TOWN OF SHOREHAM

TOWN PLAN

FOR THE YEARS

2003 – 2008

APPROVED BY THE SELECTBOARD
DECEMBER 22, 2003

Things we like about SHOREHAM...

(from Mrs. Longchamp's Fourth Grade Class - April 2003)

Separate Classroom Space

Boating

Taking Care of the Wildlife

Living on Back Roads

New Bridges

Riding Horses

Apple Orchards

Four-wheeling

Fishing

The Cows

Junkyards

Rivers, Streams & Lakes

Shoreham Telephone Company

Good Soil

Playing outside with the dogs

Canoeing

Farmland

Nice, Generous Teachers

Douglas Orchard

Playgrounds

Playing Baseball

Mavis's Ice Cream Stand

The Gazebo

Ice Fishing

Strawberries

Wildlife

Having Our Own School

Open Spaces

The Lemon Fair

More Farms

Cows

Lake Champlain

Fresh Air

The School

Shoreham Service Center

Good Fire Department

Town Common

School

Transportation

Blueberries

Would like a golf course

Sports

Trees

Opportunities

Bad roads ☺

Beautiful Land

New Town Truck

Views

Fort Ti Ferry

Hanging out in the fields

Going to church

The Stores

DSL

Swimming in the lake

Raspberries

Nice, generous people

Tree Farms

Good EMT Squad

Used Car Dealerships

Quiet, not noisy or crowded roads

Architecture

Nature & Wildlife

Town Officers

Firehouse

Safety

Riding Calves

Riding Deer

Planning Commission

Books at the Library

Saving old buildings

Making Maple Syrup

Town Plan Draft
November 17, 2003

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INTRODUCTION

In 1986, the Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act (Title 24 Chapter 117) became law. This Act encourages "the appropriate development of all lands in this state," in an attempt to make a better life for us all. The Act provides the opportunity for each municipality to prepare a five-year plan, which is intended to shape the future of that community. The needs of the community, our visions of, and for, the future, and the population itself change over time. Therefore, provisions call for renewal of the plan every five years. Shoreham adopted its first Town Plan in 1971 but has had zoning regulations in effect since 1968.

Why have a Town Plan? A plan is not a law, nor an ordinance, but rather a document that reflects a community's desires for their town's future, in order to manage and guide change. It is an imperfect document, to be sure, and it will become out-dated, by definition. The most important thing about a Town Plan is that it is used as a basis for using other tools in the decision-making process, such as zoning regulations, Act 250 hearings, etc. Courts look to town plans for guidance in their rulings; developers must assume the burden of proof so that their proposals won't adversely affect a town's ability to provide services such as good roads and schools; zoning regulations are developed according to guidelines outlined by a plan; and regional and state regulatory, planning, and development agencies use town plans to help formulate policies.

OUR TOWN

Shoreham is a town of slightly more than 1200 people, about 6 miles square, at the southern end of the Champlain Valley. **(Please refer to the various maps and charts in the plan for a more detailed picture of the numerous aspects of our town.)** Residents have widely diverse interests, needs, and priorities, yet we share many common goals. This is what makes Shoreham the special, attractive place we call home--whether we moved in last month, or whether we have three (or more) generations "in the ground!" Some of us farm and earn our living from the land; some have small businesses based out of our homes. There are retirees, seasonal residents, and second homeowners, as well as commuters who work in Middlebury and elsewhere. Some of us are here because we were born here, others have moved here by choice. Shoreham offers recreational opportunities for both year-round residents and temporary visitors. Many residents, their parents, children, and grandchildren have either been educated in, or are now being educated in our school system.

With all this in mind, there are a number of factors that might explain why many of us enjoy living here: Shoreham's small-town neighborliness; a feeling of belonging and civic pride; the system of local government led by our own elected citizens; the scenic working landscape of open farm fields, orchards, and homes; the relative absence of urban problems. We appreciate our heritage, which is evidenced in our historic sites and buildings. We value the kind of environment where children can develop into productive citizens with the support of both their families and the community at large.

UNDERSTANDING THE PLAN

In this section we'll offer a brief overview of some of the plan's major themes in an effort to provide some sense of its structure. A quick look at the relevant subsection of the Act shows that municipalities are required to include the following elements, or sections, in their town plans:

- a statement of objectives that will guide the future growth and development of the town's land, public services, and facilities;
- a plan implementation section;

- a land use plan;
- a housing plan;
- an educational facilities plan;
- a transportation plan;
- a utility and facility plan;
- a policy statement on the preservation of natural areas, scenic and historic resources;
- an energy plan; and
- a section describing our plan's compatibility with neighboring towns' plans. This we have done, using the following format:

Observations: Each section begins with observations. This is meant as a discussion of the current state of affairs under each section heading.

Goals: The next part contains the goals, which are presented as a *vision* of where we, as a community, would like to be in five or more (or less) years. The goals are usually non-specific, and *are listed in no particular order.* Another name for them might be "Lofty Ideals". The fact that some of them might be unattainable doesn't make them irrelevant or not worthy of inclusion--if it seems like an idea worth striving for, it's probably in the plan. An example from the Land Use section reads, "Maintain the historic settlement pattern of densely settled neighborhoods, surrounded by larger areas of working farm and forest land."

Policies: The third part of each section contains the policies, where more specific *proposals* are used in an effort to reach a desired goal or objective. An example from the Education section reads, "Support efforts to develop a formula of school funding that recognizes a citizen's ability to pay, while ensuring a quality education for our children." *These policies, like the goals, are listed in no particular order.*

Maps: Maps are also an important, and required, part of the town plan. We have included maps that show current land use, transportation, education, utilities, and community facilities, as well as soil types, topographic features, surface waters (such as rivers, etc.), and land parcels. These are intended to support both the overall and specific goals of the plan.

THEMES

Some of the "over-arching" goals of this plan include:

A. Promote the general health, safety, and economic well-being of Shoreham's residents.

B. Encourage Shoreham's rural, agricultural character and quality of life.

C. Provide ways to encourage citizen involvement in developing community pride and cohesiveness that are consistent with the goals of this plan.

D. Respect and protect the property rights of individuals, within a framework that recognizes and considers the concerns and needs of the community at large.

E. Manage change in such a way so that the ability of the town to provide educational and other services to its residents will not be compromised, insufficient, or overextended, and that allows the town to finance and meet the expense of new infrastructural needs.

F. Support the use of Accepted Agricultural Practices and their protection by Vermont's Right to Farm Law.

G. Develop an environment for new job opportunities, such as agriculturally-related businesses or cottage industries, which are compatible with the goals of this plan, in order to diversify and stabilize our tax base, as well as to provide employment close to home for Shoreham's residents.

H. Support the availability of low and moderate cost housing in Shoreham.

I. Allow for changing energy and utility needs.

J. Encourage planning efforts and open dialogue between Shoreham's citizens and the local branches of government.

Where some of the plan's goals in the various sections may appear unclear or contradictory, using the general goals (above) and tone of the plan may aid those officials who are using it to make balanced land use and community decisions. Above all, it must be understood that with the adoption of this plan, an implicit commitment is being made by our local officials and community leaders, as well as Shoreham's general population, to actively pursue the goals set forth in this document. If we as a community move toward these goals, this plan will work not only to achieve our interests, but also as a defense against those changes that are not in our interests. The success of this plan can be measured, in part, by whether or not Shoreham's residents can continue to be able to afford to live here, five, ten, or more, years out. There are influences outside of our town, which affect our abilities to maintain the types of employment and lifestyle to which we are accustomed. It is hoped that this plan will help encourage and enable those who are willing to pitch in and preserve the good things about life here in Shoreham to do so.

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

This plan is intended to be used as a guidebook for Shoreham's journey into the future, and as such, offers suggestions as to how we can get to where we want to be. It is, by definition, a five-year projection of the desired state of our community. While it is meant to be a flexible document in terms of how to attain the shared, overall goals spelled out in the individual sections, it is also a legal document used to evaluate group decision-making within a community.

The **Goals** of the plan are intended to be seen as the *vision, or desired state*, of our town some day. They may seem at times to be vague, wildly optimistic, or contradictory. This is both intentional and unavoidable. As we tried to envision Shoreham's future while developing this plan it became evident that there were a lot of issues and interests to consider. Establishing a set of goals at the outset allowed us to agree to disagree on some of the details, since it quickly became apparent that there can be more than one way to achieve a desired condition. The fact that not all of the goals may be met within a five-year period does not diminish the importance of the goals themselves. Additionally, some of the goals, such as maintaining open land, may require numerous commitments by the community as a whole.

Policies have been proposed, following the goals, as a way to help *guide* both public officials and citizens in making decisions that are consistent with the overall goals of this plan. Some of the policies involve direct actions by town residents and public officials, while others propose enlisting the energies, expertise, and talents of others. Policies are the standards that should be applied when decisions are made. If situations arise that require that decisions be made between seemingly conflicting goals and policies, our public officials will have to strike the right balance between them, using the overall "tone" (or theme) of the plan as a guide.

The actual implementation of the plan ultimately comes down to the ability and desire of Shoreham's citizens and public officials to recognize and work within (or in spite of) the external constraints and forces that can affect our future. The work of implementation will be aided by several factors, including:

1. Recognizing the value of our shared goals and reminding ourselves of those goals when the going gets tough;

2. Putting our best energies into those matters that we can actually do something about, and not getting distracted by larger, ancillary issues that are beyond our power to control;

3. Never saying "never," since if the desire to achieve something difficult exists, the way to accomplish it can be found; and

4. Realizing that we don't operate in a vacuum, either as individuals, or as a municipality. Actions and attitudes extend far beyond their immediate or intended areas, and can have both positive and negative effects.

