffed by a Road Foreman and three full-time and two seasonal employees. The Town owns a seven-bay highway garage, storage shed and salt shed, all located on a property adjacent to the Municipal Offices (just west of the Route 15/100 roundabout). The Selectboard and Highway Department also jointly maintain a five-year Capital Plan for the purposes of phasing major purchases and capital expenditures.

Bridges & Culverts

According to 2002 data provided by the Highway Department, Hyde Park owns and maintains 23 bridges, including culverts greater than 6-feet in diameter. The total number of municipally owned culverts less than 6-feet in diameter is approximately 470. These culverts have all been inspected for sufficiency and a plan is in place to upgrade undersized or failing structures. A comprehensive culvert assessment for Hyde Park was last conducted in 2001; LCPC is working with the Town Administrator and Highway Department to complete an update, expected for 2012. Additionally, AOT owns and maintains two bridges in Hyde Park on Routes 15 and 100.

Safety Concerns

The Vermont AOT has identified two stretches of state highway in Hyde Park that have higher than average motor vehicle accident rates. Both the overlap of Routes 15 and 100 (from the Morrystown line), and Route 15 west of Route 100 have incurred accident rates up to three times normally anticipated levels. For local highways, the intersection of Route 15/100 with Centerville Road has the highest accident rate in Hyde Park—also greater than three times the expected accident rate for such a road. This problem is primarily due to the short sight distance of vehicles approaching the intersection from Route 15/100.

From a broader planning perspective, one of the primary causes for concern related to traffic safety is the fact that the village center is separated from the rest of the town by the intersection of Lamoille County's two major arterials. Route 15 represents the region's major east-west auto corridor, connecting Chittenden County with the rest of north-central Vermont. Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) counts at the intersection of Route 15 and Centerville Road are approximately 10,000 vehicle trips (2008). Similarly, Route 100 is the region's primary north-south arterial, connecting Waterbury to Stowe, and other points north. Routes 15 and 100 overlap for approximately 2 miles from the North End Shopping Plaza in Morrisville, into the Village of Hyde Park. At their initial convergence in Morrisville, AADT counts exceed 11,000 vehicle trips (2008).

In an effort to lower speeds, reduce points of conflict and improve overall circulation and safety, AOT designed a roundabout for the intersection of Routes 15 and 100. Construction began in the spring of 2011 and was completed later in the year. The Planning Commission supports efforts to re-engineer dangerous intersections and promote greater connectivity between the village and town.

There is also concern about the high volume and speed of motorists traveling through the village center, especially those utilizing Cadys Falls Road/Depot Street to bypass the congestion of Morrystown's North End Business District. Vehicles are frequently observed traveling far in excess of the posted 25 MPH speed limit, which poses a safety risk to bicyclists and pedestrians. A potential solution would be to explore reducing the number of access points into the village from Route 15/100, of which there are currently six. This could be achieved in multiple ways, such as creating barriers at the end of streets or

designating certain streets as one-way only. Further study of this issue is necessary to determine the safest and most efficient way to control traffic, while also promoting the village as an open, welcoming place to visit and conduct business.

Alternative & Multi-Modal Transportation

Non-Motorized Transit

According to estimates from the Census Bureau (2005-09), approximately 12-percent of Hyde Park residents work within the community. Still, only 3-percent of residents working locally walked or biked to work regularly. With many residents separated from the village by Routes 15 and 100, walking or biking downtown may be impractical. Within the village, however, trips between the library, school and local businesses are easily walkable. Pedestrian connectivity is nonetheless somewhat hindered by a lack of sidewalks. Currently, sidewalks have been installed along only on Main Street and Church Street.

To promote greater pedestrian access and safety, the Selectboard, Village Trustees and Planning Commission support efforts to expand sidewalks within Hyde Park Village and the North Village. In early-2011, the Town and Village were awarded an AOT Transportation Enhancement Grant (TEG) to construct sidewalks on Depot Street. When completed, the new sidewalk will directly serve Hyde Park Elementary School, a participant in Vermont's Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program. In the summer of 2011, the Town and Village were awarded another TEG to complete "phase 2" of this project and extend a sidewalk along Johnson Street. Going forward, the Selectboard and Village Trustees should continue to monitor potential funding opportunities to construct additional sidewalks and implement the goals of the SRTS program.

Rideshare & Carpooling

Further estimates from the Census Bureau (2005-09) report only 4.7-percent of Hyde Park residents utilize a carpool as a primary means of transportation to work. With nearly half of working residents employed in Morristown, Waterbury or Stowe, there would appear to be an abundance of ride-sharing opportunities on Route 100 and points south. To a lesser extent, nearly 20-percent of Hyde Park residents commute to Johnson, Cambridge or Chittenden County, indicating additional opportunities may exist on Route 15 and points east. When practical, carpooling represents a chance for residents to save money, conserve energy, and reduce demands on the local transportation infrastructure. To facilitate more carpooling, Hyde Park maintains a designated park-and-ride lot at the Municipal Offices. Residents should also be aware of the Go Vermont program (www.connectingcommuters.org), which is a resource designed to link commuters and promote ride-sharing opportunities.

Public Transportation

Hyde Park is not directly served by any regular public transit. The nearest available service is provided by the Green Mountain Transit Authority (GMTA), through its Stowe/Lamoille Valley Area routes. Currently, these routes include a circulator between major destinations in Morrisville and Stowe, as well as the Route 100 Commuter bus, connecting Morrisville to Waterbury. Utilizing the Route 100 Commuter bus, it is possible to ride public transportation from Morrisville to Burlington and back, via connection to the Chittenden County Transportation Authority's (CCTA) Montpelier LINK.

On an as-needed basis, numerous health and human service organizations in Lamoille County also provide transportation to assist Hyde Park residents, including:

- The Central Vermont Council on Aging (CVCOA) provides transportation to elderly members of the community for access to health services, shopping and other community programs. CVCOA also operates the local Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), which offers transportation and/or mileage reimbursement to its volunteers.
- The Central Vermont Community Action Council (CVCAC) has contracted with Rural Community Transport (RCT) to administer a ride referral/ride match program in Lamoille County. RCT also focuses on developing and coordinating transit services and cultivating awareness of, and support for, public transportation in the region.
- Lamoille Community Connections (LCC) provides rides for developmentally disabled clients between their homes and the region's treatment and activity centers.
- Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) provides services to clients with disabilities that create barriers to employment. The program helps to relocate individuals and coordinate transportation so clients can work within the community, and also serves as an advocate for local and regional transportation planning.
- Out and About is an adult daycare program, which provides transportation to clients through RCT to gain access to-and-from their homes to the daycare facility.

Rail

The nearest passenger rail service for residents of Hyde Park is provided through AMTRAK, with a station in nearby Waterbury (21 miles from Hyde Park Village). This station is linked to a daily route, "The Vermonter," which runs from St. Albans to Washington, D.C. with stops in New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore.

Airports

Hyde Park residents have access to private and charter aviation services through the Morrisville-Stowe State Airport on Route 100 in Morristown. Long-term expansion plans have been considered, although none of these plans are expected to be implemented within the next several years. Commercial airline service is available through Burlington International Airport (BTV) in South Burlington (40 miles from Hyde Park Village), offering direct flights to destinations across the eastern United States.

Trails & Recreational Travel

Both the Catamount and Vermont Association of Snow Travelers (VAST) trails pass through Hyde Park. The Catamount Trail, a Nordic ski trail that spans the entire length of the state, crosses town on the eastern edge of Green River Reservoir State Park. VAST trails also run through private properties across the western corner of Hyde Park, and along the eastern edge of the Green River Reservoir. Both trail systems provide winter recreational opportunities to residents, but do not serve a role in year-round transportation.

In 2011, following several years of planning, VAST submitted a proposal to convert the state-owned right-of-way of the former St. Johnsbury and Lamoille County Railroad into a multi-modal recreation path, known as Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT). When complete, the LVRT will become the longest rail-trail in New England, spanning 93 miles from St. Johnsbury to Swanton. The proposed LVRT passes through Hyde Park Village along the Lamoille River, and is expected to attract tourism and

provide an unparalleled recreational opportunity to residents and visitors alike. At the time of this plan's adoption, construction is pending VAST's receipt of an Act 250 permit. The Hyde Park Planning Commission strongly supports the construction of the LVRT, to promote recreation and alternative transit opportunities for residents from throughout the region. To accommodate LVRT users, Hyde Park has developed design plans for a trailhead and parking facility, to be located off Depot Street. The completion of the LVRT is expected to enhance the vibrancy of the village center by creating a recreational amenity that will introduce new visitors to the community and attract commerce.

Together with multi-modal and recreation trails, scenic highways also represent a tourism and leisure amenity in Hyde Park and elsewhere throughout the region. Vermont Route 100 is a renowned fall foliage drive and several other local highways offer breathtaking views of the Green Mountains throughout the year. These highways provide visitors with a window into the community and promote Hyde Park's scenic and historic character.

Complete Streets Legislation

In 2011, Vermont enacted "Complete Streets" legislation, mandating that new and renovated paved roads throughout the state be designed to safely accommodate motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians of all ages and abilities. Inside the village, improvements to sidewalks and curb ramps represent appropriate steps to ensure compliance with the Complete Streets law and encourage alternative modes of transportation. In outlying areas where there are few public services and little pedestrian or bicycle traffic, the Hyde Park should consider higher-visibility signage and pavement markings, where appropriate. More information on how the Completes Streets legislation applies to comparably sized communities will likely come to light in subsequent years.

Automobile Parking

During most times of the day, automobile parking is not a significant concern in Hyde Park. Businesses and public facilities throughout town typically have ample off-street parking. Within the village, Main Street is lined with on-street spaces and many commercial offices have small lots behind the structure. There are nonetheless peak demand periods—such as during a popular play at the Opera House, or an event at the Courthouse—that public parking is scarce. Rather than developing new parking lots (and new impervious surfaces), the Planning Commission encourages businesses in the village to allow public parking in their private lots, during non-business hours.

A 1997 parking study conducted by the engineering firm Lamoureux, Stone & O'Leary of Essex Junction, Vermont provided a more in-depth analysis of general parking dynamics within the village. Although the report will be two decades old by the expiration of this plan, many of its conclusions remain applicable. The report found that while there was not a parking problem along Main Street, it noted that "as the village core grows and changes, additional parking spaces will be needed." Additionally, the report recommended that "the placement and integration of these spaces into the downtown village must be handled with a vision as to how the additions will affect the overall character of the village in the subsequent years." These conclusions address the fact that while the village population has remained stable, development pressures that impact parking are constantly evolving. For example, the construction of the LVRT and proposed trailhead facility are expected to attract new visitors. Likewise, Hyde Park's desire to attract new businesses to the village core could demand consideration for new parking solutions in the coming years.

Additional recommendations from the village parking study that have yet to be implemented include:

- Amending the zoning regulations to prohibit parking areas on lots between the structure and street;
- Amending the zoning regulations to reduce the number of parking spaces required of a retail use to one space per 250-300 square feet of retail area; and,
- Enhancing multi-modal transportation facilities, by installing bicycle racks and altering sidewalks where they fail to meet federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.

Finally, as noted in the Education chapter, increased enrollments at Hyde Park Elementary School have created a parking scarcity at the beginning and end of the school day. In 2011, the School Board initiated a study to explore alternative site designs that would increase parking and promote safer, more efficient circulation patterns between Main Street, Depot Street and the school.

Regional Transportation Planning

In July 1992, the Lamoille County Transportation Advisory Committee (LCTAC) was formed. The LCTAC is comprised of appointed representatives from each municipality in the county, and a member of the LCPC Board of Directors. The purpose of the LCTAC is to provide recommendations regarding regional transportation needs and concerns to the LCPC Board and Vermont AOT. The LCTAC serves as the eyes, ears and voice of communities in the regional transportation planning effort. A Regional Transportation Plan for Lamoille County was last adopted in 2006; an update of the Regional Transportation Plan and Transportation chapter of the Lamoille County Regional Plan are slated for 2012.

The benefits to Hyde Park of participating in regional transportation planning efforts, such as the LCTAC include:

1. More local control of regional transportation planning and funding;
2. Greater eligibility for federal funds;
3. Eligibility to attach additional local elements in the region's annual work plan; and,
4. Local technical assistance on transportation issues.

Local Concerns

Over the years, various transportation and safety concerns have been raised by Hyde Park residents. As alluded to in previous paragraphs, the most pressing local concerns are as follows:

- The impact of the Route 100 Alternate Truck Route, which is important to Hyde Park residents, as it is expected to reduce commuting times, alleviate traffic on Stagecoach Road, and improve the flow of trucks through the region;
- The volume and speed of traffic through the village, which remain ongoing safety issues; and,
- The lack of sidewalks in the village.

Goals, Policies & Recommendations

As a predominantly rural community on the fringe of Vermont's two largest job centers, a safe and well-maintained local highway infrastructure is critical to the continued prosperity of Hyde Park. At the same time, while continuing to support those residents who commute out of the region each day, the

Town and Village seek to publicize and advocate for the expansion of alternative modes of transit. For longer commutes, this could mean consolidating trips by carpooling, or supporting more public transportation routes. For shorter trips within the village center, Hyde Park should take measures to encourage pedestrian and bicycle connectivity, both for local roads and multi-modal trails.

Goals

- To provide a safe, efficient, and diverse transportation network for the benefit of the community.
- To expand opportunities for residents to access alternative modes of transportation, whether by carpool, public transit, walking, or bicycling.
- To maintain a safe, pedestrian-oriented village that will support a vibrant local economy.

Policies

- The Planning Commission supports amending Hyde Park's adopted Road Guidelines to allow for more flexibility, on a case-by-case basis, for narrower streets in residential areas.
- The Planning Commission encourages the application of low-impact development (LID) principals in the design of roadways, parking areas and other impervious surfaces to reduce the impact of stormwater runoff and erosion.
- The Planning Commission encourages new and replacement culverts be sized above the minimum standard specified in local and state highway ordinances, to mitigate property damage from flooding and erosion.
- The Town and Village of Hyde Park support the construction and use of the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT).
- State highways should have a limited number of road access points, to allow for smooth travel into and out of Hyde Park.
- New driveway accesses should have suitable sight distances, so as to not create hidden or blind driveways.
- Hyde Park supports regional programs that provide special transportation services for those residents that require assistance.

Recommendations

- The Planning Commission should work with LCPC to collect traffic counts on streets within the village center, to help assess where traffic calming measures would be most effective.
- The Selectboard and Village Trustees should work together to fund and construct a trailhead facility for future LVRT users.
- The Selectboard and Highway Department should develop a Road Surface Management Schedule (RSMS) for budgeting needed road repairs and major improvements.
- The Highway Department should update road and bridge conditions every three years, to establish maintenance and repair priorities.
- The Selectboard and Village Trustees should continue to appoint representatives to the Lamoille County Transportation Advisory Committee (LCTAC), to coordinate transportation planning, road maintenance and improvements with adjoining towns. Participation in the LCTAC will also help ensure that the interests of Hyde Park are adequately addressed by the region and state.

Chapter 6: Housing

Hyde Park is largely a residential community. As the local population has increased over the last two decades, the extent of residential growth has far exceeded the level of commercial and industrial development. According to the Hyde Park Grand List⁴, residential properties represented approximately 74-percent of appraised property values in 1993. This figure increased to more than 82-percent in 2004, and again to 85.6-percent in 2010. During the same period, the number of residential structures in Hyde Park grew by nearly 30-percent, from 922 to 1,190. Meanwhile, the number of vacation, commercial, industrial, farm and forest properties remained relatively stable.

While the image of Hyde Park as a quiet residential community is a pleasant one, it is important to plan for a diversity of land uses, to better support the cost of municipal services. This is particularly true within Hyde Park Village and the North Village, where there are existing buildings capable of supporting mixed-use redevelopment, wherein dwelling units are interspersed with businesses and office space. Otherwise, single-family residential properties will bear an increasing burden of local property taxes to fund the extension of services—such as streets and school bus routes—to outlying development.

Current Housing Demographics

In the last two decades, new housing starts in Hyde Park have increased substantially, at a rate faster than overall population growth. For comparison, between 1990 and 2010, the number of housing units in the community increased approximately 42-percent, while the population increased by only 26-percent. This trend is attributable to several factors, including a declining average household size, which will be discussed in detail later in this chapter.

Table 7 depicts an inventory of residential properties in Hyde Park, according to the Grand List. While the table shows an across-the-board increase in the total number of residences, the high rate of increase among properties on greater than six acres is of particular concern. While there are some strategic advantages to large-lot zoning—including the preservation of open space—it is very expensive to extend and maintain services for development on this scale. Accordingly, higher densities are encouraged in traditional village areas, as permitted by local zoning and subdivision regulations.

Table 7: Inventory of the number and percentage increase in residential properties assessed in Hyde Park in 1995, 2004 and 2010				
	1995	2004	2010	% Change
Residential <6 acres	487	518	564	15.8%
Residential >6 acres	216	284	308	42.6%
Mobile homes w/o land	135	157	155	14.8%
Mobile homes w/ land	84	99	124	47.6%
Vacation homes	47	49	39	-17.0%
Total	969	1,107	1,190	22.8%
Source: Hyde Park Grand List 411 Form				

⁴ The Grand List is a listing of all real estate parcels within the Town and Village of Hyde Park.

Population & Household Size

According to the Census Bureau, average household size in the United States has decreased each decade since the start of the 20th century, and declined sharply since 1970. This trend is due to a number of factors, including: families having fewer children; the breakup of extended family households; an increase in the number of single-parent households; and the larger proportion of elderly residents that are choosing to remain in their own homes later in life. As a result, communities must provide an increasing number of housing units, even at stable population levels.

Following this trend, Hyde Park's average household size decreased from 2.71 in 1990, to 2.49 in 2000 and finally to 2.43 in 2010. **Table 8** highlights relevant shifts in housing-related demographics between 1990 and 2010.

	1990	2000	2010	% Change ('90-'10)
Population	2,344	2,847	2,954	26.0%
Total # of housing units	967	1,220	1,372	41.9%
Total # of households	866	1,138	1,214	40.2%
Average household size	2.71	2.49	2.43	-10.3%
Avg. rental household size	2.52	2.15	2.23	-11.5%
Avg. owner occupied household size	2.75	2.58	2.48	-9.8%

Source: U.S Census Bureau 1990-2010

Vacancy

When the number of households in a geographic area increases at a rate faster than available housing units, there is a corresponding drop in vacancies. Between 1990 and 2000, vacancy rates in Hyde Park decreased from 10.4-percent to 6.7-percent. Recent municipal plans attributed much of this decrease to the strong housing market of the 1990s and early-2000s. With the economic recession of the late-2000s, demand for new housing slowed and Hyde Park's

Table 9: Comparison of housing unit characteristics in Lamoille County and Hyde Park, 2010

	Lamoille County	Hyde Park
Total # of housing units	12,969	1,372
Total # occupied units	10,014	1,214
Owner occupied units	7,128	974
Renter occupied units	2,886	240
Vacant housing units	2,955	158
Vacancy rate	23.7%	12.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010

vacancy rate rose to 11.5-percent (2010 Census). While Vermont fared far better than most states during the recession and related foreclosure crisis, home values and new housing starts were significantly depressed between 2008 and 2010, and have only recently begun to climb back to pre-recession norms. Traditionally, the housing market has been a major driver of economic growth in Lamoille County, due to the popularity of seasonal homes and consistent demand for new construction to keep pace with population growth.

Affordable Housing

The Vermont Department of Economic, Housing and Community Development (DEHCD) housing policy states that housing is “affordable” when the costs (including rent and utilities, or mortgage payments and taxes) are no more than 30-percent of gross income for a household earning 80-percent of the county median. Estimates from the Census Bureau peg the median household income in Lamoille County at \$53,010. At this level, an affordable monthly housing payment for local families is approximately \$1,000 per month, including taxes and utilities. Accounting for recent increases in heating fuel prices—which may exceed \$200 per month during winter—there are a limited number of housing options in the region that are, by definition, affordable.

Table 10 contains data on the average listed values of all residential properties in Hyde Park. As alluded to above, the projected mortgage payment for a residential property on fewer than six acres (\$189,405) would typically exceed the county affordability threshold, even before taxes. While mobile homes and rentals are more affordable locally, there are significantly fewer units available for prospective residents. More insight into local housing affordability is shown in **Table 11**, based on the transfer of properties within Hyde Park over the last four years.

Table 10: Average municipal listed value of residential properties in Hyde Park, 2010

	Average Municipal Listed Value
Residential <6 acres	\$189,405
Residential >6 acres	\$337,830
Mobile homes w/o land	\$54,944
Mobile homes w/ land	\$116,102
Vacation homes	\$216,334
Source: Hyde Park Grand List 411 Form	

Table 11: Total number and average annual value of residential property transfers in Hyde Park, 2007-2011

	2008	#	2009	#	2010	#	2011	#
Residential <6 acres	\$183,633	15	\$ 152,214	7	\$ 142,500	18	175,000	37
Residential >6 acres	\$242,982	14	\$ 211,675	4	\$ 154,796	6	236,500	26
Mobile homes w/o land	\$42,375	4	\$ 26,133	3	\$ 38,500	4	34,500	13
Mobile homes w/ land	\$85,733	3	\$ 133,500	2	\$ 84,666	3	95,000	11

Source: Vermont Dept. of Taxes

The data above suggest a substantial decline in the price of large-lot single family residences purchased and sold in Hyde Park between 2008 and 2010. This is not necessarily indicative of a proportional decrease in housing values, but does suggest that the struggling economy has impacted the types of properties that are attractive in the recently lagging housing market. Data from 2011 suggests a rebound in the local housing market, although state and national indicators forecast mixed-messages for the future at the time of this plan’s adoption.

Rental Housing

Relative to other comparably sized communities in Lamoille County, Hyde Park has a low number renter-occupied housing units located in town. As of 2010, Hyde Park contained only 240 rentals, which is 17-percent of the total housing stock. According to data from the Census Bureau (2005-09), the estimated gross median rent in town was \$695 per month, which is approximately 22-percent lower

than the county average. The comparatively low cost of rent in Hyde Park can be linked to several factors. Most notably, neighboring towns contain amenities—including ski resorts and a state college—that attract short-term renters. While these amenities are easily accessible to Hyde Park residents, the town is just far enough away that there is less demand for rental housing.

Potential Avenues to Expand Affordable Housing Opportunities

Municipalities ultimately have a limited number of opportunities to impact affordable housing. Those with zoning and subdivision regulations must be careful not to inflate housing costs by requiring large lots, or having other development standards that add costs to the final unit. According to Vermont statute, municipalities may not discriminate against mobile homes and must permit mobile home parks, multi-family housing and accessory apartments in their communities. Hyde Park's zoning bylaws have met these standards since they were first adopted in 1988. Efforts to plan for and accommodate a diversity of housing types have helped Hyde Park remain an affordable place to live. Nonetheless, the Planning Commission should continue to monitor real estate trends and market rents to ensure this fact remains true for years to come.

One avenue to encourage affordable housing is for Hyde Park to support projects that create new, designated affordable units. Lamoille Housing Partnership (LHP) in Morrisville is a regional, non-profit organization serving residents of Lamoille County in funding, managing and developing attractive, affordable housing opportunities. LHP develops projects in the region that:

- Are financially feasible;
- Meet perceived or real social needs; and
- Serve community interests.

LHP has developed two affordable mobile home lots with energy-efficient units in Hyde Park, and is available to work with municipal governments, businesses and individuals to discuss developing other affordable housing opportunities.

Goals, Policies & Recommendations

Hyde Park is a residential community, predominantly characterized by detached single-family homes. Within the last two decades, however, the town has experienced a marked increase in the scale and diversity of residential development. This has allowed Hyde Park to attract new residents, while maintaining a wide range of housing options. In the coming years, the Planning Commission should examine strategies to encourage higher densities and mixed-uses within the village, to provide additional housing alternatives and strengthen the local economy.

Goals

- To provide opportunities for residential development that accommodates a diversity of ages, income levels and housing preferences, without compromising water quality, conserved lands, or creating strip development (suburban sprawl).
- To maintain the character of existing neighborhoods and provide for orderly growth, compatible with the physical capabilities of the land, and existing municipal facilities and services.

Policies

- Accessory apartments are encouraged, as they provide income for homeowners and appropriately sized housing units for residents living alone.
- Hyde Park recognizes the positive economic impact of seasonal homes throughout the region.
- Sites for manufactured and mobile homes are permitted in locations similar to those generally used for traditional single family housing.
- Hyde Park encourages land use patterns that are inherently more affordable, by nature of the cost efficiencies associated with construction (e.g. shorter access roads, smaller lots, proximity to utilities), such as Planned Unit Developments (PUDs).
- Efforts by regional and non-profit organizations to increase opportunities for affordable housing will be supported, provided they are consistent with other elements of this plan.
- By state law (21 V.S.A. § 266), all new construction and renovations of existing construction are required to meet the Vermont Residential Building Energy Standards (the “Energy Code”). More information on these standards is described in the Energy chapter. Copies of the Energy Code are also available online at the website of the Vermont Public Service Department (<http://publicservice.vermont.gov>).

Recommendations

- The Planning Commission should conduct periodic reviews of the local zoning and subdivision regulations to ensure they enable the range of housing opportunities envisioned in this chapter.