This section of the plan outlines issues of the highest priority to Shoreham, and includes **Suggested Actions** to achieve the desired **Objectives**, or conditions. **Objectives** are tangible, near-term achievements that are attained on the way to achieving long-term goals. **Suggested Actions** are specific steps that should be taken to achieve desired results. The actual actions taken will depend on several factors, including: the interest and ability of the town's officers and citizens to act, a genuine attempt to solicit input and gather information as a part of a more detailed planning process and discussion-generating effort, and obtaining funding, where necessary. Since this plan is an imperfect glimpse of a hoped-for future, the need for on-going dialogue within the community is great. Tentative time frames have been included in order to both prioritize these objectives, as well as to show some indication of the magnitude of work involved. The leadership needed to accomplish each objective is expected to come from the listed group(s).

1. **Perform an in-depth analysis of Shoreham's tax base and tax bills so that the town may better understand its present fiscal situation and future trends, and develop ways to reduce the strain on the taxpayers.**

Time Frame: Complete within one year
Leadership: Selectboard, School Board, Listers, Planning Commission
Suggested Actions:

A. Look for public resources to assist the town in analyzing its tax base and tax bills, and develop recommendations for action.
B. Work with state legislators to reform the current system of property taxation so that it promotes, rather than undermines, Shoreham's goals.
C. Look for methods of funding for education and/or municipal services that are less regressive than the property tax.
D. Consider the impact on the tax base of the large number of farms in Shoreham that are involved with land conservation efforts, including the sale of development rights.
E. Consider establishing a capital fund.
F. Explore possibilities that can expand the Town's tax base to include businesses and commercial activity that are compatible with the Town Plan.

2. **Prepare a Capital Budget and Plan**

Time Frame: Complete within two years
Leadership: Selectboard, working with the Planning Commission, School Board, and other municipal organizations
Suggested Actions:

A. List all major capital investments needed in the next 5 to 10 years for the town's community facilities, including schools, roads, public safety, and land preservation.
B. Estimate costs and explore possible funding sources.
C. Schedule and budget expenditures based on needs, priorities, and ability to pay.

3. **Revise Zoning Regulations to be consistent with this Plan**

Time Frame: Initiate within 1 year of adoption of this Plan
Leadership: Planning Commission, working with the Zoning Administrator and other interested parties
Suggested Actions:

A. Review existing regulations, and identify strengths, weaknesses, and conflicts with the new Town Plan.
B. Learn about, evaluate, and compare different types of, and approaches to, regulations that could be used to achieve the goals of this plan. Obtain examples from other towns.
C. Use the Geographic Information System to analyze past building trends and to project future settlement patterns under both current zoning regulations and various alternative regulatory scenarios. Study the economic, social, and sociological impact of the various results on the town and affected landowners.
D. Select the regulatory approaches that are best suited to Shoreham, and present recommendations to town residents and the Selectboard (along with rejected scenarios).
E. Draft new regulations based on comments and input.
F. Amend draft regulations as necessary, based on public input.
G. Prepare draft regulations for public vote and adoption as Zoning Bylaws.

4. **Study, protect, and improve Shoreham's agricultural land and economic base, in order to enhance its rural character.**

Time Frame: Ongoing; initiate within one year of adoption of this Plan
Leadership: Planning Commission, Zoning Board, and/or Selectboard, working with interested citizens and/or ad hoc citizen groups

Suggested Actions:

A. Assemble a committee of town residents that represents agricultural, business, residential, historical, and environmental interests. Give the committee the charge of studying and monitoring:
   1. the impact of agriculture and its economic value on the town's tax base,
   2. agriculture's relationship with the town's non-farming related sectors, (such as the residential and business communities),
   3. the numerous aspects that contribute to life in a rural community (including aesthetic, economic, environmental, employment, housing, social, scenic, and educational considerations),
   4. accepted Agricultural Practices and state-wide zoning regulations of large farms.

B. Inventory and evaluate Primary Agricultural Soils and current agricultural land use.

C. Prioritize the many aspects of rural life, within the context of attaining a vibrant, cohesive, resilient community. Recognize the importance of maintaining and preserving Shoreham's natural, scenic, and historic resources.

D. Consider the current trend toward large, high-density agricultural operations and their potential impact on neighbors and town infrastructure, such as roads.
   Explore ways to mitigate potential land use conflicts between the agricultural and other sectors, which could include (but not be limited to):
   1. use of innovative zoning regulations, voluntary conservation districts, transfer of conservation easements, and/or other incentives, and
   2. development of new and original ways to sustain our distinctive rural heritage and character, including education of both farm and non-farm residents to the needs of each other.

E. Analyze the implications of applying various tools to sustain agriculture, as well as farm-related and other businesses that are compatible to a rural setting. Such an analysis would include financial and socio-economic considerations for both the farming and non-farming taxpayer, as well as steps that could be used to influence and attract proposed businesses, activities, and/or facilities, that will not adversely affect the rural character.

F. Present strategies to the Planning Commission that:
   1. endeavor to conserve agricultural lands and agricultural land use, while being cognizant of the residential needs of non-farmers (including possible revisions of town zoning regulations),
   2. reflect and enhance Shoreham's historic rural character,
   3. strike a balance between potentially conflicting interests that may threaten that character, and
   4. provide for mediated "safety valves" or public forums to resolve conflicts when they do arise. Revise, if necessary, before hosting public meetings to obtain comments and further suggestions.

G. Revise proposals, if necessary, based on comments and input, and present to Selectboard.

H. Adopt and implement proposals.

5. Review town highway plan, prioritize, and budget for actions.

Time Frame: Ongoing; initiate within one year of adoption of this Plan
Leadership: Selectboard, Road Foreman, interested citizens, traffic consultants
Suggested Actions:

A. Evaluate transportation survey, with an eye toward establishing appropriate usage restrictions, specifically with regard to weight and speed.
B. Explore the practical options and costs necessary for adequate enforcement of speed and weight restrictions, including ordinances and signage.
C. Perform a use-survey to help develop a long-range Capital Road Budget & Plan.
D. Earmark a greater amount of money to be spent on improving roads that bear the greatest amount of traffic. Where traffic patterns indicate that present town roads have become corridors for intrastate travel, seek to have maintenance responsibilities taken over by the state.
E. Upgrade the road base, where appropriate, to accommodate increased vehicle weight and use.
F. Consider bike paths, where appropriate, in transportation projects within budget constraints.
G Explore the possibilities of sharing resources, manpower, and equipment with other towns.

Further Suggested Actions that could aid in the implementation of this plan:

A. Solicit and encourage resident volunteer organizations to continue to work toward keeping Shoreham a pleasant, safe, attractive, and desirable place to call home.
B. Assure that applicants are aware that adequate sewage disposal systems meet the minimum state standards in all residential and business building plans, in the interest of public safety and landowner protection.
C. Encourage alternative waste disposal systems that adequately dispose of sewage.
D. Participate in the planning of any major changes or additions to energy-related routes or equipment.
E. Include regulation of energy-related physical equipment, structural additions, and/or new installations, in any revision of the zoning by-laws.

LAND USE

BACKGROUND

Farming has historically been the single most important land use activity in Shoreham. Shoreham's tillable land is relatively flat and very productive, and the climate is favorable for a variety of agricultural uses. The agricultural community has made a commitment to economically successful farming, which is reflected in the working landscape. This commitment has resulted in the maintenance of a "critical mass" of agricultural activity and land use, that helps attract and sustain the necessary support industries associated with farming.

From the outset, the non-farming community has elected to live in Shoreham, in large part, for the rural atmosphere. Some of the positive attributes of rural life that make Shoreham an attractive place to live include: low population density, fewer perceived social ills and lower crime rates, lower land prices than more densely populated towns, close proximity to family members, slower pace of life, rural "ambiance" (aesthetics, non-intrusive architecture, less noise, light, and other types of pollution), a sense of greater independence, and beautiful scenery. Ironically, it is these same desirable traits that begin to be lost or adversely affected as traditional land use patterns change and population densities increase.

The number of housing units in Shoreham has increased by over 91% from 1970 through 2000, largely because of changes in the agricultural sector and booms in the local real estate and "professional jobs" market. In the last three decades there has been a trend toward conversion of farms (or parts of farms) into large acreage residential lots. While some land use conversion has occurred on marginal lands, such as pastures or small meadows, enough development has occurred on Primary Agricultural Soils, and/or adjacent to existent agricultural operations so as to put new pressures on working farms. Shoreham has a large number of farmers who have sold their development rights, placing conservation easements on their land. Currently there are over 7,100 acres that have been conserved. Shoreham should continue to offer to all residents the opportunity to experience and (more importantly) to contribute to the benefits of living in a small, rural, agricultural community. The farming community, for its part, has much benefit to derive from the diversity that new residents represent. Both farmers and non-farmers alike should be sensitive to the practical needs of their neighbors, and be willing to communicate their concerns directly to one another. The entire Shoreham community should diligently work to resolve any such conflicts, in order to preserve the rural environment, which makes life here so attractive.

OBSERVATIONS

There are a number of types of "*Land Uses*" in Shoreham, but foremost among them is agriculture. Land used for agriculture in Shoreham comprises about 70% of the town's total land base, with the remaining 30% divided up between the following categories: Residential, Commercial, Forest, Other Open Land, and Other (including roads, water, etc.). The conserved acreage represents over 23.6% of the total land in Shoreham. Three important categories are described below, and some of the potentially conflicting differences between the various groups are discussed.

Agriculture

Historically, farming has formed the economic, cultural, and social basis of Shoreham life. Agricultural activity was once carried out on a large number of small farms, but as time passed, the average farm grew in size, while the total number of farms decreased.

Shoreham's major agricultural industries are dairy, apple, and beef production. Other agricultural activities in town include: Christmas trees, sheep, fallow deer, and vegetables. Located in the southern Champlain Valley, Shoreham is part of a major farming region, in one of Vermont's most agricultural counties. The sufficiently high density of farming operations that exists in the area means that the services that support them can be located nearby, thus creating a mutually beneficial situation.

A significant percentage (60%) of the town's land is composed of Primary Agricultural Soils, which is a state rating used to indicate good to excellent fertility. Most of this land is used for crop production, and the topography ranges from gently to moderately sloping.

The economics of farming in recent years have caused many of Shoreham's farm businesses to make major production decisions, which have typically included change in size, new technologies, and/or new marketing initiatives. Some of these decisions have had, or may have, an adverse impact on adjacent, non-farming residents in the form of noise, traffic, light, and odor. The town's roads may also likely require additional upgrading and maintenance due to the increased size and weight of agricultural vehicles.

In Shoreham, all real property is taxed at its fair market value. In most cases, the **fair market** value of farmland exceeds the **use** value of the same land, when used for farming. For the last 25 years, the state legislature has accepted the idea that a use-value basis for taxing farmland is valid. To that end, it developed the Current Use Program, which was intended to help offset the enrolled farmer's increased tax costs (i.e. the difference between the "listed" (and usually higher) fair market value, and the actual (usually lower) use value), while ensuring no loss of tax revenues to the town. Act 60 has equalized the education portion of the local property tax, so the loss of tax revenue reimbursed by the state to the town for Current Use is limited to the municipal portion only.

The last five years have seen an increase in the number of farms that have sold the development rights. The conserved farms have reduced fair market value. With passage of Act 60, the sale of development rights and the corresponding reduction of the grand list valuation of agricultural land, there has been no effect on the local portion of the school tax unless conserved property was not enrolled in current use. In that case, there is a small one-year affect on State hold-harmless reimbursement. There has been a slight increase in the municipal portion of the local tax rate as is evident from a 2002 study by the Vermont Land Trust.

The sale of development rights has also initiated investment in the agricultural economy of Shoreham, which has helped to increase or maintain the Grand List of agricultural buildings and facilities. The long-term effects may be negligible as the fair market value of conserved properties may be increasing. Thus, Shoreham's residents should appreciate the fact that agricultural properties, even when enrolled in the Current Use Program or having sold their development rights, are carrying a larger share of the town's tax burden than residences. Existing or future legislation may affect the specifics of any "current use" programs.

Residential

Shoreham's variety of open and wooded land, its scenic vistas with gently rolling fields and not-too-distant mountains, and its proximity to Lake Champlain help contribute to the State's tourism image and industry.

Most of the town's residences, new and old, are located along town or state roads, in varying densities. There are several 10+ acre lot subdivisions. The number of new, non-farm related residences has increased significantly since the early 1970's. **(Refer to the Population and Housing Section for statistics).**

Residences adjacent to farmland are generally located along town roads at relatively low densities. There has been a slow, but steady, growth in the number of residences into agricultural areas of town. Conflicts have arisen between the lifestyle expectations of non-farm residents and the occupational needs of farmers, which might reflect a perception of rural living that does not always consider the economic realities of modern agricultural practices.

Shoreham has several higher density residential areas, including the geographically centralized village, Richville, Lapham's Bay (Torrey Island), Larrabee's Point, and Happy Evie. The original settlement of these areas occurred on relatively small lots, prior to zoning regulations. More recent development has generally occurred on 10+ acre lots.

Commercial (Non-Farm)

Shoreham's current commercial district was formed in 1968, when the first zoning bylaws were adopted. It was located so as to include some of the businesses, which were then already in operation. It is located along Route 22A, north and south of the Catholic Church, and along Main Street (Route 74), in the Village. Most of the larger, non-farm businesses are located in this area. Historically, the physical size of the district is relatively small, although some unused frontage exists. The National Historic District, along Route 74 and up School Street, is more residential. The area along Route 22A is more commercial in nature.

Non-farm commercial enterprises here in town are predominately small, family-owned sole proprietorships or corporations conducted from the home (or an outbuilding located on the homestead), specializing in goods and services. Technological advances now allow people to work at home in non-traditional jobs. Although there is no significant manufacturing industry in Shoreham, the number of small, home-based businesses seems to be increasing—that is beneficial, since it creates job opportunities. These types of businesses add to the attractiveness of town, since they are typically owned and operated by local residents who are sensitive to, and have a vested interest in, the town's affairs. This is generally consistent with other rural towns, and is preferred to "strip" development along one of the highways.

The new municipal sewage system should enable the establishment of new businesses in Shoreham, since it adds an essential element of infrastructure to the Town center and complements the existing assets (including access to a major highway, power, and a municipal water supply), that are already in place. The size of the sewer system was designed to support growth at a moderate rate.

GOALS

Agriculture

A. Encourage a mutual understanding of the needs of farmers and neighboring non-farmers.
B. Support and uphold the right to farm, using state Accepted Agricultural Practices and Best Management Practices, which can help keep agriculture the dominant commercial activity in Shoreham.
C. Develop and nurture the public's commitment to support diverse farming activities.
D. Encourage the maintenance and conservation of agricultural lands for the production of food and other agricultural products.
E. Promote the long-term viability of sustainable farming practices.
F. Encourage conservation of forest land and use of accepted forest management practices.
G. Promote soil conservation practices that protect the long-term productivity and viability of agricultural soils.
H. Encourage a diverse farming economy where both small and large land bases support the community's needs.

Residential

A. Maintain the historic settlement pattern of densely settled neighborhoods, surrounded by larger areas of working farm and forest land.
B. Encourage new residential property development within the sewer district that reduces impact on agricultural areas.
C. Consider the quality of residential life for non-farming residents, along with the economic needs of farmers.
D. Support efforts that enhance the appearance of the community.

Commercial

A. Nurture a strong and diverse regional economy that provides satisfying and rewarding job opportunities for residents, which also maintains high environmental and social standards.
B. Support the presence of locally owned and operated businesses, as long as they are compatible with other land uses and goals of the Town Plan.
C. Encourage the establishment of an industrial park, or area of town, that would be an appropriate setting for attracting compatible businesses or light industrial activities utilizing existing sewer system and other infrastructure.
D. Support the establishment of agriculturally-related businesses and cottage industries.

POLICIES

General

A. Assure the permitting of home-based businesses, with the understanding that limited regulations may be imposed that address aesthetics, safety, and environmental issues.
B. Manage so that the rate of growth in Shoreham will not exceed the town's ability to affordably provide adequate services and facilities to all of its residents.

Agriculture

A. Facilitate an understanding of the mutual needs of farmers and their non-farming neighbors. This would include recognition of both the numerous (natural, economic, etc.) high-risk factors unique to farming, as well as legitimate public concerns related to farming activities.

B. Encourage development away from Primary Agricultural Soils reserving them for agricultural uses.

C. Minimize development pressure on agricultural land.

D. Consider landowner's applications that propose to conserve agricultural land for farm use.

E. Support efforts of landowners and developers to achieve the goals, policies, and objectives of this plan. Provide information, assistance and advice as needed.

G. Recognize the opportunities and limitations presented by geology and soils when planning and regulating land use.

H. Uphold the farmer's right to produce and market food and other agricultural products, without unnecessary interference from local regulation.

Residential

A. Recognize that non-farm residential and farming interests are sometimes at odds. Develop and support efforts to resolve such conflicts in a non-litigious manner. Consideration should be given to both the economic needs of farmers, as well as the lifestyle concerns of non-farmers.

B. Encourage an awareness that reflects our appreciation of a rural environment and our New England heritage.

C. Encourage construction of new residential development away from primary agricultural soils, and toward land less suited for agricultural use.

D. Support property tax reform measures.

E. Support development proposals that minimize residential intrusion in areas of active agricultural activity. This should include, but not be limited to, developments that leave parcels of land of sufficient acreage and productive capability to be economically viable for farming, developments sited on poor or marginal agricultural soils, developments that minimize access ("curb cuts") to town or state roads, etc.

F. Assure that any large residential development proposal adequately addresses the issues of public costs and implementation of public services.

Commercial

A. Support initiatives that attempt to strengthen regional employment opportunities.

B. Encourage and promote the development of local businesses (including marketing co-operatives and partnerships) that create markets for locally produced goods and services, especially the production of value-added products.

C. Support the development of job opportunities that allow Shoreham's work force to experience satisfying and rewarding employment.

D. Encourage businesses that are compatible with other land uses and activities typically found in a rural, agricultural community.

E. Encourage minimal negative impacts by commercial operations on surrounding neighborhoods.

LAND USE PLANNING REGIONS

This part of the plan describes the patterns of Shoreham's current land uses and our vision of how land could be used in the future to protect and enhance the town's rural character and other goals. It is meant to be used in conjunction with the Land Use Plan Map; the descriptions that follow will draw in large part from the various geophysical, demographic, and traditional settlement patterns of the respective areas.

The Land Use Plan Map divides Shoreham into six regions. The first five are the Village, Richville, Torrey Island, "Happy Evie," and Larrabee's Point areas. These areas are typified by seasonal and year-round residences on relatively small lots. The other region is called the "Rural Region," and includes all the land in town that isn't included in the other regions. The idea is to recognize those areas of Shoreham that are historically and geographically unique, and break them out into separate regions for planning purposes.

Village

The Village Region is defined as the area immediately contiguous to Route 22A and Route 74 West intersection. This area is Shoreham's historic town center. Most community facilities such as the Town Clerk's office, the elementary school, churches, etc.; most commercial businesses, including stores, garages, and the apple co-op; and historic residences are located in this area. Major changes in the Village area have been the relocation of a local milk hauling business to the area, establishment of a gas/convenience store, and addition of the town shed. However, only minor changes in the outward appearance have occurred in recent years.

There are two parts of the Village, each with its own character, look, and predominant uses. The area along Route 74 West (Main Street) is more residential with a typical New England blend of mostly houses and some small businesses such as the Shoreham Inn and home occupations, town office, and the Shoreham Commons. There is sufficient infrastructure to allow for higher density future development and there is room in this area for expansion. Commercial development may be limited in size and impact to preserve the historic character of the Village. A design review process might be considered to ensure that development maintains the existing village character.