Chapter 7: Economic Development

Hyde Park has a long tradition of diverse, locally based small businesses that add to the community's economic vitality and preserve its rural character. However, according to a 2010 Census Bureau estimate, nearly 90-percent of Hyde Park's resident workforce is employed in other towns. And while residential development increased significantly in the most recent decade, commercial and industrial development did not. This imbalance forces residents to commute out of town for employment and other services, while denying the community needed property tax revenues to support municipal services.

Local Employment Characteristics

The Vermont Department of Labor tracks quarterly and annual employment trends across the state, as well as in specified Labor Market Areas (LMAs) and individual towns. **Table 12** illustrates changes in the Hyde Park employment base between 2005 and 2010.

NAICS Industry Type	Establishments		Employment		Average Wage	
	2005	2010	2005	2010	2005	2010
Natural Resources & Mining	3	2	C	C	C	C
Construction	22	19	97	76	\$28,283	\$38,289
Manufacturing	5	10	C	C	C	C
Wholesale Trade	4	6	C	C	C	\$77,583
Retail Trade	6	5	20	13	C	C
Transportation & Warehousing	4	4	C	C	C	C
Financial Activities	1	1	C	C	C	C
Professional & Business Services	14	20	111	64	\$37,400	\$33,749
Educational & Health Services	6	6	42	45	\$24,173	\$24,048
Leisure & Hospitality	1	2	C	C	C	C
Other Services	6	7	16	27	\$10,932	\$19,234
Government	15	10	394	430	\$31,189	\$36,894
<i>Total</i>	<i>87</i>	<i>90</i>	<i>757</i>	<i>699</i>	<i>\$30,508</i>	<i>\$34,202</i>

Source: Vermont Dept. of Labor

As a consequence of Hyde Park's small size, data for industry sectors with only a few employers is masked as "C," to protect the confidentiality of individual business owners. Even so, these listings are still incorporated in the calculation of the totals and averages shown above. Overall, this data indicates that while the number of local employers increased slightly across sectors between 2005 and 2010, the number of jobs in Hyde Park actually decreased by 7.6-percent. This data is somewhat skewed by the fact that it compares pre-recession employment with figures from what is widely believed to have been the lowest depths of the recession. While the national economy is fluid and inherently difficult to predict, a comparison of pre-recession and post-recession data (when available in the coming years) will likely yield a more accurate portrait of the local employment base.

Comparatively, Vermont labor markets fared far better than the rest of the country during the aforementioned recession, which officially began during the last quarter of 2007. For those with automobiles, the strong Chittenden County economy is within commuting distance; for those without automobiles, the Morristown-Stowe labor market is accessible and serviced by limited public transit. A comparison of the national, state, regional and local unemployment rates since the last plan update is shown in **Table 13**.

Table 13: Unemployment trends in Hyde Park and select comparison areas between January 2006 and January 2012				
Comparison Region	Unemployment Rate (%) Comparison			
	Jan '06	Jan '08	Jan '10	Jan '12
Hyde Park	5.1%	6.3%	8.3%	6.9%
Morristown-Stowe LMA	5.0%	5.9%	8.8%	6.9%
Burlington-S. Burlington LMA	3.8%	4.1%	6.4%	4.6%
Lamoille County	5.3%	6.0%	8.7%	6.8%
Vermont	3.6%	4.1%	6.8%	5.0%
United States	4.7%	5.0%	9.7%	8.3%

Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Vermont Dept. of Labor

Although jobless rates across the region remain stubbornly high, employment statistics have been trending positively over the last two years throughout Vermont. By comparison, the national unemployment rate and that of other states within New England has experienced far less improvement.

Journey to Work

Official “Journey to Work” data from the Census Bureau has been commonly used to classify towns as job centers or bedroom communities. Job centers are those towns with more local jobs that members of their resident workforce; bedroom communities are defined as having more than two-thirds of the resident workforce leaving town for employment. Hyde Park has traditionally been, and remains, a bedroom community by this conventional definition. Journey to Work data—which had previously been recorded as part of the decennial Census—has been replaced by three and five year estimates (referred to as the Census Bureau’s American Community Survey), with smaller samplings and higher margins for error.

The last Journey to Work dataset from the 2000 Census is now dated and does not reflect the economic restructuring that has taken place in the last twelve years. Still, this information retains some relevance, insofar as the major regional labor markets (Morristown-Stowe, Barre-Montpelier and Burlington-South Burlington) remain unchanged. **Table 14** illustrates the place of work for Hyde Park residents recorded in 1980, 1990 and 2000.

Historically, long distance commutes to Chittenden and Washington counties were far less common than today. However, the growth of the state highway network and expansion of economic opportunities in neighboring labor markets has resulted in an increase in long commutes. Job growth in Lamoille County and within Hyde Park would reduce the amount of travel for residents, thereby conserving energy and allowing more time for leisure or other pursuits. As of the 2000 Census, 736 workers reported Hyde Park as their place of work; more than half of these persons lived in either Hyde

Park or Morristown. Overall, nearly 70-percent of those who worked in Hyde Park lived in either Hyde Park or another bordering town. This suggests that most people who work in Hyde Park live within a near radius. A detailed breakdown of the residency of those employed in Hyde Park is illustrated in **Table 15**.

Table 14: Place of work for Hyde Park residents as reported by the Census, 1980-2000				Table 15: Place of residence for workers employed in Hyde Park as reported by the Census, 1980-2000			
<i>Place of Work</i>	<i>1980</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>Place of Residence</i>	<i>1980</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>2000</i>
Belvidere			2	Belvidere	2	2	6
Cambridge	7	17	54	Cambridge	12	17	23
Eden	13		19	Eden	3	20	30
Elmore			5	Elmore	4	11	15
Hyde Park	227	148	236	Hyde Park	227	148	236
Johnson	80	59	108	Johnson	69	120	83
Morristown	332	322	478	Morristown	65	101	141
Stowe	86	189	280	Stowe		23	26
Waterville	4		1	Waterville	4	3	9
Wolcott	28	3	27	Wolcott	19	12	19
Chittenden County	28	65	101	Caledonia County			31
Franklin County		13	29	Chittenden County			11
Orleans County	7	9	22	Orleans County			54
Washington County	53	67	95	Washington County			41
Other	46	15	39	Other			11
<i>Total employment</i>	<i>911</i>	<i>918</i>	<i>1,518</i>	<i>Total employment</i>			<i>736</i>
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980-2000				Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980-2000			

As previously noted, the Census Bureau does publish commuting data estimates for various geographies across the country. According to recent estimates, the most noteworthy change in commuting patterns for Hyde Park residents was an increase in the number of commuters driving to Chittenden County. In 2000, only 5.6-percent of the local workforce reported working in Chittenden County; data collected between 2006-10 suggests this figure has increased to 11.1-percent (including 3.6-percent of residents commuting to the City of Burlington). This trend is likely attributable to the fact that Chittenden County maintained one of the lowest unemployment rates of any county in the northeast during the recent recession. Thus, the labor market in greater-Burlington has drawn and retained more workers, relative to the rest of the state.

Income & Poverty

Income estimates are often imprecise due to the unpredictability of factors such as inflation, unemployment and migration, as well as the various ways it is measured (per capita, household or family income). **Table 16** provides a comparison of incomes in Hyde Park, Lamoille County and Vermont as a whole. According to the Vermont Department of Taxes, median incomes in Hyde Park lag slightly behind both the county and state. Nonetheless, as of the previous Census, poverty rates in Hyde Park (5.8-percent) were also far lower than the county (10.1-percent) or state (10.4-percent) averages.

Table 16: Median Adjusted Gross Income in Vermont, Lamoille County and Hyde Park in 2010

	Per Family	Per Capita
Vermont	\$57,665	\$24,404
Lamoille County	\$53,176	\$23,061
Hyde Park	\$50,026	\$21,924

Other Economic Development Variables

The regulatory environment at both the local and state levels affects the siting decisions of businesses and industry clusters. To this end, the local permitting process and its administration by municipal officials convey a community's attitude towards development—both positive and negative. Permitting requirements must be explicit and consistently applied. Efforts at the state level to streamline permitting should be supported, if such efforts do not adversely impact natural and environmental resources.

Public infrastructure is also essential to sustainable economic development. This includes sufficient water and sewer capacity; an efficient transportation network; competitive energy prices; as well as mobile phone and broadband internet coverage. Planning for future economic development should consider the needs of local businesses and emerging industries, by identifying areas that have desirable transportation access, municipal water and sewer service or adequate soil for on-site systems, as well as high-capacity electrical and telecommunications service.



Sweet Crunch Bakery on Main Street

Village Revitalization

Concurrent with this plan update, the Hyde Park Village Trustees began meeting twice per month (having previously met monthly), devoting their second meeting to researching and identifying resources, grants and programs that would facilitate village revitalization. While the village in its present state is a charming and historic traditional New England town center, the Trustees seek to attract more residents and businesses, to inject new life into the village core. As part of this process, the Trustees engaged in regular meetings with the Hyde Park Planning Commission during the drafting of this document, paying particular attention to ensure the plan conveys a business-friendly message—that

Hyde Park is open for business. In late-2011, an increase in the Village Water and Light Department's sewer capacity made it possible to take on new commercial customers, alleviating what had been previously a serious concern. The construction of the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (as discussed in the Transportation chapter) could also represent an economic stimulus for the community, potentially attracting thousands of tourists annually to the region.

The Village of Hyde Park is eager to attract new development, including but not limited to shops, offices, restaurants and residences. At the same time, it is critical that all new construction and renovations are designed with sensitivity towards the village's historic character. A 1981 Historic Sites and Structures Survey completed by the state Division for Historic Preservation identified the following as defining traits of this village character:

- Romanesque, Georgian and Greek Revival-style architecture;
- The use of carriage houses and stables as wings adjoined to the rear of buildings; and,
- Wood clapboard façades.

This plan does not seek to prescribe narrow architectural restrictions for future re-development within the village. Rather, Hyde Park's goal is to establish: 1) That the village possesses a distinctive character that contributes to its vibrancy and cultural identity, which must be preserved; and 2) There are broader standards within which new construction and renovations of existing buildings must be held. In this sense, the Village of Hyde Park's historic character is defined by mixed housing styles, multi-level gables and the front of buildings oriented to the street, with parking facilities in the rear of the structure (consistent with the carriage house design of the late-19th and early 20th century). On the other hand, strip developments, tract housing, as well as other site designs that place parking at the front of the lot (between the street and building) are decidedly inconsistent with the traditional character of the village. These standards do not constitute a comprehensive framework for defining village character (these will eventually be codified in a unified development bylaw), but illustrate the clear intent of the Town and Village of Hyde Park to preserve the historic village center. An appropriate litmus test for deciphering consistency with Hyde Park's definition of village character is to ask: can a new structure, as proposed, be reasonably anticipated to have historic value in 100-years?

Hyde Park believes strongly that economic development can occur in a manner consistent with the aesthetic character of the village. Encouraging investments within the town's traditional centers of activity—including Hyde Park Village and the North Village—is consistent with Vermont's statewide planning goals and will ensure a more livable and sustainable community for all. Among the many benefits of village revitalization to residents are:

- Preserving open space elsewhere in the community;
- Reducing the need for automobile trips, thereby saving dollars and energy;
- Growing local jobs and businesses; and,
- Providing new opportunities for commerce and entertainment, closer to home.

In April 2012, to help facilitate new development within traditional village areas, the Selectboard and Trustees agreed to a joint Town/Village tax stabilization program, that will apply to both Hyde Park Village and the North Village. In 2011, the Village of Hyde Park also renewed its "Village Center"

designation with the Vermont Downtown Board, which enables property owners to access the following tax benefits:

- **10-percent Vermont Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit:** A state tax credit applied to costs associated with the substantial rehabilitation of a Certified Historic Building, which can be applied on top of a similar 20-percent federal tax credit available through the National Park Service. All rehabilitation costs up to \$500,000 (and half of all costs above \$500,000) are eligible for the 10-percent credit.
- **25-percent Façade Improvement Tax Credit:** A second available state tax credit that is extended to costs incurred in the rehabilitation of a building façade. It, however, cannot be applied to a building already utilizing the 10-percent state Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit noted above.
- **50-percent Code Improvement Tax Credit:** A third and final state tax credit, which applies to the costs of bringing a building into compliance with state building codes, to abate hazardous materials or to redevelop a contaminated property. This credit may be used in conjunction with either of the two noted above, provided credits are not requested more than once on the same eligible expenditure.

According to program guidelines, a designated Village Center should represent “a traditional center of the community, typically comprised of a cohesive core of residential, civic, religious, and commercial buildings, arranged along a main street and intersecting streets.” Consistent with this definition, towns may have multiple village centers within the community—and several have more than one recognized by the Vermont Downtown Board. The North Village could be a candidate for the program and would likely benefit from the available tax credits. In the coming municipal plan cycle, the Planning Commission should explore the process of designating a second Village Center in North Hyde Park.