The second village area, on both sides of Route 22A, is primarily commercial. It also includes larger and higher-impact businesses such as the gas/convenience store and the apple co-op. With power, major road access, and municipal sewer, this area is suitable for both residential and commercial growth, and is most suitable for commercial growth.

Richville

The Richville Region, founded in 1786 and at one time referred to as "Hackelburnia," is centered south and west from the intersection of Richville and North Orwell Roads, east to the State's boat access, and north to the intersection of Shacksboro and Buttolph Roads.

This area was developed due in great part to its proximity to the Lemon Fair River. Richville's mills and manufacturing supplied commerce and employment; other businesses provided professional and general services to its residents and the agricultural community. Today, Richville is a residential settlement. Its past is in evidence by a higher density neighborhood, some historical remains, adjacent working farms, and the Lemon Fair watershed.

Surrounded by the Rural Region, this area is an ideal place for this residential cluster with some small home-based businesses.

Torrey Island

The Torrey Island Region includes the land north and west of the Lapham Bay Road-Lake Street intersection, south of the Bridport line, and east of Lake Champlain.

Torrey Island started out as a number of privately owned seasonal camps on the shore of Lake Champlain, in the northwestern-most corner of Shoreham. The Torreys offered 99-year leases for small lots along the Lake to people interested in building summer camps. Over the years some of these camps have been converted to year-round housing. Access to most of the dwellings continues to be through the Torrey's farmstead.

Happy Evie

The Happy Evie Region is a lakeshore development located a short way south of the Lapham Bay Road—Lake Street intersection, west and south of Delong Road, which is a private road that connects the lots to Lake Street.

Like Torrey Island, it has evolved into a mix of seasonal camps and year-round housing, although in this case the relatively small lots are individually owned.

Larrabee's Point

Larrabee's Point was the site of the first store in Shoreham and is the western gateway to Shoreham and Vermont. Through the years it has been home to various commercial enterprises, including taverns, hotels, a tea house, a storehouse and wharf, and, of course, the ferry, as well as various agricultural enterprises. The ferry, one of the longest running in the state, began service in approximately 1787.

Once active as a trading and transportation center, handling goods that were being shipped up and down the Lake, it now services tourists passing through the area. Its centerpieces are the MV Carillon Boat Tours and the Fort Ti Ferry. There are a number of historic and new dwellings in this region, with a mix of seasonal and year-round occupancy. Cresting the hill heading in an easterly direction, travelers are treated with a panorama of Vermont farms and hillsides.

This region should maintain its position as a gateway to Shoreham and Vermont, and connection across the lake with New York. The current mix of activities brings visitors to Shoreham and helps the economy of the entire town. Additional commercial activity, including locally owned or family run businesses appropriate to a rural Vermont community (such as retail stores, farmstands, restaurants, or similar enterprises) could also help attract tourists and benefit the town. New developments in the area should respect the proximity to the lake and protect our natural resource.

Rural Region

The rural region is comprised of a significant amount of generally fertile agricultural land and a distribution of other land types found in the Cedar Swamp, along the Lemon Fair and Lake Champlain shores, and on hills including Sisson, Mutton, Cream, Barnum, and Delano. Glacial recession has left several significant areas of loam soil and deposits of sand within the town's borders. A few knolls of bedrock outcroppings have been quarried for shale and crushed stone.

The rural region is used primarily for agricultural purposes, although residential and locally-owned business development has occurred in the past 15 years. However, residential and business use in this region is still low density. Lands in this region are vital to Shoreham's agricultural economy, and provide the open space that gives Shoreham its rural character and scenic beauty. It is our desire that this traditional land use pattern remain as unchanged as possible. The establishment of new residences in and around agricultural enterprises, and residents not sensitive to farming issues can negatively affect the cohesiveness of the agricultural community. This suggests that actions designed to lessen the pressures on farming from residential development in the rural region be considered. That said, the simplest way to reduce development pressures on farmland is to make farming profitable, and the best incentive to keep land in agriculture would be an economic one. Unfortunately, that is beyond the scope of this plan. Our thrust then is to maintain, as much as possible, an agricultural land base and community, so that those who wish to farm might find that opportunity here in Shoreham, now and in the future. At the same time, we should be willing to support diversifying the commercial, economic, and tax base of Shoreham in such a way as to be compatible with the overall goals of this plan. This could include home-based businesses.

It is recognized that residential and commercial growth pressure will continue, and that the town must plan to accommodate that. However, the establishment of new homes in a rural region, as noted above, can place additional burdens on agricultural activities. New home development should be based on historical density patterns; thus expanding existing village neighborhoods in this and other planning regions should be encouraged. Clustering of new homes on smaller lots in the rural region, on less agriculturally significant soils, should be encouraged. This would allow large landowners to potentially realize equity in their land and at the same time lessen the impact of residential development on their farming operation and more effectively conserve a natural resource. Patterns of future land use development should be directed toward enhancing a sense of the traditional community, while also preserving land values as much as possible.

In developing Zoning Bylaws, the Planning Commission should be guided by the goal of assuring orderly and affordable growth. The Planning Commission should be available to work with potential applicants to modify or formulate development plans that meet the goals of preserving as much of Shoreham's agricultural potential, open space, and rural character as possible

POPULATION AND HOUSING

OBSERVATIONS

BACKGROUND

Shoreham's rural character is perhaps best underscored by the relatively high percentage of "stand alone" (i.e. single family residence) housing units dotting the landscape, with over 95% of all units (including mobile homes) falling into this category. This is consistent with all of our neighboring towns, and probably will not change significantly. The total number of housing units in Shoreham has increased from 291 in 1970, to 441 in 1980, to 511 in 1990, to 556 in 2000. At the same time, the average household size has shrunk from 3.59 persons in 1970, to 3.22 in 1980, to 2.87 in 1990, to 2.7 in 2000. Shoreham's actual population grew 23% in the ten years from 1970-80 (from 790 to 972), 14.7% (to 1115) by 1990, and another 9.6% by 2000 (to 1222).

	1970	1980	1990	2000
Housing Units	*291*	*441*	*511*	*556*
Household Size	*3.59*	*3.22*	*2.87*	*2.7*
Population	*790*	*972*	*1115*	*1222*

More recently there has been a significant reduction of people employed in the apple industry, as a number of orchards have been discontinued and the Shoreham Cooperative Apple Producers Association ("The Co-op") has discontinued packing apples. Other agricultural industries have seen an increase in employment, however. In particular, farms with direct sales of produce, expanded dairy farms, milk-hauling services, and diversified farms have seen an increase in both total employment, and increases in the wage scale. Many agricultural and agriculturally-related workers have seen a relative increase in wages.

Affordable housing options in recent years have generally consisted of mobile homes that are used for primary residences, or seasonal "camps" that have been converted into year-round dwellings. The latter option raises the issue of increased septage problems, due to potential overloading of septic systems that were originally designed for limited, seasonal use. The relative percentage of mobile homes to all other housing types in Shoreham rose from 7.7% in 1980 to 13.3% in 1990. (Mobile homes are no longer counted in the census data as different from single-family dwellings.)

Other affordable housing options found in Shoreham include: a five apartment unit owned by the Addison County Community Action Group (ACCAG), a small number of apartments and duplexes for rent, and various types of housing for agricultural laborers.

The rapid rise in property taxes has had a substantial impact on the affordability of housing for all residents. From the 2000 census, the median household income in Shoreham was $39,375. The average house with less than 6 acres of land (R1) was valued at $90,275 and paid $2,681 in property taxes. From the commonly accepted rule of thumb that a household should not have to pay more than 30% of its income for housing, property taxes represent 23% of that cost. For an average house with more than 6 acres of land (R2), property taxes represent an even larger portion of the housing cost. A similar portion of rent paid to live in Shoreham would go to pay property taxes.

Increases in residential housing will put increased demand on town services and facilities. Since 1997, the permits issued for subdivision of land and for new dwellings have increased significantly.

The traditional architecture and historic settlement patterns of homes either clustered in the town centers or on individual farmsteads dotting the countryside are important aspects of Shoreham's—and the area's—appeal. The reality of today's employment situation, coupled with the current trends of agricultural economics, has served to alter traditional housing patterns. Conflicts may arise when the needs and expectations of Shoreham's non-farming residents do not coincide with some of the practices of modern-day farming.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Affordability of housing is a regional issue, and Shoreham's mix of housing unit types and values is comparable with our neighboring towns. It is considered an issue, especially for families earning less than the median household income.

Based on our analysis of conditions in 1989, Shoreham appears to be providing a reasonable supply of affordable housing. We want to be sure this continues in the future. Since the 1989 census, both income and housing valuations have slowly risen, and we believe that this analysis is still reasonably accurate. However, the 64% rise in Shoreham's real property tax rates (from $2.00 to $3.28) from 1989 to 2003 may be the single most important factor in residents' perceptions that housing may not now be as affordable as it once was. This rapid rise will have the greatest impact on our fixed income residents who wish to remain in their present housing accommodations. Although there is relatively little that the town can do to directly affect the future supply or affordability of housing, we recommend that the following program be implemented, if necessary and appropriate:

A. treat proposals for multi-family, manufactured, and single family conventional housing fairly and equitably;
B. support the creation of appropriate home-based businesses in town so the total costs of housing and business can be reduced for those homeowners;
C. support the creation of well-paying, satisfying jobs in town and in the region in order to help the income side of the affordable housing problem;
D. keep housing affordable by enabling, where appropriate, small lots, multi-family dwellings, accessory apartments, clustered developments served by common facilities, innovations in design, flexibility in local regulations, and other reasonable provisions.

The 2000 Census report indicates that out of a total of 556 housing units in Shoreham, 469 were classified as year-round residences and 87 (15.6%) were seasonal units. Of the 469 year-round units, 16 were classified as vacant. For the remaining 453 units, 353 (77.9%) were owner occupied, and 100 (22.1%) were renter occupied.

Given the above, and the many factors that housing affordability involves; it appears that median-income Shoreham households can afford median priced housing in Shoreham.

The ACCAG apartments, the relatively high numbers of permits for mobile homes and manufactured houses, camps, and farm labor housing indicate that "very low" (under 50 % of median) and "low" (50-80% of median) income housing needs are being met.

GOALS

A. Encourage the continued availability of adequate and affordable housing for all of Shoreham's residents.

B. Meet the residential needs of diverse social and income groups.

C. Ensure that Shoreham's farmers and their non-farm neighbors can live co-operatively side-by-side.

POLICIES

A. Use a variety of development strategies to both maintain Shoreham's rural and agricultural base and provide housing opportunities for all of its residents, such as Planned Residential Developments, Land Trusts, cluster housing, transfer of development rights, expansion of current village residential region, conservation easements, establishment of a business/light industry district, etc.

B. Support development of housing that is affordable for local residents.

C. Ensure that the timing, rate, and location of new housing developments do not exceed the town's ability to provide adequate public facilities and services.

D. Support housing alternatives for the town's senior citizens, to enable them to continue to live in Shoreham.

E. Encourage creation of job opportunities that would allow residents to both live and work in Shoreham.

F. Steer housing development away from Primary Agricultural Soils and towards more marginal agricultural land and higher density residential districts.

G. Encourage the use of adequate and appropriate sewage disposal systems, including those using alternative technologies in all proposed residential and business building applications.

EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

OBSERVATIONS

Shoreham is one of seven communities that make up the Addison Central Supervisory Union School District. Shoreham's children attend grades K-6 at Shoreham Elementary School, and students in grades 7-12 are bused to Middlebury Union Middle and High Schools. Vocational classes are available through Patricia Hannaford Career Center. Shoreham Elementary School received Full Approval through the Vermont State Public Approval process in August 1995. Home schoolers have been able to have access to school programs and facilities.

Shoreham's elementary school was built in 1955, and was approved for 165-student capacity. Since that time new state regulations have been adopted and the school currently has a capacity of 141 students. From 1989 to 1994 several large upgrading projects have been completed at the school, and the entire building is now handicapped accessible. In July 2002 Shoreham Elementary School's roof repairs and renovation work was completed at the cost of $740,000. Even with these upgrades and improvements constant attention to the aging building will be necessary to keep it in good condition. Some major facilities issues currently facing the school are lack of storage space and the need for more cost-effective interior lighting.

Enrollment at Shoreham Elementary peaked in 1992 with 155 students. The 2002-03 enrollment was 118 students. Projections of future enrollment over the next 10 years are holding at current levels or a decline in students. Decreased school enrollment is not unique to Shoreham; it is a statewide trend. These projections, however, could be affected by either (or both): 1) major new housing development(s) in town; and 2) any sudden or significant change in the relative affordability of land/housing in Shoreham, as compared to surrounding towns.

Act 60, and subsequently Act 68, has changed the way education is funded in Vermont. The debate continues, but the total cost of education continues to rise. As a consequence, it is less clear how and from where the money is raised. Since 1996, approximately 84% of the total monies raised by the town property and real estate taxes went to pay for the K-12 education of Shoreham's children. In the school year 2001-02 approximately 33% of total school tax monies collected went to the elementary school, 41% went to UD3 (high school and middle school) and 26% went to the vocational center. These statistics should make it clear that as taxpayers it is essential for us to be informed and actively participate in the UD3 budgeting process. There are many reasons for the increase to the cost of education some of which are: 1) Continual rise in insurance costs with low contribution from teacher's contracts, 2) Unfunded mandates from both state and federal agencies. 3) Continued increase in middle and high school budgets, 4) Elevated expectations for the school to deliver more services to students.

The more involved Shoreham's adults are in the social and educational development of our youth, whether within or outside our schools, the more effective our educational system can be, and the more vibrant and resilient our community will be.

GOALS

A. Ensure that Shoreham's children receive a quality education, in order to better prepare them for the future.

B. Optimize the use of tax money to achieve a quality school system and keep facilities well maintained.

C. Maintain a safe and secure learning environment.

D. Encourage the community to become informed about and actively involved with the school to help prepare students for higher education and productivity in the community.

E. Establish within the entire Shoreham community a pride of ownership of the school and its activities, through effective outreach and communication networks between the Administration, School Board, teachers, parents, children, and townspeople otherwise not affiliated with the school.

F. Educate the public regarding unfunded mandates from both state and federal agencies.

G. Maintain an attractive, vibrant, and appropriate educational facility, while also encouraging and supporting its use for community activities.

H. Work with the local school board and community to develop a capital plan for Shoreham Elementary.

I. Ensure that home schoolers continue to have access to all school programs.

POLICIES

A. Initiate a communication network that provides the entire Shoreham community with information about the educational results of the school and provide an opportunity for feedback from the community.

B. Utilize Shoreham's unique natural, physical, and historic resources--as well as the talents of its' citizens--as much as possible in the educational curriculum, to enhance the students' appreciation and awareness of their community.

C. Help our elected officials to eliminate unfunded state and federal education mandates by encouraging community involvement at local board, district board and state and federal levels.

D. Present the school, its grounds, and its administration as models for responsible citizenship and environmental stewardship.

TRANSPORTATION

OBSERVATIONS

Shoreham is a rural town with an extensive road system. Sections of three State highways (Routes 22A, 74, and 73) pass through town. The town currently maintains 62.35 miles of road, including 50 miles of gravel surface, and 12.35 miles of asphalt and maintains approximately 1 mile of Route 73. The layout of the towns' roads today basically follows the same historical routes established by Shoreham's early settlers, and reflects the cultural heritage of our town. Most of the town's major roads are oriented either to the east-west highway (Rte.74), or the major north-south throughway (Rte.22A). In this geographical sense, we consider our roads to be adequate for present and future needs.

Road use patterns have changed as more people build houses on the dirt roads to get away from the busy highways and more residents find employment outside of Shoreham. State highways and the Richville Road carry the bulk of commuter traffic in and out of town. The increased speed and types of traffic on the town's roads (especially along those commuter routes that pass through the village and residential areas) has created the need for a new look at our road system. Weight and speed limits, even where posted, are seldom enforced. Vehicular traffic on Shoreham's relatively narrow roads has increased in both speed and numbers over the past 10 years, making pedestrian, bicycling, and other types of non-vehicular road use dangerous. Bicycle traffic along all roads in town has increased to the point where a conflict between bicycle and vehicular traffic is apparent, and accidents seem inevitable. Signs, in areas of need, which adequately reflect today's traffic situations would aid in matters of traffic flow and safety.

The size and weight of agricultural equipment, commercial, and farm-related vehicles have increased dramatically over the last 10 years, and have raised both safety and financial concerns for residents. Our roads were simply not designed to handle the loads being hauled today. The cost of maintaining an under-designed or inadequate road system will continue to increase, and the town will be forced to address the conflicts including: 1) the economic realities of large scale farming, 2) mandated agricultural regulations, and 3) the Town's obligation to provide and maintain adequate roads for all of its residents' needs. This will be a difficult issue to address during the next five years, and will require a balancing of private and public interests.

There are no formal public transportation services or networks in Shoreham. There is the privately owned and operated Fort Ticonderoga Ferry at Larrabee's Point.

GOALS

A. Maintain or improve existing roads to accommodate the changing needs, especially the needs of our largest industry, agriculture.

B. Provide and maintain a transportation infrastructure that is safe, efficient, and cost effective.

C. Support efforts to reduce conflict between vehicular and all other types of traffic (such as bicyclists, pedestrians, etc.) on both town and state roads.

D. Maintain a transportation system that promotes the other goals and policies of the town plan, especially when such a system encourages efficient land and energy use, and desirable patterns of land use development.

E. Develop a transportation system that maintains or enhances the rural character of our village and residential districts.

F. Promote regional transportation systems that meet the needs of all segments of our population.

G. Maintain a level of service that provides both safety and easy movement on our roads, limits the physical changes that would alter our rural character, and simultaneously optimizes use of the taxpayers' dollars.

POLICIES

A. Support enforcement of speed and weight limits on all roads in town, particularly through the village and residential areas, in an effort to improve both the safety and the overall condition of the roads.

B. Maintain or improve the level of service on all roads in town.

C. Manage roads in such a way as to meet present and future demands of the town, while maintaining a rural character.

D. Ongoing inspections should be conducted to ensure control of phosphorous run-off, thus making sure road banks are not eroding into rivers, streams, ponds, or wetlands. Run off should be directed to well vegetated areas before reaching surface waters to the greatest extent possible.

E. Recover any money spent to repair damage to the town highways caused by illegal or un-permitted uses or negligence.

F. Minimize the need for new access roads, driveways, and/or traffic controls onto state and local highways.

G. Improve the safety of our roads for all forms of traffic.

H. Require that private roads be built to adequately handle the anticipated traffic demands before the town considers taking over maintenance of said roads.

I. Consider the establishment of bike lanes, greenways, snowmobile, hiking and/or cross-country ski trails, and pedestrian paths, in conjunction with new development or transportation projects, in all new construction or improvements to roads in town.

J. Support actions that would protect Shoreham's rural character, including physical changes or modifications to state roads both within the village limits and along residential corridors. Oppose actions that would threaten it, unless it can be proven that the changes will enhance safety and minimize negative effects on the town's rural character.

K. Encourage energy conservation, through public transportation and ride sharing programs.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

OBSERVATIONS

Shoreham's community facilities are a 12 acre village common that is the location of various town sheds, the Town Clerk's office, Platt Memorial Library, Newton Academy building, Shoreham Elementary School, Shoreham Congregational Church, the Masonic Building, Morton Park, the Farnham property, and a large multi-use recreational field. A Shoreham Commons Task Force was formed, as a sub-committee of the Planning Commission, and they obtained a grant to assess community needs and develop possibilities and priorities for improvements and preservation projects in the commons area. The Task Force worked with a consultant to develop a plan for the commons, which reflects considerable public input.