Goals, Policies & Recommendations

Attracting economic development is vital to the future of Hyde Park. As a bedroom community, the vast majority of residents commute to neighboring towns for employment. Given Hyde Park’s rural character, this will likely always be true, to an extent. Nonetheless, it would be advantageous for Hyde Park to attract and grow local businesses, to diversify the Grand List and to allow residents opportunities to shop and work locally. Hyde Park supports mixed-use and commercial development within its traditional village centers and desires to maintain a regulatory and tax structure that is accommodating to those interested in investing in the community.

Goal

- To develop a healthy, diverse and sustainable economy within the physical constraints of the town.

Policies

- Hyde Park supports economic activity that strengthens the vitality of small businesses, home occupations, farms, forestry and related activities.
- Hyde Park supports preserving the town’s working landscape to ensure the continued economic viability of lands actively used for farming, forestry, sugaring, outdoor recreation and other natural resource-based activities.

- Any amendments to local development regulations should be coupled with an efficient permitting process, with clear standards to ensure projects are not unnecessarily burdened.
- Hyde Park supports and encourages economic development and reinvestment within the Village of Hyde Park and the North Village. However, all new construction and renovations within these designated historic districts should be compatible with the existing character of the villages.

Recommendations

- The Planning Commission should consider applying for Village Center designation from the Vermont Downtown Board for the North Village.
- The Selectboard, Village Trustees and Planning Commission should continue to advocate for the construction of the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail and plan infrastructure investments—such as trailhead facilities, way-finding signage and bicycle racks—that enhance this amenity.

Chapter 8: Natural & Productive Resources

Hyde Park and its residents derive a vast amount of scenic, historic and economic value from the community's natural resource base and working landscape. The composition of land (soils and geology) shapes development patterns and supplies mineral resources for extraction. Rivers and reservoirs provide water for drinking, irrigation and recreation, while representing a potentially underutilized energy source. And, the preserved habitats of plant and animal species help ensure the continued health of local ecosystems, in addition to providing recreational opportunities for outdoor enthusiasts.

Land & Soil Resources

With a fixed municipal sewer service area, the vast majority of future development in town will require on-site septic treatment. Accordingly, the suitability of soils for supporting a private system should be a leading consideration in future site development. Steepness of slope, depth of soil to bedrock, seasonal high water tables and percolation rates are among the most important factors in determining the feasibility of an on-site septic system. Due to Hyde Park's varied landscape of hills, marshes and low-lying floodplain, many areas of town are unsuitable for development. **Table 17** describes major soil characteristics within Hyde Park.

Table 17: Description of major soil associations, land use suitability and their respective locations within Hyde Park			
Association	Description	Use/Limitations	Location
Adams, Colton, Duxbury	Level to steep; excessively to well-drained soils	Main source of sand and gravel; steeper areas in woodlands; less steep areas used for crops and homes	Along Lamoille and Gihon Rivers; southeast of Green River Reservoir
Lyman, Turnbridge	Deep, loamy soil; varied slopes and draining characteristics	Woodland, with farming on lesser slopes; development limited by soil depth and slopes	Northeast uplands surrounding Green River Reservoir
Berkshire, Marlow, Peru	Deep, loamy soil; varied slopes and draining characteristics	Crops and trees; pan and slope limit for development; suitable for wildlife habitat, recreation, woodland	Route 100 and Centerville Road areas
Boothbay, Salmon, Swanville	Deep, loamy soil; varied slopes and draining characteristics	Mainly crops; limitations are slow permeability, slope, and wetness. Suitable for wildlife and woodland	Western corner of town
Source: USDA Soil Conservation Service- Soil Survey of Lamoille County, Vermont, 1981			

Along with influencing construction and development patterns, soils serve as the foundation for the natural working landscape. Of particular importance to farmers and forest-based industries are the locations of designated Prime Agricultural (Prime Ag) and Class I Productive Forest Soils. The locations of these soils are illustrated in the Soil Resources map in **Appendix III** (Map 16). Overall, both Prime Ag and Class I Productive Forest Soils are prevalent throughout town, making Hyde Park an excellent location for many farm and forest-based activities. Where such resources exist in large tracts (greater than 25 acres on a single parcel), Hyde Park has established provisions in the subdivision regulations to

prohibit land fragmentation. These regulations are intended to require developers to cluster housing and services on marginal soils, to allow farming to remain viable in the future. Development-related impacts on mapped Prime Ag and Class I Productive Forest Soils are also reviewed under Act 250 criterion 9.

Gravel

Lamoille County is among the most gravel-rich regions of the state, and also one of the fastest growing. Because gravel is a non-renewable resource utilized in many types of construction, it is important to plan wisely for its use; areas with an abundance of sand and gravel should be identified and preserved. The approximate locations of sand and gravel reserves in town are identified in the Surficial Geology Resources maps in **Appendix III** (Maps 11 & 12).

The LCPC completed a study in 1989 that identified existing gravel pits and areas of likely gravel deposits within the region. According to that report, there were 27 gravel pits in Hyde Park, of which 16 were active, 7 were inactive and 4 had been reclaimed. In 1993, voters approved the purchase of a 38-acre parcel in Garfield to be used as a sand and gravel source. At 1993 levels of usage, it was projected that this parcel could meet the Hyde Park's sand and gravel needs for over a century. In light of the community's accelerated growth in recent years, it would be worthwhile to revise local sand and gravel inventories.

Topography

The slope of a landscape imposes a natural order to land use and development potential. Like much of Lamoille County, Hyde Park's landscape includes a diverse mix of woodlands, hills, ridgelines, floodplains and shorelines. Elevations range from a low of 530-feet where the Lamoille River crosses the Johnson town boundary, to approximately 1,850-feet atop McKinistry Hill, west of the Green River Reservoir. General guidelines for assessing development suitability relative to slope are described in **Table 18**.

The Hyde Park Topographic Limitations map in **Appendix III** (Maps 9 & 10) depicts areas with slopes less than 20-percent, slopes between 21 and 30-percent, slopes between 31 and 44-percent and slopes greater than 45-percent. The suitability of a site for development, however, must also be evaluated within the context of how slope interacts with other land use features, such as soil type, vegetation and the proposed site design.

Slope %	Description
0-3%	Suitable for most development, but may require drainage improvements
4-8%	Most desirable for development; fewest restrictions
9-20%	Suitable for low-density housing on large lots, with some consideration for erosion control and runoff
21-30%	May be developed with careful site design and off-site wastewater treatment
> 30%	Construction should be avoided; natural vegetation required to control soil erosion

Aquatic Resources

Aquatic resources serve a variety of essential functions. Lakes and rivers support numerous recreational and economic activities, such as swimming, fishing and boating; groundwater and reservoirs supply

homes and businesses with potable water; and wetlands store flood waters, while filtering natural and man-made contaminants. Bodies of water also provide irreplaceable habitats for a variety of aquatic and riparian plant and animal communities. Alternatively, water systems may serve as repositories for runoff and seepage, including potentially leaching landfills, septic systems and underground storage tanks. Moreover, pollutants can be introduced to the water through the illegal dumping of chemicals. Ultimately, these contaminants may kill fish and plants, destroy existing and potential drinking water supplies, and preclude recreational activities.

Rivers & Streams

The Lamoille River forms the southern political boundary of Hyde Park, from its confluence with Centerville Brook to the Johnson town line. The Lamoille originates at Horse Pond in Greensboro and flows west into Lake Champlain in Milton. Along this route, the river assimilates water from a variety of different sources. The Lamoille is the region's most distinctive natural watercourse, providing recreational opportunities and numerous scenic vistas.

A second major waterway within Hyde Park is the Gihon River, which originates in Eden and flows through Hyde Park into the Lamoille in Johnson. In 2009, LCPC produced a river corridor plan to identity protection and restoration projects along the Gihon within the three towns. This report was based on Phase I and II geomorphic assessments completed in 2005 and 2006. A similar analysis was performed for Centerville Brook, a tributary of the Lamoille, with a watershed of 9.22 square miles in the center of Hyde Park. That corridor plan was completed in 2010, based on assessments conducted during the spring and summer of 2006.

Other notable streams and rivers within Hyde Park include the Green River, which flows out of the Green River Reservoir into Wolcott, Rodman Brook in central Hyde Park, and Beaver Meadow Brook in northern Hyde Park. All of the above-mentioned streams and rivers are part of the Lamoille River watershed, within the Lake Champlain basin.

Riparian Habitats

Vegetation—in the form of trees, shrubs, grasses and herbs situated along stream banks and river corridors—provides food and shelter for many wildlife species. To this end, the Gihon River, Centerville Brook, Green River and Baldwin Brook corridors have each been noted as important deer habitats. These and other riparian corridors should be preserved both as a matter of wildlife protection, as well as for the purposes of preventing sedimentation and maintaining stream bank stability.

Significant Natural Features

In a 1991 report, *Waterfalls, Cascades and Gorges of Lamoille County, Vermont*, the upper and lower falls on the Green River in Hyde Park were identified as having regional significance. Owned by the Village of Morrisville Water and Light Department, these falls were once considered threatened, due to the potential development of a dam on the upper falls. However, there are presently no plans for additional hydro-electric dam development in Hyde Park.

Lakes & Ponds

Hyde Park has numerous lakes and ponds scattered across town. The largest, Green River Reservoir, has been preserved as a Vermont State Park and is open to the public for camping, fishing and non-motorized boating. As further described in Historic & Scenic Resources and Land Use chapters, Hyde Park has implemented a viewshed overlay district designed to preserve the serene, wilderness quality of

the area. In 2006, the Hyde Park Planning Commission and Green River Reservoir Viewshed Overlay District received an award from the Vermont Planner's Association (VPA) for Outstanding Planning Project of the Year. Other noteworthy bodies of water within Hyde Park include Zack Woods Pond (also under conservation), Beaver Lake, Clear Pond, Collins Pond, Mud Pond, Perch Pond and Schoffield Pond.



The Green River Reservoir
Photo by: Over and Above Aerial Photography

Wetlands

The term “wetland” is used to identify areas otherwise commonly referred to as swamps, marshes, bogs or fens. Generally, wetlands share three basic characteristics:

- 1) The presence of water at or near the ground surface;
- 2) The presence of water-dependant plants occurring on site; and
- 3) Common types of soil, which have formed as a result of the presence of water.

Wetlands serve many important ecological functions including stormwater retention, erosion control, ground water recharge and wildlife habitat. Wetlands throughout the country have been inventoried by the U.S. Department of the Interior, producing a set of National Wetland Inventory maps for every municipality. These maps were created using aerial photographs and are useful in determining the general character of a broader area. In cases where detailed wetland characteristics for individual parcels are desired, a site visit and survey are usually necessary.

Wetland regulations were first adopted in Vermont in 1990, later consolidated into legislation under Act 115 in 2004 and last amended effective August 1, 2010. The current system establishes a three-tier

wetland classification system. Designated Class I wetlands are considered the most environmentally significant and therefore receive the highest level of protection under state law, requiring a 100-foot vegetated buffer between any adjacent land development. There are currently no Class I wetlands located in Hyde Park. Rather, most local wetlands are designated as Class II—protected from development by a 50-foot buffer. Lastly, Class III wetlands are those wetlands with no delineated buffer.

Groundwater

Groundwater from soil pores, springs and aquifers supplies the majority of drinking water consumed in rural areas of Vermont. These sources are replenished through rain and other surface waters, which percolate through soil. Any activity that introduces contaminants directly into the ground (such as underground storage tanks, septic disposal fields or agricultural activities) can pollute groundwater. Since many sources of surface water also pass underground, the same is true of a variety of surficial contaminants. In the end, groundwater quality impacts all Hyde Park residents. Homes and businesses outside the Village water service area rely upon wells as a main source of drinking water. The Village Water and Light Department also uses groundwater from the spring-fed Fitch Hill Reservoir as the primary source for the municipal water supply. Consequently, maintaining the integrity of local groundwater systems is vital to the continued health and prosperity of Hyde Park.

The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) is responsible for the Vermont Source Protection Program, which is used to protect the state's public water sources. As noted in the Public Services & Community Facilities chapter, Hyde Park's two publicly owned water systems (the Village system and Hyde Park Fire District #1) are both protected by Wellhead Protection Areas (WHPA) to guard against water contamination.

Floodplain & Flood Hazard Areas

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) defines a floodplain as an area of land adjacent to rivers and streams that is subject to recurring inundation. Development within floodplains can have many potentially damaging consequences, as construction may obstruct the natural flow of water or displace soil and raise base flood elevations. To better protect life and property in Hyde Park, the Town and Village have adopted flood hazard regulations within their respective zoning bylaws. These regulations ensure that Hyde Park residents remain eligible to enroll in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), which enables homeowners to purchase federally subsidized flood insurance.

Hyde Park's flood hazard regulations prohibit all development within the FEMA-delineated floodway and limits development within the floodway fringe (a sub-section of FEMA's Special Flood Hazard Area) to a conditional use. These boundaries have been established in accordance with the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM), last amended in 1981. At the present time, there is no timetable for the release of updated FIRMs, or official digital FIRMs (DFIRMs) for Lamoille County. Residents interested in viewing FIRMs for the Town and Village of Hyde Park are encouraged to visit the FEMA Map Service Center at <http://msc.fema.gov>.

Wildlife Resources

Fisheries

The *Vermont Guide to Fishing*, published by the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department, indicates the Lamoille River supports all species of warm and cold water sport fish found throughout the state, with

the exception of lake trout and smelt. The upper reaches of the Gihon River also support rainbow, brown and brook trout, while the Green River Reservoir is noted as a warm water fishery supporting perch, bass, bullheads and pan fish. The Fish & Wildlife Department owns approximately five acres of stream bank near the Johnson town line, for public fishing access on the Lamoille River in Hyde Park.

Critical Habitats

Hyde Park has an abundance of wildlife diversity and preserved critical habitats, most notably that of whitetail deer and bear. Vermont's deer require a protected habitat to endure severe winter weather and heavy snowfall. Winter deer yards provide two features important to whitetail deer survival: shelter and food. Statewide, under average winter conditions, between 6 and 8-percent of Vermont's forestland is suitable for winter deer range. Wintering areas do not change substantially between years and can be used by generations of deer over several decades, if appropriate habitat conditions are maintained. Currently, mapped deer wintering yards in Hyde Park exist east of the North Village and on the north shoreline of the Green River Reservoir. Bears also require large areas of uninterrupted forestland for breeding and travel between seasonal habitats. The Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department prepared a map in 1989 to indicate general areas of black bear habitat throughout the state. According to this map, Hyde Park has bear habitat along its northern and eastern highlands, surrounding the Green River Reservoir.

The Vermont Non-game and Natural Heritage Program of the Fish & Wildlife Department maintain an ongoing effort to identify and map special natural features in towns across the state. These maps show the locations of rare plant and animal species, significant wildlife communities and other natural or fragile ecological areas. The revised Critical Habitat map for Hyde Park (**Appendix III**, Map 21) identifies these features in relation to conserved public lands in town.

On a regulatory basis, Act 250 criterion 8(A) mandates that development activity must not “imperil necessary wildlife habitat or endangered species in the immediate area.” According to the Vermont Natural Resource Board (NRB), the habitat must be critical to a life stage of a species and be clearly identifiable—as in the case of the mapped deer wintering and bear habitat.

Working Landscape

The term “working landscape” has been used many times in relation to Hyde Park's economy, natural resource base and scenic appeal. *Smart Growth Vermont* defines the working landscape as “lands actively used for the production of food, fiber, earth products and outdoor recreation,” including cropland, woodlots, orchards, sugarbushes, pasture, plant nurseries, quarries and fee-based recreation. As this description suggests, a vast amount of land in Hyde Park contributes to the broader working landscape.



Applecheek Farm
Photo by: Applecheek Farm

Agriculture

Farming remains a rich part of the working landscape, cultural heritage and economy of Hyde Park. According to the 2010 Grand List, there were 13 parcels in town classified as farms. Data from the 2007 Census of Agriculture indicated Lamoille County farms produced nearly \$21.6 million in agricultural products annually, or an average of \$72,000 per farm. This represented more than a 66-percent increase in value over the 2002 Census of Agriculture.

With the increasing popularity of community-supported agriculture (CSA) shares and the local foods movement, high-quality and locally grown farm products have become a staple of many Vermont communities. To diversify the local economic base and ensure the continued viability of farming in Hyde Park, the Planning Commission encourages the expansion of agritourism and other alternative forms of agriculture on working farms.

Forest-Based Industries

The extraction of forest-based products, including timber and maple syrup, represents a means of converting natural resources into value-added products that can be manufactured, marketed and sold locally. When managed in consultation with a professionally developed forest management plan, these processes can be beneficial to the long-term health of forests. The Planning Commission encourages the sustainable harvest of forest-based products, in accordance with regulations established by the Vermont Division of Forestry.

In addition to resource extraction, forests provide an opportunity for hunting, fishing, hiking, snow-shoeing and Nordic skiing, among other forms of recreation. These activities contribute an untold amount to the local economy, while enhancing the experience of residents and visitors alike.



Elmore Mountain and Hyde Park's Working Landscape

Use Value Appraisal Program

The Use Value Appraisal (UVA) program was established by the Vermont Legislature in 1977, in recognition of the fact that tax pressures placed on farm and forest lands were contributing to their development and fragmentation. The UVA program allows farm and forest land to be taxed on resource production value, rather than the value of the parcel's development potential. Despite the fact that it was a popular program statewide, the growth of UVA enrollment was curtailed by a decrease in funding in 1991 and 1992, and an enrollment moratorium in tax years 1992 and 1993. During the moratorium, property owners enrolled in the UVA program were allowed to withdraw from the program without penalty. Since that period, local enrollment has steadily increased. In 1993, 51 properties (approximately 25-percent of Hyde Park's total acreage), were enrolled in UVA. As of 2009, that number had grown to 99 parcels, including more than 37-percent of the town's total acreage.



*Winter Agritourism in Hyde Park
Photo by: Applecheek Farm*

Implementing Principles of Smart Growth as a Means of Resource Conservation

As described within the ensuing Land Use and Implementation chapters, the Town and Village of Hyde Park support the implementation of the principles of Smart Growth as a means of encouraging economic and environmental sustainability, and preserving Hyde Park's natural resource base. According to the organization *Smart Growth America*, the core of this land use philosophy is "building urban, suburban and rural communities with housing and transportation choices near jobs, shops and schools." Additionally, relevant "Smart Growth Principles," as defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency include:

- Mix land uses;
- Take advantage of compact building design;
- Create walkable neighborhoods;
- Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective; and,
- Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas.

This plan seeks to further each of the principles above, as a means of maintaining Hyde Park's appeal as an attractive place to live, work and invest. While much of the emphasis surrounding Smart Growth relates to creating vibrant downtowns, an equally important byproduct of the philosophy is the preservation of farms, fields and forests surrounding our villages and growth centers. For Hyde Park, implementing policies that encourage the application of Smart Growth in community-wide land use planning, site design and the development review process represents a legitimately effective natural

resource conservation strategy. The underpinnings of Smart Growth have positive implications for all sectors of the community; however, the extent to which sound planning serves as a proactive preservation tool is often understated.

Goals, Policies & Recommendations

Hyde Park's natural resource base and working landscape represent a vital economic driver, tourism attraction and quality of life amenity. Today, residents of Hyde Park expect development to avoid fragile habitats, and to protect water quality and soil resources. The town's zoning bylaws and subdivision regulations establish standards that developers must follow in order to protect and maintain the integrity of these resources.

Goals

- To retain working farm and forestland as a viable part of Hyde Park's economy, landscape and culture.
- To promote public awareness and appreciation of Hyde Park's natural resources and to balance the conservation and protection of these assets with ecologically sound development practices and economic needs.

Policies

- Hyde Park encourages the ongoing involvement of residents in determining the appropriate balance between resource protection and development.
- Land use and development activities should minimize and, where possible, eliminate negative impacts on water resources, such as increased stormwater runoff, erosion, sedimentation, habitat loss and contamination.
- Development on slopes greater than 30-percent is prohibited.
- Further fragmentation of productive farm and forestland is discouraged.
- The use of Accepted Management Practices (AMPs) by agricultural and forestry operations is required, as established by the state. For its part, Hyde Park encourages the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs), to optimally protect soil resources from erosion and degradation.
- A naturally vegetated buffer should be maintained around all perennial streams and rivers.
- Rare, threatened and endangered species and their habitats will be protected and preserved through appropriate conservation techniques. Where appropriate, a buffer area should be designed and maintained to limit habitat encroachment.
- Hyde Park supports long-term, multi-use land management strategies.
- Hyde Park supports working farms and productive forests as integral parts of the local economy, landscape and culture.

Recommendations

- The Selectboard and Village Trustees should work with the appropriate state agencies and conservation organizations to retain and, if necessary, acquire by purchase access to public waters.
- The Planning Commission should continue to support efforts of organizations to purchase development rights and implement other conservation strategies, provided the lands protected are consistent with the objectives of this plan.

Chapter 9: Historic & Scenic Resources

The Town of Hyde Park was chartered in 1781 and first settled in 1787. It is named after Captain Jedidiah Hyde—a Revolutionary War veteran and one of the town’s first settlers—who surveyed Hyde Park’s boundaries in 1788, after arriving from Norwich, Connecticut. The ensuing two-plus centuries of human activity and natural events have left the community with a unique and historic built environment of dispersed settlements. This mixture of farm land and small hamlets, nestled between the ridgelines of the Green Mountains, creates a rolling landscape of scenic vistas. The blend of historic sites and picturesque natural scenery also contributes to Hyde Park’s



The Hyde Park Opera House (c.1920) on Main Street

character as a traditional New England town, with a vibrant village center surrounded by rural countryside. This historical settlement pattern has long been a source of pride for Hyde Park residents, as an 1897 passage from the local newspaper, the *News and Citizen* pro-claimed:

“There are few villages in Vermont that can compare with Hyde Park in healthfulness and beauty of situation. It is a natural sanitarium. Situated on an elevated terrace of sand ground, it secures perfect drainage and is fanned by fresh breezes and mountain air... It possesses that air of neatness, thrift, and refinement so characteristic of the progressive New England village” (Hyde Park—Vermont: An Historical Story, 1976).

This sense of place once applied not only to the incorporated Village of Hyde Park, but to other historic settlements, such as Garfield, Centerville and the North Village. While the commercial and administrative activities in the community have long since centralized in the village center, the outlying historic sites remain an essential part of Hyde Park’s fabric. Unless otherwise noted, the information contained within this chapter was derived from the compilation *Hyde Park—Vermont: An Historical Story*, published by the Town of Hyde Park and its Bicentennial Committee in 1976.

Significant Dates in the History of Hyde Park

1780-81	Grant and charter
1787	First settlements in the southwest corner of Hyde Park
1804	Three school districts active within Hyde Park
1836	Formation of Lamoille County; Hyde Park designated county shire
1857	Opening of Lamoille Central Academy, Hyde Park’s eventual unified school district
1873	Arrival of the first railroad train in Hyde Park
1882	Telephone arrives to Morrisville
1895	Incorporation of Hyde Park Village; electricity and streetlights installed in the village
1898	Construction of the Lamoille Central Academy building in the village
1904	Hyde Park Fire Department founded

1910	Great Hyde Park Village fire
1927	Great Flood of 1927
1951	Current Hyde Park Elementary School building constructed as an addition to LCA
1956	Construction of the village bypass
1967	Closing of Lamoille Central Academy; opening of Lamoille Union High School
1973	Construction of the current Town Office building
1980	Hyde Park population rises to 2,021 residents—a 50-percent increase over the previous Census count and the largest single-decade increase in the town’s history.
1994	Major addition to Hyde Park Elementary School, including four classrooms and a library
2006	Hyde Park receives Village Center designation from the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation

Historic Settlements

Village of Hyde Park

The first streets through the present Village of Hyde Park were not constructed until after 1800, nearly two decades after settlers first arrived in the southwest corner of town. In fact, Hyde Park’s first store and post office were established in a residence on the former Craftsbury Road, approximately one mile northeast of the village.

Hyde Park grew rapidly through the 1830s, becoming the shire of Lamoille County upon the county’s incorporation in 1835-36. As part of this process, administrative functions and the county courthouses were established in the village, where they remain to this day. While Hyde Park Village was not officially incorporated as a municipality until 1895, the town center was a bustling hub of commerce from the early-1800s onward; in 1887, twelve trains stopped in Hyde Park station daily. At various times during the 19th and early-20th centuries, Hyde Park Village was also home to a bank, hotel, drug store, newspaper publisher, black-smith, barbershop, butcher and market. The fate of the village was substantially altered by the construction of a bypass in 1956, which re-routed what is presently Route 15 and 100 around Main Street. As a result, Hyde Park presently enjoys the benefit of safe and pedestrian friendly town center, conveniently accessible to the region’s major highways.



The Lamoille County Courthouse (c.1911)

In April 1910, Hyde Park Village was devastated by a fire, which began in the county jail and spread along the tree-lined Main Street, destroying more than a dozen businesses, residences and community buildings. In the wake of the fire, the village was rebuilt, with many of today’s prominent structures dating back to this early-20th century reconstruction period.