The ten bay town shed was built in 1985 and houses the fire and rescue squad equipment, road equipment and vehicles, and a meeting room used for various town meetings and activities. There are also two older barn-type buildings nearby that are currently used for storage.

The Town Clerk's office, built in 1963, houses the town records and provides office space for town business. With the increase in population and regulation the paperwork handling and storage needs of the town have increased, rapidly approaching the limit of the vault storage space. With the advent of computerization of the town clerk, treasurer and lister functions, more space is needed to accommodate the equipment. The space is marginal for many Selectboard meetings and other uses.

The Newton Academy building, formerly a town school and still a source of community pride, now houses the Shorewell Medical Clinic, a community room, and a storage room. The clinic consists of a full time physician and his staff, specializing in general practice and cardiology. The community room houses the Shoreham Pre-school and provides space for senior citizens and other community meetings. The building is under-utilized; the second floor, which contains an auditorium and other rooms, is vacant. A committee of area residents has been formed to help preserve the building and to plan for full utilization. They have raised funds and acquired grants to repair the cupola. Repair of the cupola has been completed, as have other minor repairs. The building has considerable architectural and historic significance, as well as potential future functional value, and could use some timely attention to ensure its preservation.

The privately owned Masonic building located on the common is occasionally used for meetings.

There are two Church buildings in town; the Congregational Church and St. Genevieve's Catholic Church. The Congregational Church basement is used for both Church sponsored community activities such as bake sales and socials, as well as a meeting place for many non-Church related community organizations such as the Boy and Girl Scouts and the Addison County Parent/Child Center.

Platt Memorial Library was built and donated to the town by Dr. Mary Mixer Platt in 1906. The Library is supported by the town and by private contributions, and is administered by unpaid trustees elected by the town. A committee has been formed with the goal of enlarging the library to meet the increasing needs of the community.

The Shoreham Elementary School was built in 1955 and houses grades K-6. Shoreham students in grades 7-12 attend the Middlebury Union High School and Middle School. The gymnasium is also used for larger town meetings and for privately organized athletic activities and other meetings and classes. In 2003 there will be an after school activity program, organized in cooperation with Mary Johnson Children's Center.

The Shoreham First Response and Shoreham Fire Department provide rescue and fire services. They are staffed by volunteers and are funded by the town, their own fundraising efforts, and by private contributions. Shoreham is also served by the Middlebury Volunteer Ambulance Service, and has implemented E-911. The Town owns and maintains sufficient fire fighting, rescue, and extraction equipment to satisfactorily meet the needs of the town. Mutual aid agreements are in effect with neighboring towns. Police services are provided by Town Constables, Addison County Sheriff's Department, and the Vermont State Police.

Shoreham is a member of the Addison County Solid Waste Management District, through which future solid waste disposal issues will be decided. Currently, Shoreham's households and businesses make their solid waste disposal arrangements with private haulers. There is a recycling program in town, organized and funded by the town. The village sewer system was completed in 2001. It is regulated by the Shoreham Wastewater Ordinance, overseen by appointed Sewer Commissioners. This facility provides sewage disposal for all businesses and residences in the Village area. Sewage disposal for the rest of town is provided by individual on-site septic systems.

Tri-town Water is a public utility controlled by users in the towns of Shoreham, Bridport, and Addison, and managed by a Board of Directors who represent the member towns. Tri-town supplies potable water to more than 90% of Shoreham's households and businesses, and the remaining locations rely on on-site wells. Tri-town Water service is supported by user fees. The utility has been a reliable and

economical water supplier, and it has thus far been able to meet the modest increased requirements for additional service. Easy access to Tri-town water is considered a plus when considering most types of development. Tri-town monitors requests for tap-ons annually, to assess needs for changes in capacity and service. Incremental improvements and expansions have occurred over the years to meet changing demand--for example, an additional storage tank was built on Snake Mountain, and a pumping station was added in Richville to meet increased usage requirements. The limit of pumping capacity has been approached during an occasional extended summer heat wave, but these instances have been short lived. A major expansion was completed in 2002. They anticipate that the facility will accommodate demands in the years to come.

Central Vermont Public Service Corp supplies electrical power.

The independent Shoreham Telephone Co. provides telephone service.

The United States Postal Service maintains a Post Office near the village center.

On April 1, 1999 the town purchased the 326-acre Farnham property for purposes of siting the new wastewater facility. Although the facility, which was constructed in 2000, only needed 16 acres, the opportunity and price of the entire parcel was too good to pass up. The land, which stretches from Route 74 in the village, north along Route 22A for almost a mile, and west into the Cedar Swamp, is generally wetland, with some hayland and ledge outcroppings. The town is studying the suitability of using the ledge area for a stone quarry, which could be used by our road crew for the upkeep and improvement of our roads.

Town ownership of the Farnham property, with it proximity to the village and its entire frontage, gives the town an unprecedented opportunity to direct future growth and development in the village area and along the Route 22A corridor.

Recreational facilities include two state fishing and boating accesses on Lake Champlain, a town access to Lake Champlain, and two state fishing accesses on Richville Pond. The Town Common is used for a variety of recreational activities such as baseball, softball, basketball, and town festivities. The Town also owns a five-acre municipal forest on Lapham Bay Road, called Morton Park in honor of Shoreham's native son and the 22nd Vice President of the U.S., Levi P. Morton.

The former town school district #5 building on State Route 22A is maintained by the Shoreham Historical Society and houses a meeting space and small museum.

There are nine cemeteries in Shoreham, four of which are currently in use. St. Genevieve's Cemetery is run by the town's Catholic Church, while the Village Cemetery, Lakeview Cemetery, and East Shoreham Cemetery all have their own cemetery associations to oversee them.

There are numerous civic and community organizations in town (in addition to the above-mentioned) including: 4-H, Boy and Girl Scouts, Parents-Teachers-Friends (PTF), and the Shoreham Gathering. The former Shoreham Boosters established a nature trail behind the school for the children, and built a basketball court and Gazebo on the Town Common. The Shoreham Gathering is a civic and social group open to any adult living in Shoreham.

Town facilities have been adequate for many years, but with increased development and changes in technology and management practices some additions and improvements are being considered.

GOALS

A. Provide an environmentally sound, and energy cost-efficient system of public facilities and services to meet present and future demands for education, transportation, fire protection, public safety, emergency medical services, water supply, sewage treatment, solid waste management and disposal, and other essential needs.

B. Reduce environmental degradation and extend the life of the regional landfill by encouraging waste reduction, and recycling.

C. Develop a capital budget for maintenance, expansion, and replacement of town operated, community facilities and equipment.

D. Consider building or locating a larger building to accommodate the town's current and future office needs.

E. Encourage the reduction of non-point phosphorous pollution by controlling run-off.

F. Develop a master plan for potential uses of the Farnham Property.

POLICIES

A. Maintain or improve present levels of services.

B. Plan growth over time so that the Town's facilities, services, and natural resources are not overburdened by development. Locate, cluster, and/or design new development in areas that are able to provide necessary levels of facilities and services.

C. The construction or expansion of public and/or private community facilities and services should be consistent with the goals and policies of this plan.

D. Encourage and support maintenance and use of historic town structures, such as Newton Academy, through a variety of methods, including private and public financial and technical assistance, and the establishment of an historic buildings trust fund.

E. Encourage and support initiatives by public and private groups that seek to build or enhance recreational facilities for Shoreham residents, such as hiking, skiing, and/or snowmobile trails, athletic fields, a fishing pier and/or increased boating access on Lake Champlain, etc.

F. Locate, to the greatest extent practical, new or expanded public utilities within existing highway or utility rights-of-way.

G. Promote maximum waste reduction, conservation, and recycling, and encourage the use of a solid waste transfer service near the present recycling center.

H. Provide and maintain adequate levels of recreational facilities and programs to serve Shoreham's residents, through private and/or public initiative, and enhance the sense of community felt by its residents.

I. Take steps to ensure that higher levels of (state and federal) government do not plan and construct facilities that are incompatible with the goals and objectives of this plan.

J. Encourage and support interested citizens who volunteer to develop and enhance community facilities and programs.

K. Inventory the various topographical, transportation and other physical features that will effect the future development of the Farnham Property.

NATURAL, HISTORIC, AND SCENIC RESOURCES

The many natural, historic, and scenic resources in Shoreham constitute an integral and essential part of the town, and serve to reflect its character and heritage.

Natural Resources

OBSERVATIONS

Natural resources are entities of Shoreham's physical features that are derived from geological or biological activities, which may or may not have apparent market value, but that do have broad economic value for the town and the region as a whole. Our natural resources include our agricultural soils, surface waters including Lake Champlain and Lemon Fair River, ground waters, shoreline areas, earth resources, wildlife and plant life, wetlands such as the Cedar Swamp, and several prominent hills in a rolling topography typifying our area.

Surface waters are valuable as a water source, recreation areas, habitat for wildlife and vegetation, and an aesthetic resource. These values can be diminished by pollution, alternation, or overuse. This resource is complex and has been adversely affected by runoff, invasive species, and other biological factors. These influences ultimately impact this vital water resource.

Shoreham's agricultural soils are quite fertile, but the heavier clay soils can be difficult to work. Agriculture involving growing forage crops to support the livestock is the predominant land use. Large tracts of this productive, tillable land contribute to the viability of agriculture.

Permanently conserved land is an asset to the community. Conserved land also contributes to the perpetuation of the desirable open land/working landscape that is the essence of Shoreham's character. Development not only reduces the opportunities for such recreational use of the countryside, but also increases the need for (and cost of) town services, such as schools and roads.

Wetlands, such as Cedar Swamp, provide temporary storage for floodwaters, as well as providing filtration that improves water quality. Wetlands provide habitat for wildlife.