In 1981, the Vermont Division of Historic Preservation surveyed historic resources within the village and designated a historic district, encompassing all but a dozen structures. The survey provided detail on several buildings of historical significance, including:

- Lamoille County Courthouse (1911; Main Street)
- Page Mansion (1893; Main Street)
- Lamoille Central Academy (1898; corner of Depot and Upper Main Street)
- Lanpher Memorial Library (1916; Main Street)
- Hyde Park Opera House (c. 1920; Main Street)
- Screener's Ink Building (1855; Main Street)
- P.H. Edwards Building (c. 1893; Main Street)
- Noyes-Sargent House (1860; Depot Street)
- Hyde-French House (1850; Main Street)
- Childs-Baker House (c. 1850; corner of Commonwealth and Main Street)

To stimulate an appropriate balance of historic preservation and economic development, the Village Trustees voted in 2012 to enroll the Village of Hyde Park in the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street program. This program consists of three core support mechanisms: a four-point strategy for preservation-based economic development, a network of more than 2,000 linked communities and a national support center.

The North Village

North Hyde Park, or the North Village, was first settled in 1820 as a small farming outpost on the banks of the Gihon River. In the ensuing decades, it grew to become a center of commercial activity for the surrounding agricultural communities. During the 19th and early-20th century, the North Village evolved into a center for lumber processing and manufacturing. During the 1950s and 60s, the former Bullard Lumber Company, located on Ferry Street, was the largest golf tee manufacturer in the world, producing more than one-half million tees per day.

Also designated an historic district in 1981, the Division for Historic Preservation noted:

“North Hyde Park's heyday came with the construction of several sawmills, a tub factory, and a number of related wood products industries during the years 1865-1875. The village tripled in size and began to enjoy such amenities of town living as doctors, churches, hotels, and a flourishing social life. A substantial majority of the buildings in the present historic district date from this decade of prosperity.”



North Hyde Park Post Office

Perhaps the North Village's most prominent historic building is the Grange Hall, formerly Valley Hall, constructed in 1910 and later purchased by Gihon Valley Grange #379—an association of local farmers. The Grange Hall has historically hosted an array of community events, including Fourth of July celebrations, minstrel shows and plays. In 2010, the Hyde Park Historical Society installed new front wall for the building and added a new porch, with a handicapped-accessible ramp.

Over the last decade, the North Village has experienced an influx of economic activity, associated with the growth of the North Hyde Park Industrial Park. The park currently has eight additional lots available for development. When the build-out is complete, North Hyde Park will be among the largest hubs of manufacturing and light industry in Lamoille County.



The historic Grange Hall in North Hyde Park

Centerville

The village of Centerville, settled along the banks of Centerville Brook, is where the center of economic activity in Hyde Park was originally expected to develop. Although Centerville was once home to a Post Office and several mills, it gradually transitioned from industry to agriculture, and later to the quiet residential area it is today.

Garfield

Situated in the northeast corner of Hyde Park, the village of Garfield was a prosperous settlement during the late-1800s, with a general store, post office, school and two sawmills. Around 1920, after the loss of one sawmill to fire, residents began to leave Garfield; eventually their abandoned farms reverted to wilderness. The area remains thickly wooded and sparsely developed to this day.

Historic School Districts

With a population dispersed among several smaller hamlets and villages, Hyde Park has had no fewer than fifteen different school districts over the course of its history. A listing of historic schools in Hyde Park can be found below (date of closing in parentheses, where available):

- Hyde Park Village School
- North Hyde Park (1966)
- Cleveland Corners School (1898)
- Wiswell/Doty School (1940)
- Whitcom/Center School (1946)
- Garfield School (1953)
- Plains School (1907)
- Centerville School (1945)
- Bundy School (1938)
- Greenfield School (1875)
- Barnes School
- Battle Row School
- McKinistry Hill School
- Denio School

Scenic Resources

The scenic resources of a community are largely subjective and therefore more difficult to define than historic sites, or other types of quantifiable resources. Nonetheless, Hyde Park's rolling landscape of farms and forests, set against the backdrop of the Green Mountains, creates an alluring four-season atmosphere. Among the town's most treasured scenic areas are the aforementioned Green River Reservoir and Zak Woods Pond.



*The Fitch Hill Inn (L) and The Governor's House Inn (R) in Hyde Park
Photo by: John Rohleder*

While Hyde Park accommodates visitors for skiing, hiking and other forms of outdoor recreation, perhaps the greatest attraction of all is the legendary fall foliage. Visitors from across the world flock to Lamoille County each September and October to take-in the scenic autumn panoramas. In fact, foliage season is the busiest time of year for Hyde Park's two bed-and-breakfast accommodations.



*Scenic Fall Foliage
Photo by: Applecheek Farm*

Goals, Policies & Recommendations

Artifacts from Hyde Park's past are scattered across the community in the form of historic buildings and sites. These historic resources not only provide a physical link to the past, but also enrich the town's scenic landscape. Protecting these resources can be difficult, as regulations disproportionately impact a small number of property owners, while the broader public benefits from the preserved scenic environment. Balancing the rights of individual property owners with the desire of the community to maintain the attractive, scenic nature of Hyde Park will be important as the community continues to welcome new residents.

Goal

- To manage growth in a way that protects and promotes the Hyde Park's historic and scenic assets, without unduly infringing upon the rights of landowners.

Policies

- Hyde Park recognizes the contribution of historic buildings and scenic landscapes to the local economy and quality of life enjoyed by residents.
- Hyde Park recognizes the importance of the Lamoille River and Green River Reservoir, and their enduring scenic and recreational values.
- Hyde Park supports activities that help to maintain and enhance the local working landscape and natural beauty of the community.
- Hyde Park encourages the maintenance and continued functional use of historic structures, sites and areas.
- Development within any designated historic district should be in character with the surrounding architecture.
- Telecommunication towers and other large, conspicuous structures should be designed and carefully sited to minimize the impact on the scenic character of Hyde Park.
- In accordance with local zoning bylaws, development within the Green River Reservoir Viewshed must be designed and sited so as not to negatively impact the scenic quality of the area.

Recommendations

- The Planning Commission should periodically review the tower provisions of the zoning bylaws to ensure scenic impacts are addressed in any development proposal.

Chapter 10: Land Use Plan

For much of the 20th century, land development patterns in Hyde Park largely mirrored the Vermont tradition of a compact village center, surrounded by rural countryside. Over the last four decades, however, almost all residential growth has occurred in outlying areas of town. Based on recent economic and demographic trends across the region, Hyde Park anticipates continued residential growth in the years to come. To ensure that future development is well-planned and compatible with the traditional landscape of farms, forestland and neighborhoods surrounding a vibrant village center, the Town maintains zoning bylaws and subdivision regulations; while the Village enforces only zoning bylaws.

Town Zoning Bylaws

The Town of Hyde Park first adopted zoning bylaws in 1988. They have since been amended several times, most recently in 2010. Generally, these bylaws encourage compact, mixed-uses within traditional village areas, with permitted densities decreasing outward from centers of activity. This design is intended to encourage efficient, economical development, while preserving the natural and scenic resources of the community. Hyde Park's overall zoning philosophy is based on sound land use principles and these regulations continue to promote orderly growth. It is the intent of this chapter to confirm the continued applicability of this approach, while encouraging a few targeted amendments that could work to better implement the broader vision of this plan.

As Hyde Park continues to grow, the Planning Commission should regularly review local development trends, in light of their conformance with this plan. If warranted, more substantial zoning revisions may be proposed to reflect changes in Hyde Park's ability to extend and maintain adequate public services. Presently, the Town's zoning bylaws contain the following land use districts:

Rural Residential 2

The Rural Residential 2 (RR2) district includes those areas of town best suited to rural, medium density, single-family residential development (one dwelling unit per two acres). This district can be generally described as covering the southwest corner of town. Multi-family dwellings, when compatible with the character of surrounding neighborhoods, may be permitted as conditional uses. To promote more efficient site designs and maximize flexibility for landowners, the Planning Commission encourages Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) within the RR2 district.

Additionally, mobile home parks, and commercial and industrial developments may be permitted, provided they are consistent with the land use goals set forth in this plan. Per Vermont statutes, all normal agricultural and forestry uses are allowed within the RR2 and all other zoning districts herein described.

Rural Residential 5

The Rural Residential 5 (RR5) district includes those areas of town best suited to rural, low density, single-family residential development (one dwelling unit per five acres). This district general includes lands north of the North Village and lands immediately north of the RR2 district. While all conditional uses specified for the RR2 district are also applicable in RR5 zones, lower densities are required to decrease the possibility of development conflicting with the traditional working landscapes

North Hyde Park/Garfield

The North Hyde Park/Garfield district includes areas surrounding the North Village and Garfield, and is intended to permit small retail, commercial and industrial enterprises (as appropriate for village settings). Residential development is also permitted at a maximum clustering density of one dwelling unit per half acre throughout the district.

North Hyde Park Industrial & Commercial

The North Hyde Park Industrial & Commercial district is designed to encourage industrial and commercial development adjacent to Route 100 and the North Village, to capitalize on the presence of public water service and three-phase electricity. Due to its proximity to the Hyde Park Fire District #1 WHPA, the handling and storage of hazardous materials should be carefully monitored in accordance with the federal Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA).



N. Hyde Park Industrial Park from Route 100

Shoreland

The Shoreland district includes lands within 500-feet of the Green River Reservoir and Zack Woods Pond as measured at mean water level (mwl). Development in the district is limited to preserve the natural wilderness surrounding these water bodies and the unique recreational opportunities they afford. Very low density seasonal camps may be appropriate (one dwelling unit per ten acres), provided they are constructed with full wastewater treatment facilities; commercial and industrial development is prohibited.

Conservation-10

The Conservation-10 district includes lands east and northeast of the RR5 district. These lands are characterized by steep slopes, shallow soils, limited road access and are generally far from public services. The area is best suited for forest and wildlife management, agriculture, recreation, and seasonal or very low density residential development (maximum of one dwelling unit per 10 acres). Any conditional use must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the DRB that the property is accessible to emergency service providers during occupation or operation.

Conservation-27

The Conservation-27 district includes lands within Green River Reservoir State Park and other areas of town owned by the Morrisville Water and Light Department, in association with their Green River Reservoir hydro-electric dam. These lands are also characterized by steep slopes, shallow soils, limited road access and are generally far from public services. Like the Conservation-10 district, the area is best suited for forest and wildlife management, agriculture, recreation and seasonal dwellings (maximum of one dwelling unit per 27 acres). Similarly, any conditional use must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the DRB that the property is accessible to emergency service providers during occupation or operation.

Wellhead Protection Areas

The Wellhead Protection Area (WHPA) district applies to lands adjacent to the sources supplying the Village of Hyde Park municipal water system and Hyde Park Fire District #1. This includes an aquifer protection area surrounding Fitch Hill Reservoir and a 200-foot radius around the well used by the fire district. In order to thoroughly protect these public water sources, the WHPA district restricts any land uses that could potentially compromise surface or groundwater quality.

Green River Reservoir Viewshed & Flood Hazard Area Overlays

The Green River Reservoir Viewshed and Flood Hazard Area Overlay districts, as previously described within this plan, are important regulatory tools for preserving property rights and environmental quality throughout town. As overlays, these districts provide additional protections on the lands to which they apply, without changing the underlying zoning.

Town Subdivision Regulations

Hyde Park first adopted subdivision regulations in 2009, to ensure that any new lots created are accessible to public services and have legal access to a public roadway. Additionally, the Town's subdivision regulations help promote orderly community growth, by encouraging site designs that lead to the preservation of agricultural and meadowland. Whenever possible, the Planning Commission encourages flexibility within these development standards, through the permitting of PUDs. PUDs allow the Hyde Park DRB to modify dimensional requirements simultaneous with site plan approval, to permit layouts that maximize open space, make efficient use of infrastructure and create desirable living spaces. As development trends dictate, the subdivision regulations should also be reviewed to maintain compatibility with local zoning bylaws, and the goals and policies expressed within this plan.

Village Zoning Bylaws

The Village of Hyde Park has traditionally maintained separate zoning bylaws. These bylaws contain four land use districts (as described below), which are consistent with the Town's general zoning and land use philosophy.

Commercial-Residential (CRD)

The Commercial-Residential District (CRD) covers the central village core along Main Street and the immediate side streets. The CRD is designed to permit shops, offices and one or two-family residential dwellings, consistent with the village's historic character. Other uses, such as residential structures with three or more dwelling units, fuel stations and lodging may be permitted as conditional uses.

Residential District (RSD)

The Residential District (RSD) extends to those lands south of Route 15/100 surrounding the CRD. The objective of RSD is to encourage residential development in areas within walking distance of the village center, which can utilize existing infrastructure such as municipal water, sewer and sidewalks.

Small Industry-Residential (SIR)

The SIR district applies to a small portion of the village east of Centerville Brook and south of East Main Street and Route 15/100. It is intended to allow for small-scale industries, compatible with the village center and nearby commercial activity in bordering Morrystown. Industry is permitted within SIR as a conditional use, provided there are no adverse impacts associated with noise, odor or visual blight.

Low Density Residential-Agriculture (LRA)

All lands north of Route 15/100 within the village limits are zoned Low Density Residential-Agriculture (LRA), to promote agriculture and associated residential uses outside the mixed-use core. The district mandates a minimum lot size of 0.5 acres for properties connected to municipal water and sewer, and 1.5 acres for properties with on-site water and sewer systems. The low-density nature of the LRA district also serves to preserve the scenic, rural landscape north of Route 15/100, which is the first thing travelers see approaching Hyde Park from Morristown and points south.



Inset map of Hyde Park Village featuring Village Center boundary, Historic District boundary and partial extent of zoning districts.

Consolidation of Town & Village Zoning and Subdivision Regulations

At the present time, the shared DRB for the Town and Village must interpret and enforce a 90-page Town zoning bylaw, a 37-page set of Town subdivision regulations and 60-page Village zoning bylaw—all intended to implement a shared vision for the community. For the sake of clarity and efficiency, the next logical progression to follow the adoption of a joint Town and Village Plan would be to merge the Town and Village zoning into a unified development bylaw that would also extend subdivision regulations to the village.

Combining the Town and Village zoning would provide the Planning Commission an opportunity to address a range of development-related issues alluded to within this plan. Examples include strengthening the Flood Hazard Overlay and potentially incorporating fluvial erosion regulations; refining definitions of permitted versus conditional uses; as well as removing a provision that allows for

the administrative approval of up to three clustered one-acre lots within any zoning district. The latter provision is inconsistent with the land use policies set forth in this plan, as it encourages the fragmentation of forestland and open space.

Public Lands

In August 2009, the Hyde Park Planning Commission drafted a letter of support in favor of granting a tax reprieve to aid in conservation of the area known as Zack Woods. The letter states that Zack Woods and Zack Woods Pond are a critical habitat for numerous rare plant and animal species, and that preserving the land is consistent with the goals and policies of the *2005 Hyde Park Municipal Development Plan*. This action was approved at Town Meeting in March 2010. There are many additional areas of Hyde Park under public ownership and therefore not part of the municipal tax base. These areas include:

- Green River Reservoir State Park: A Vermont State Park, maintained by the Department of Forest, Parks, and Recreation (described in greater detail in preceding chapters of this plan).
- Cricket Hill Trails: Owned by Lamoille North Supervisory Union.
- Moss Woods: An undeveloped, wooded 6-acre tract within the village center owned by the Village of Hyde Park.

Future Land Use Impacts

In addition to trends occurring within Hyde Park, the town must also adapt to broader development trends that impact communities across the region. To this end, there are several variables that should be closely monitored as the Planning Commission, Selectboard and Village Trustees review the Comprehensive Development Plan, and zoning and subdivision regulations in the years to come:

Transportation Infrastructure

As noted in the Transportation chapter, the planned Route 100 Alternate Truck Route stands to fundamentally change driving patterns, both through Hyde Park and across Lamoille County. When complete, automobile connectivity between Route 15 and points south along Route 100 will be greatly improved. Circulation at the intersection of these two highways also recently improved, with the completion of a roundabout in late-2011. Ultimately, the combined effect of these transportation infrastructure improvements will make Hyde Park more accessible to recreational amenities and economic opportunities available in Stowe and Waterbury.

Growth of the Surrounding Region

According to the Census Bureau, Lamoille County ranked as the second fastest growing county in Vermont (5.3-percent) between 2000 and 2010. Neighboring Chittenden (6.1-percent) and Franklin (5.1-percent) Counties ranked first and fourth respectively in rate of growth, and first and second in total population added. Overall, the combined growth of Chittenden, Franklin and Lamoille counties accounted for more than 80-percent of Vermont's net population growth during the previous decade. These three counties were also among the fastest growing during the 1990s. This concentrated population increase can, in part, be attributed to the stability of the greater-Chittenden County labor market. During the recent recession, Chittenden County maintained one of the lowest unemployment rates among all counties in New England. As Hyde Park is within an hour commute to much of Chittenden County, additional population and economic growth within that region will likely bring new residents and visitors to town.

Subdivision & Parcelization Trends

While the population of Hyde Park increased by 26-percent between 1990 and 2010, the number of housing units increased by more than 42-percent over the same period. A similar trend has been observed across Lamoille County, as average household size has decreased and more residences have been built to serve as seasonal homes. According to a study published by the Vermont Natural Resource Council, 60-percent of land within Hyde Park is owned in parcels greater than 50 acres. As much of town is zoned for two acre residential lots, this leaves Hyde Park with expansive build-out potential. While a true, complete build-out is unlikely to ever occur, the Planning Commission should closely follow building permit trends and adapt local regulations, as necessary, to prevent the fragmentation of forests and Hyde Park's rural landscape.

Compatibility with the Region and Surrounding Communities

While Vermont Statutes delegate local planning authority to municipalities, Hyde Park recognizes that planning also takes place within a regional context. In light of this fact, the town is committed to ensuring that all local planning efforts are compatible with the comprehensive plans of neighboring communities throughout the region.

The *Lamoille County Regional Plan (2006-14)*, drafted and adopted by the Lamoille County Planning Commission, is based on the principle of local control. As affirmed throughout this plan, Hyde Park is actively engaged in a planning process that ensures local control is exercised in guiding future land use decisions in the Town and Village. Additionally, both this plan and the regional plan provide a framework of goals and policy statements that are aimed at promoting orderly growth and sustainable development. Future compatibility with regional planning efforts will be assured through the work of the Hyde Park Planning Commission and the Town and Village's representation on the Lamoille County Planning Commission's Board of Directors.

Hyde Park shares a boundary with five municipalities—the towns of Craftsbury, Eden, Johnson, Morristown and Wolcott. Pursuant to 24 VSA § 4381, each bordering municipality maintains a duly adopted municipal development plan. During the preparation of this comprehensive plan, each of the neighboring plans was reviewed to ensure compatibility. The Hyde Park Planning Commission is also open to collaborating with communities across the region in the preparation of supplemental plans and special studies. In 2010-11, the Planning Commission worked with LCPC in the creation of a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) for Hyde Park and Johnson. Hyde Park will continue to explore opportunities for collaborative inter-community and regional planning efforts, as time and resources allow.

Goals, Policies & Recommendations

Hyde Park seeks to plan for orderly growth, so as to accommodate new residents and economic opportunities, while preserving the natural and historic character of the community. To achieve this vision, the Town regulates land uses through zoning and subdivision bylaws, while the Village maintains zoning of its own. These regulations are intended to guide sustainable development in a way that is compatible with the surrounding natural and built environments.

The Planning Commission recognizes that the factors influencing development trends today may be very different from those driving land use decisions in the future. Therefore, all local land use

regulations should be periodically reviewed to ensure their continued alignment with the community's vision for the future.

Goals

- To promote orderly growth, while maintaining Hyde Park's rural character and working landscape.
- To encourage creative site designs that preserve open space, while maximizing the efficiency of infrastructure and energy resources.
- To maintain land use regulations that are clear and unambiguous to all parties involved in the development review process.

Policies

- Hyde Park encourages land owners to participate in the Use Value Appraisal Program (current use) to help preserve productive farms and forests.
- The Planning Commission supports efforts of non-profit organizations to enroll land in conservation programs, so long as such efforts do not conflict with goals described in this plan.

Recommendations

- The Town and Village should embark on an effort to develop a unified development bylaw for all of Hyde Park to streamline the interpretation, administration and implementation of local land use regulations.
- Hyde Park should strengthen conditions of the Flood Hazard Overlay to discourage construction within mapped floodplains and fluvial erosion corridors.
- The Planning Commission should continue to explore incentives to encourage sustainable, low-impact development through the permitting of PUDs and by encouraging flexibility in the development review process.
- The Planning Commission should continue to monitor subdivision and parcelization trends, to ensure local zoning and subdivision regulations are enabling development to occur in manner consistent with the vision set forth in this plan.

Chapter 11: Plan Implementation

The previous chapters of this plan outlined goals, policies and recommendations for guiding future sustainable development in Hyde Park. While policies can be directly implemented by the municipal legislative body, the implementation of goals and recommendations requires an ongoing planning and community engagement process. This chapter is intended to identify available tools, strategies and opportunities that will assist the community in building to achieve its vision for the future.

Non-Regulatory Implementation

In addition to zoning and subdivision regulations (regulatory implementation tools), Hyde Park also maintains a five year capital plan, for the purposes of planning and phasing major capital expenditures. Capital budgeting is a non-regulatory implementation tool, which allows the Town and Village to prioritize where and how resources are allocated over the long-term. In the years to come, the Planning Commission should coordinate with the Selectboard and Village Trustees to ensure implementation priorities identified within this plan are funded, to the extent local resources allow.

Other Potential Implementation Strategies

Outside of Hyde Park's adopted regulatory and non-regulatory planning techniques, the Town and Village have the option of pursuing several other strategies for the implementation of municipal planning priorities. These include:

Special Studies

As economic and demographic trends shift, it may become necessary for Hyde Park to periodically re-assess the data and assumptions built into local land use policies. In such cases, a special inquiry such as a traffic impact study, infrastructure assessment or build-out analysis may be warranted to shed light on changing conditions. The LCPC provides resources to assist municipalities with a variety of short and long-term planning studies.

Purchase or Transfer of Development Rights

Vermont statutes (24 VSA § 4402-03) specifically authorize the exchange of development rights within a municipality, either through transfer or outright purchase. A transfer of development rights program (TDR) is a regulatory implementation tool, whereby permitted development densities from an identified "sending" zone can be sold to those in a designated "receiving" zone. Such a program can be used in coordination with local zoning, to encourage higher densities in designated regions without specifically prohibiting development in areas best suited for lower densities. Ultimately, a TDR program would only be practical should development pressure persist in outlying rural residential areas.

Alternatively, a purchase of development rights program (PDR) is a non-regulatory implementation strategy that provides opportunities for local government and non-profit organizations to purchase future development rights from a property, without impacting the current land use. A PDR program could be a highly effective tool in ensuring the preservation of farms, forests and open space, by providing willing landowners an incentive to maintain their working lands.

Advisory Commissions

Along with to the formation of an Energy Committee (Chapter 4), the Town and Village may oversee the creation of other advisory commissions to guide specialized areas of planning and development. Such

commissions could include, but are not limited to: design review, historic preservation, housing and conservation.

Targeted Implementation

In the last several years, municipal budgets across Vermont have been strained by the lagging economy and declining tax revenues. As a result, one of the most effective ways for communities to implement their local plans is to closely monitor state and federal funding opportunities and adjust planning priorities accordingly. While the level of funding for many programs is uncertain from budget year-to-budget year, the following grant sources have been available to assist Vermont municipalities achieve planning and development-related goals over the past several years:

- *U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG):* CDBG is a nationwide, federal program that provides funding for community development projects, downtown planning studies and site development. Eligible projects must directly benefit low to moderate income residents. More details are available at www.dhca.state.vt.us/VCDP/index.htm
- *Vermont Department of Economic, Housing, and Community Development, Municipal Planning Grant (MPG):* The MPG program, which supported this plan as well as several past planning projects in Hyde Park, is available to assist municipalities in the update of plans, bylaws and other local community development projects, such as infrastructure planning. Terms of the grants and statewide funding priorities vary from year-to-year, but the range of eligible planning activities under this program is typically broad. More details are available at: www.dhca.vt.us
- *Vermont Agency of Transportation, Transportation Enhancement Grants:* An annual fund allocated for projects that enhance local and regional transportation systems, including sidewalks, bike paths, scenic easements, and rail-trails. More details are available at: www.aot.state.vt.us
- *Vermont Division for Historic Preservation, Certified Local Government Program:* Provides grants for resource identification and planning; nominations to the National Register of Historic Places; as well as other planning, education and special studies. To qualify, municipalities must meet a minimum criteria established by the Division for Historic Preservation. More details are available at: www.historicvermont.org
- *Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation, Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF):* Awards funding to cover up to 50-percent of the costs of public recreation projects, including land acquisition for outdoor recreation and open space. More details are available at: www.vtfpr.org/reclwcf/index.cfm
- *Vermont Department of Buildings and General Services, Recreational Facilities Grant:* Open to municipalities and non-profit organizations for facility-based projects that provide, coordinate or organize recreation programs for youth or adults. More details are available at: <http://bgs.vermont.gov/>

- *Vermont Emergency Management Hazard Mitigation Grant Program*: Available to municipalities across the state, following a federal disaster declaration in any Vermont county. Eligible projects need not be related to recent storm damage, but must pass a FEMA-administered benefit-cost analysis. Competitive HMGP activities include home buy-outs, flood-proofing measures and erosion control.