Ground water resources are vital to those who depend on wells for potable water. With most of the town served by Tri-Town Water, we are less aware of this vital resource, but that makes it no less important to maintain its quality.

Earth resources include gravel, shale, and rock. Historically, there have been many pits and quarries, mostly developed for use by the owners for personal or local use. Most building aggregates are trucked in from somewhat distant locations.

Shoreham's combination of open meadowland with sheltering wooded and wet areas makes it excellent habitat supporting a variety of wildlife, benefiting all, from birdwatcher to hunter.

GOALS

A. Assure the recognition and conservation of Shoreham's Natural Resources.
B. Preserve and improve the condition of our surface and ground water resources.
C. Increase public awareness and appreciation of our agricultural soils, surface waters, and natural resources, and their importance in our daily life.

D. Encourage awareness that development on our prime soils will hasten the loss of our prime industry, agriculture–and may contribute to loss of hunting and recreational opportunities.
E. Reduce non-point phosphorous pollution.

POLICIES

A. Promote use of our natural resources based on a philosophy of conservation and long-term sustainability.
B. When natural resources are used, such use should not conflict with the goals of the Town Plan.
C. Encourage development patterns that do not break up large tracts of agricultural land.
D. Promote and support agricultural uses of the land.
E. Encourage only limited development with good septic systems along lakes and rivers to preserve the health of the waters.
F. Encourage practices such as buffer zones and erosion control to protect surface waters from phosphorous runoff.
G. Promote education about phosphorous and control of non-point phosphorous pollution.
H. Develop and implement road maintenance and construction guidelines that reduce erosion from roads and construction sites with a goal toward phosphorous reduction.

Natural Areas

OBSERVATIONS

Natural Areas are those areas in Shoreham containing landscape features, which have special geological and/or biological significance (see also the Natural Areas definition in the Regional Plan). Natural areas include, but are not limited to, Hand's Cove, with its diverse ecosystem; the wooded slopes of Shoreham's highest hill—the Pinnacle—with its rich array of native wildflowers; and the Lemon Fair River Basin, with its geological and biological diversity.

GOALS

A. Encourage the recognition and conservation of Shoreham's Natural Areas, understanding that such areas exist both as an integral part of our rural environment, as well as a reminder of our role in the natural ecosystem.
B. Encourage awareness of our natural heritage through education about the importance of Natural Areas.

POLICIES

A. Preserve Shoreham's natural areas by guiding future growth and plans accordingly.

Historic Resources

OBSERVATIONS

Our historic and cultural heritage is well documented by numerous residential, agricultural, and educational structures. The following properties have been designated and are listed on the National Register of Historic Places: the East Shoreham Covered Railroad Bridge, Larrabee's Point, Hand's Cove, the Congregational Church, and the school house on Elmendorf Road. Fifty-five sites and structures in Shoreham are on the State Register of Historic Sites, and the village is a Historic District on the State Register. The historic significance of Hand's Cove has been recognized through a conservation easement on an adjacent property. At least one farm is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The Shoreham Historical Society has been, and continues to be, an active citizen's organization in the Town. The above suggests a strong public commitment to the recognition and preservation of our historical heritage.

One of our goals is to consider increased utilization and preservation of some of the historic buildings on the Commons.

GOALS

A. Encourage preservation of Shoreham's state, town, and privately owned historically significant structures and places.
B. Encourage continued awareness of our heritage and historic resources through education programs in the local schools, etc.

POLICIES

A. Take reasonable steps, which are flexible to extenuating circumstances, to ensure the protection of historically significant structures and sites.
B. Encourage adaptive re-use of historic structures.

Scenic Resources

OBSERVATIONS

The scenic resources of Shoreham are all around us, and reflect the agricultural character of our working landscape, and the natural topography of the Town. With approximately 8,000 acres (25%) of Shoreham's land base conserved for agriculture in perpetuity, the Town may be able to capitalize on its scenic resources through tourism. At least three businesses and a number of retail agricultural operations currently directly benefit from the tourist's dollars that are left in Town. "Scenic Resources" may mean different things to different people, but the physical beauty that surrounds us contributes in a variety of ways to the richness of life in our rural community.

GOALS

A. The Town and its residents should both recognize and value the emotional and economic importance of our scenic resources.
B. Consider the working agricultural landscape, as well as the village with its Commons and public and private buildings, scenic resources.
C. Recognize that Shoreham's scenic resources have economic benefits for a variety of business and commercial activities.
D. Recognize that Shoreham's working farms contribute to the attractive open lands that both residents and travelers find so appealing.

POLICIES

A. The Town's residents should be encouraged to work co-operatively to enhance Shoreham's scenic resources.
B. Supporting the continuation of agriculture will have a positive effect on our landscape.
C. Encourage an appreciation of our scenic and natural resources so they may be maintained and enhanced for the enjoyment of future generations.
D. Encourage sensible development.

ENERGY

OBSERVATIONS

The most commonly used sources of energy for Shoreham's residential, agricultural, and commercial needs are presently available in adequate supply, as are suitable distribution systems for our immediate future needs. These energy sources include electricity, petroleum based liquid fuels and propane, coal, solar, water, wood, and wind, with their respective distribution systems. While today's requirements are being met, any increase in agricultural, commercial, or residential activity will almost certainly be accompanied by an increased demand for energy. Without planning, these increases could result in changes that would detract from the uncluttered rural atmosphere that we now enjoy in Shoreham. Similarly, increased energy demands occurring outside of town could require the installation, in town, of new or enlarged energy transport corridors that would adversely affect Shoreham's beauty and character.

GOALS

A. Support energy conservation.
B. Encourage the use of renewable energy sources wherever practical.
C. Encourage the use of the most efficient, least polluting types of energy sources by Shoreham consumers.
D. Seek to make available adequate amounts of dependable, low cost energy, with a minimum impact on safety.
E. Encourage energy production and delivery and/or transportation systems that minimize adverse effects on the town's rural, agricultural, and historical character.
F. Minimize the number of energy transmission and transport corridors through Shoreham, and maximize the use of existing corridors and equipment.

POLICIES

A. Stay abreast of emerging technologies that might lead to future problems, or to solutions of current problems.
B. Stay abreast of issues involving: energy-related installations, policies, transport issues, or other matters that might affect Shoreham.
C. Encourage joint usage of facilities by energy and utility suppliers.
D. Encourage municipal departments to show leadership, in matters of energy conservation and efficiency, in their application of the goals of this plan.
E. Encourage energy conservation through promotion of ride-share programs and high insulation and energy efficiency standards in new and remodeling construction projects.
F. Encourage the application of alternative, renewable energy technologies, particularly with solar, wood, and wind resources, in both public and private sectors.
G. Encourage the design and construction of energy efficient structures, including residential, public, business, and commercial facilities, wherever possible.
H. Encourage siting of new construction in such a way as to maximize the efficient use of energy, e.g. use cluster housing where appropriate, locate structures near existing public roads and energy transmission facilities, maintain traditional land use and settlement patterns, design structures to maximize solar gain, etc.
I. Encourage competition among energy and utility providers, in an effort to ensure that an adequate, low cost "menu of services" will be available for consumers.
J. Encourage energy use, sources, transmission, etc. in ways that are compatible with other sections of the Town Plan, especially those that will not adversely affect Shoreham's rural character.

COMPATIBILITY WITH OTHER TOWN PLANS

Shoreham lies at the southern end of the Champlain Valley, bounded by Lake Champlain to the west, Orwell to the south, Whiting and Cornwall to the east, and Bridport to the north. While all five of these towns share a similar rural, agricultural heritage, Cornwall seems to be losing its agricultural community faster than the others, as it becomes more of a bedroom community for Middlebury professionals. That said, all of our neighboring towns with current Town Plans share many of the same concerns as we do, including (but certainly not limited to): open land, highway use patterns, and taxes. Shoreham's Town Plan proposes no goals, policies, or suggested actions that are incompatible with the current plans of our neighboring towns.

Land Use

All of the plans of adjacent towns address the principle of maintaining open land through agriculture. Most agree that the land should remain open using "Generally Accepted Agricultural Practices". Most address conserving viable farmland through Planned Residential Developments and other cluster housing concepts in order to retain the historic development pattern of compact village centers with surrounding open farmland.

Transportation

Our neighboring towns share our concern about the number and types of vehicles passing through our region on the state highways, and address some of the inherent dangers they pose. Both excessive speeds and roads built for "1970 traffic" combine to present a potential for disaster. Increased bicycle traffic is discussed by surrounding towns, as is the need for wider shoulders to accommodate bicycle traffic.

Population and Housing

All towns express concerns over the lack of—and/or the difficulty of obtaining—affordable housing, as well as the specific housing problems faced by the elderly. Planned Residential Developments and Community Land Trusts are mentioned in Cornwall and Orwell as possible solutions to potential conflicts between current land uses and future housing needs. Reference is made to the impending effects of demographic changes and the recent housing building boom and express concern over the potential increases in property taxes to pay for services that will be needed to support additional residential development. Orwell and Bridport propose limiting residential development to less than an average local or county rate, and mention impact fees to help fund the required infrastructure.

Education

Education facilities in Shoreham and its surrounding towns are considered adequate for the near (5 year) future. Bridport and Orwell's town schools go through the eighth grade, Shoreham and Cornwall's schools go through sixth and feed Middlebury Union Middle and High School, and Whiting's school teaches children through sixth grade, before sending them onto Otter Valley Jr. High. The five towns' high school students are educated by three different Union High School Districts, including: Fair Haven UHS (Orwell), Otter Valley UHS (Whiting), and Middlebury UHS (Bridport, Cornwall, and Shoreham). This phenomenon has had the effect, over the years, of fracturing the earlier cohesiveness of the region's towns, which had been based on shared (or similar) socio-economic, occupational, and geographical histories.

The property tax burden is the "hot button" topic in all the towns, with one town calling it their "single most significant issue" (emphasis theirs). We call on the legislature to pay for any mandate they pass for education (or any other purpose), and to find ways to fund education other than relying so excessively on the property tax.