On top of these programs, the Planning Commission and municipal staff should continually monitor funding opportunities that could support the implementation of local planning and community development goals.

Continuing Planning Process

Over the previous planning cycle (2006-10), a multitude of socio-political, economic and technological shifts altered Hyde Park's long-term development outlook. Many of these unpredictable, yet interrelated variables—including rising energy costs, a slumping global economy and the accelerated adoption of broadband technology—are poised to impact the community over the next five years as well. Meanwhile, a new wave of technological innovations and economic trends will influence long-term development prospects in entirely new ways.

To keep pace with the evolving range of factors influencing growth and development in the region, the Planning Commission remains engaged in an ongoing community planning and outreach process, as specified in 24 VSA § 4325. While long-term planning priorities are subject to change due to a variety of factors, the Planning Commission has identified the following tasks as areas to address in the coming years:

Town/Village Unified Development Bylaw

As described within the Land Use chapter, the Planning Commission will next prioritize a development bylaw revision, that will consolidate the now separate Town zoning and subdivision regulations, with the Village zoning. This project is intended not as a complete overhaul of the existing regulations, but to tighten and clarify the administration and interpretation of the bylaws for all parties.

Economic Development Planning

An overriding theme of this Comprehensive Development Plan is the desire of Hyde Park to stimulate economic development within the village. Through this plan, the Planning Commission, Selectboard and Village Trustees seek to convey that Hyde Park welcomes new enterprises and has municipal water and sewer capacity to support commercial uses. In recent months, the Town and Village have taken measures—such as executing a tax stabilization agreement—to lay a strong foundation for economic development. Other near-term steps, such as adopting a streamlined unified development bylaw, will likewise ensure a clear and efficient permitting process. With these pieces in place, Hyde Park can proceed with other economic development strategies, including marketing and business recruitment, to begin implementing this long-term vision.

Multi-modal Transportation

With the anticipated construction of the Lamoille Valley Rail in the late-2012, Hyde Park can anticipate a significant increase in bicyclists, pedestrians, snowmobilers and other recreational users passing through the community. Combined with the continued expansion of the village sidewalk network, residents and visitors will have access to more multi-modal and alternative transit opportunities than

ever before. The Town and Village should capitalize on this increased recreational activity, by conducting traffic and pedestrian counts, building trailside amenities (such as the trailhead facility design discussed within the Transportation chapter) and improving way-finding signage, to attract visitors to the village. Overall, the increase in alternative transit connectivity, both within the village and in relation to neighboring towns, will serve as tourism, recreation and economic development asset. Long-term transportation plans should seek to build upon and leverage this asset to the greatest extent possible.

Appendix I: Municipal Survey

At Town Meeting 2012, the Hyde Park Planning Commission distributed a survey to Town and Village residents to assess public opinion on a range of development and infrastructure-related issues relevant to this plan. The survey was also advertised on the Hyde Park municipal website and available online via Survey Monkey through the month of April. A total of 83 responses were collected. Survey questions and a breakdown of responses are shown below:

Question 1: Hyde Park should continue to invest in constructing more sidewalks in the Village.

Support (61.3%) Don't support (13.8%) No opinion (15.0%) Need more info (10.0%)

Question 2: Hyde Park should invest in facilities and amenities (such as trailhead parking, way-finding signage and bicycle racks) to attract visitors and promote use of the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail, for the benefit of local businesses and community organizations.

Support (66.2%) Don't support (13.0%) No opinion (9.1%) Need more info (11.7%)

Question 3: Hyde Park should promote commercial development within the Village core by allowing for flexibility, and a variety of conditional uses, within the zoning bylaws.

Support (63.3%) Don't support (7.6%) No opinion (0%) Need more info (29.1%)

Question 4: Hyde Park should consider expanding municipal water and sewer capacity to attract mixed-use and commercial development within the Village

Support (48.1%) Don't support (11.4%) No opinion (11.4%) Need more info (29.1%)

Question 5: Hyde Park should encourage more renewable energy generation in town, including small-scale wind and solar arrays, and hydro-electric dams.

Support (71.8%) Don't support (9.0%) No opinion (3.8%) Need more info (15.4%)

Question 6: Hyde Park should continue to strictly regulate the siting of telecommunications facilities, to mitigate potential negative aesthetic impacts.

Support (44.7%) Don't support (21.1%) No opinion (9.2%) Need more info (25.0%)

Question 7: Hyde Park should support efforts of state and non-profit organizations to conserve land.

Support (75.0%) Don't support (15.0%) No opinion (3.8%) Need more info (6.3%)

Question 8: The Town & Village Plan and local bylaws should discourage the subdivision of large tracts of farm and forest land into small residential lots. For example, by encouraging the clustering of home sites and/or allowing flexibility in the permitting of Planned Unit Developments (PUDs).

Support (54.5%) Don't support (26.0%) No opinion (5.2%) Need more info (14.3%)

Question 9: Hyde Park should support capital investments in infrastructure—such as water, sewer and transportation systems—that may encourage new residential or commercial growth, provided those costs are funded by the developer (i.e. a developer builds an access road and the new owners maintain it, rather than the town).

Support (66.3%) Don't support (8.4%) No opinion (7.4%) Need more info (18.1%)

Question 10: Hyde Park should make flood mitigation a planning and investment priority.

Support (45.6%) Don't support (12.7%) No opinion (17.7%) Need more info (24.1%)

Survey Analysis

While the survey represents only a small percentage of the overall population, the results help confirm many of the longstanding beliefs of the Hyde Park Planning Commission. Notably, that reinvestment and revitalization within the village; conserving farm and forestland; preserving the community's scenic landscape; and promoting multi-modal transit are all issues that enjoy broad support among Hyde Park residents.

Survey respondents also indicated that more public information is needed on issues such as expanding municipal water and sewer lines, amending the Village zoning bylaws, and planning for telecommunications and alternative energy facilities. While the former issue is on the distant horizon, the latter two should be confronted during the coming planning cycle. As noted in the Land Use chapter, amending the local zoning and progressing towards a unified development bylaw for both the Town and Village is a near-term priority. On the issue of telecommunications and alternative energy, the Planning Commission would be well-advised to consider working with LCPC and other partners to host a presentation on Section 248 and the Public Service Board permitting process. While, as discussed in the Energy chapter, Hyde Park does not appear to have the topography to support an industrial-scale wind farm, several large projects have either been proposed or are under construction at the time of this plan's adoption. Increasingly, alternative energy facilities—including not only wind,

but solar, hydro-electric and biomass—have emerged as a hotly-debated issue across Vermont and will likely remain a topic of discussion for years to come.

The *Town & Village of Hyde Park Comprehensive Development Plan* sets forth a series of goals and policies that collectively express the community’s current position on development issues, along with painting a long-term vision for the future. The 2012 Municipal Survey was organized in such a way that it can be re-circulated in subsequent years, to document how public opinion on various subjects evolves—or calcifies—over time. Should the Planning Commission perceive a major shift in one or more areas, additional public outreach, education and a plan amendment may be warranted.

Appendix II: Implementing “Complete Streets”

Enacted in 2011, Vermont’s “Complete Streets” legislation (as described within the Transportation chapter) has become a source of confusion for many municipal officials. While the overall spirit of the law is clear, the actual implementation of Complete Streets projects—especially in rural areas—is still difficult to conceptualize. In the coming years, as more communities adjust to the legislation, Hyde Park will have examples and precedent upon which to base transportation investments. This appendix is intended as a supplemental source of information, to familiarize municipal officials and members of the public alike with the Complete Streets philosophy.

The information below was published by the City of El Paso, Texas in the *Connecting El Paso* report and later published by the digital newsletter *Better! Cities & Towns*, distributed by New Urban Publications, Inc.

Ten steps to creating complete streets

1. Design for pedestrians first.

Great streets are designed to provide a high-caliber experience for pedestrians; once this is accomplished, they go on from there to accommodate all other required modes of travel, including bicycling, transit, and automobiles.

2. Remember that proportions matter.

A street should function as an outdoor room, surrounding its occupants in a space that is welcoming and usable. A 1:3 ratio for building height to street width is often cited as a minimum section for a sense of enclosure. Creating this sense of enclosure involves more than just narrow street width, however. There are well-defined eight-lane roads just as there are two-lane roads that seem to be impassable.

Streets must be sized properly for their use and should be defined with appropriate building sizes. Street trees and furniture such as lighting also play a critical role in defining the space of the street.

3. Design the street as a unified whole.

An essential distinction of great streets is that the entire space is designed as an ensemble, from the travel lanes, trees and sidewalks, to the very buildings that line the roadway. Building form and character is particularly important in shaping a sense of place. The best streets invariably have buildings fronting them, with a particular height and massing that creates an appropriate sense of enclosure. The random setbacks generated by conventional zoning rarely produce this effect; form-based regulations must be put in place to control building form and placement. Furthermore, urban buildings must front the street with frequent thresholds such as doors, windows, balconies, and porches. These thresholds promote a lively streetscape, and ultimately provide passive security for pedestrians by focusing “eyes on the street.”

4. Include sidewalks.

Appropriately designed sidewalks are essential for active pedestrian life. Pedestrians will be more willing to utilize sidewalks if they are protected from automobile traffic. One of the simplest ways to buffer the pedestrian is to place street trees between the street and the sidewalk. Other street furniture such as streetlights, bus shelters, and benches occupy wider sidewalks and provide additional separation between pedestrians and automobile traffic. The width of the sidewalk will vary according to the location. On most single-family residential streets, five feet is an appropriate width, but streets with rowhouses and multi-family buildings requires a more generous sidewalk. On Main Streets, fourteen feet is an ideal sidewalk width, which must never fall below an absolute minimum of eight feet.

5. Provide bicycle facilities.

Bicycling is becoming a popular means of not only exercise and recreation, but increasingly it is viewed as an important alternative to vehicular transportation. On higher-speed roadways in rural or suburban locations, bike lanes are the preferred bicycle facility, providing cyclists with a separate lane for travel independent from fast-moving automobiles. On lower-speed roadways in more urban areas, sharrows, or designated lanes for use by both bicyclists and vehicles, are the preferred facility for bicyclists. Sharrows are typically found 20-25 mph streets with on-street parking and a mix of travel modes and land uses.

6. Provide shade.

Motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists typically prefer shady streets. Shade provides protection from heat and sun and contributes to the spatial definition of a street. Shade can be provided with canopy trees or architectural encroachments over the sidewalk. Canopy trees should be planted in a planting strip between the sidewalk and the street in order to provide continuous definition and shade for both the street and the sidewalk. Architectural encroachments over the sidewalk such as awnings, arcades, and cantilevered balconies are another way to protect pedestrians from the elements and meanwhile shield storefronts from glare.

7. Plant street trees in an orderly manner.

great streets are typically planted with rows of regularly-spaced trees, using consistent species. This formal tree alignment has a powerful effect; it at once shapes the space and reflects conscious design. More importantly, the shade produced by the trees will be continuous enough to make walking viable. Furthermore, the spatial impression of aligned trees also has a traffic calming effect.

8. Provide parking on-street and mid-block.

On-street parking buffers pedestrians from moving cars and calms traffic by forcing drivers to stay alert. Parallel parking is the ideal arrangement, because it requires the least amount of space and allows pedestrians to easily cross through the thin line of cars. Diagonal parking is acceptable on some shopping streets, as long as the extra curb-to-curb width is not achieved at the expense of sidewalk

width. Parking located in front of a street-front business encourages people to get out of their cars and walk, and is essential to leasing street-oriented retail space.

The bulk of a building's parking supply should occur behind the building. The conventional practice of placing surface parking lots in front of buildings results in a disconnected pedestrian environment. If current zoning regulations are reformed to provide "build-to" lines rather than mandatory front setbacks for commercial buildings, parking will be forced to the interior of the block. As a result, the pedestrian realm of the sidewalk will be defined by shop fronts and building entrances rather than parking lots.

9. Make medians sufficiently wide.

Where divided thoroughfares are unavoidable, the medians must be generous enough to serve as a pedestrian amenity. A minimum median width of 8' will accommodate a row of street trees and will provide adequate refuge for pedestrians crossing a wide roadway.

10. Use smart lighting.

Streets should be appropriately lit for automobile and pedestrian safety. Pedestrians naturally avoid streets where they feel unsafe. Loosely-spaced, highway-scaled "cobra head" light fixtures do not provide appropriate light intensity and consistency for pedestrian well-being. More frequently spaced, shorter fixtures are more appropriate, and provide light beneath the tree canopy as street trees mature.

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Appendix III: Town & Village Maps

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