Energy

Most plans recognize that the supply and price of energy resources are far beyond the control of a town or its citizens, but all urge conservation and efficient use of their energy resources.

Community Facilities

All towns have facilities and resources typically found in small, rural communities. One area of consideration, mentioned in several Plans, is the need to obtain or provide public access to public waterways within, or adjacent to, the respective towns.

Natural, Scenic, & Historic Resources

All towns recognize the need to protect and maintain these resources and areas using a variety of approaches, most of which typically limit or restrict the haphazard introduction of single-family dwellings or commercial development. All towns recognize the importance and value of our natural resources such as waters, wetlands, soils, natural areas, scenic and historical resources as integral to our existence and to why we live here. Various means are proposed to protect and maintain their resources.

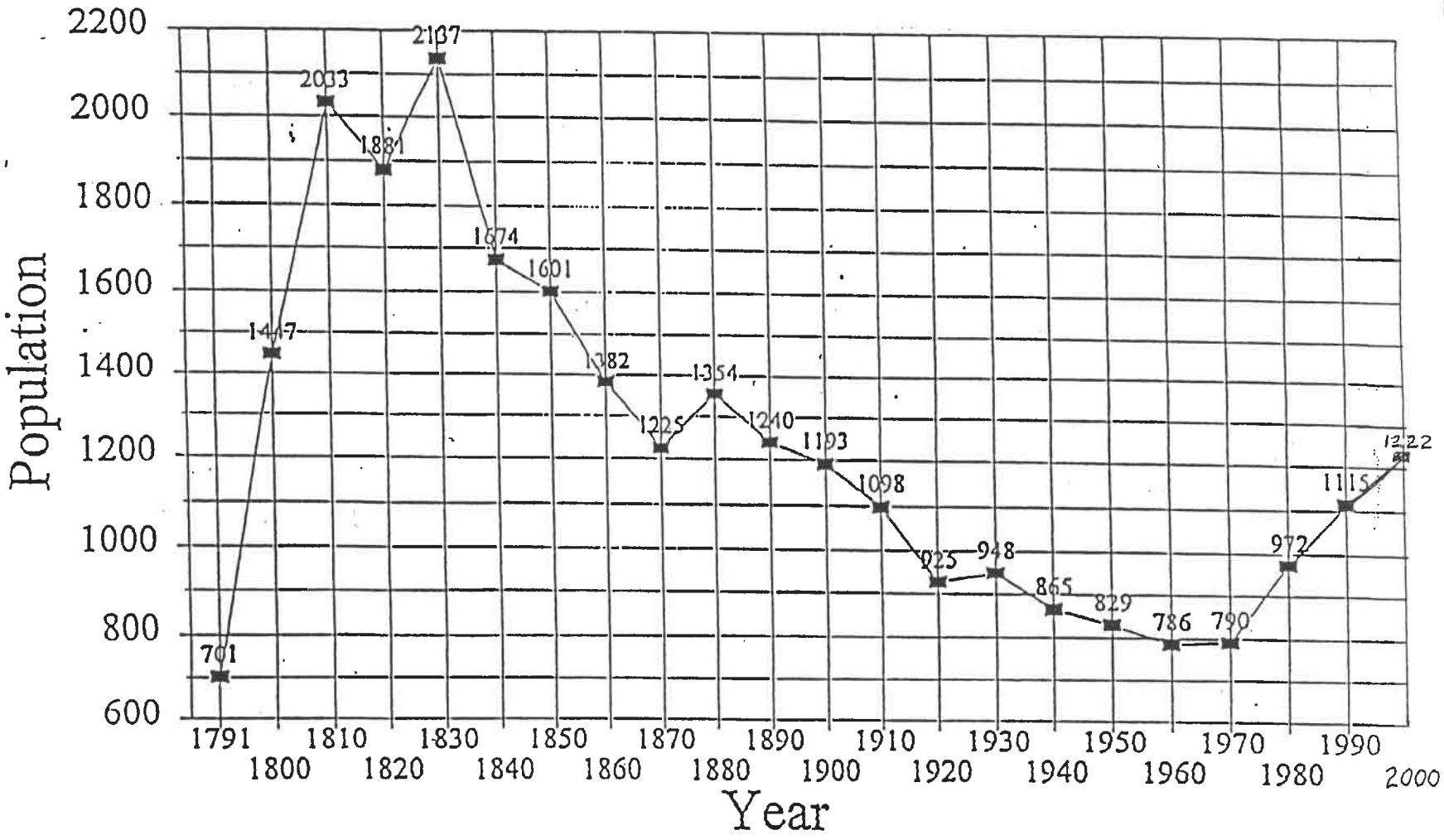
Commercial Activity in the Town of Shoreham

Commercial activity in Shoreham includes:

1) Agriculture/Forest	-	Apple Orchards
	-	Dairy
	-	Beef
	-	Vegetables
	-	Christmas Trees
	-	Plants
	-	Agricultural processing and storage
	-	Game Birds
	-	Fallow Deer
2) Retail	-	Gasoline
	-	Grocery Outlets
	-	Antique Stores
	-	Fruit & Vegetable Stands
	-	Restaurant
3) Lodging	-	Inns
	-	Bed & Breakfasts
4) Home-based Businesses	-	Hair Dresser
	-	Media Services
	-	Excavating Contractors
	-	Bookkeeping
	-	Painting Contractors
	-	Building Contractors
	-	Distributors
	-	Cleaning
	-	Insurance
	-	Trucking
	-	Auto Repair
	-	Diesel Repair
	-	Upholstery
	-	Daycare
	-	Bakery
	-	Framing
	-	Publishing
5) Misc. Commercial Activity	-	Quarrying
	-	Ferryboat
	-	Tour boat
	-	Sawmills
	-	Shorewell Clinic
	-	Gallery
	-	Shooting Preserve
	-	Seed Distribution and Sales

Shoreham Town

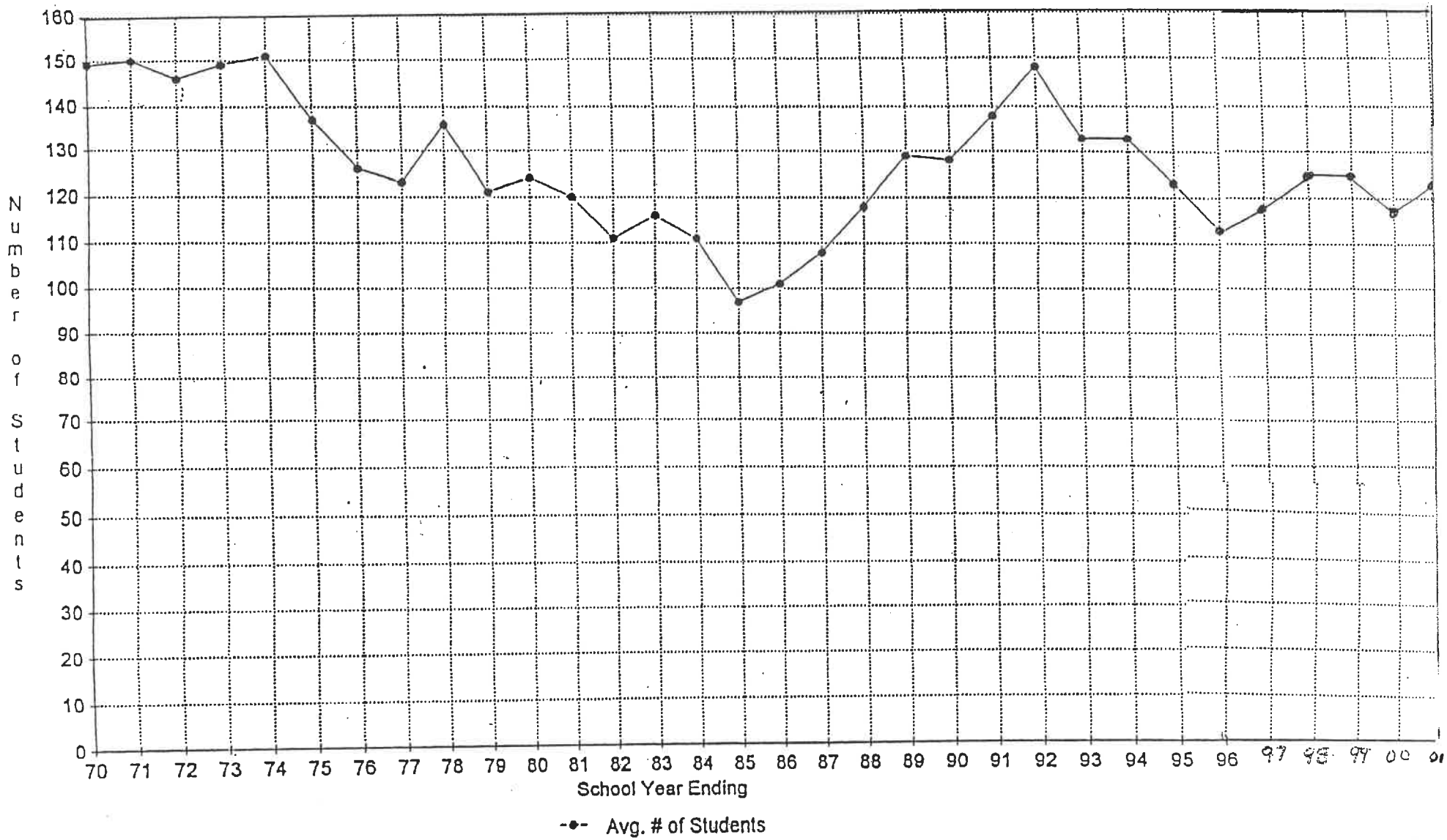
Population: 1791-2000



Source: Two Hundred Years and Counting, Center for Rural Studies, University of Vermont, 1993.

Average Daily Student Enrollment

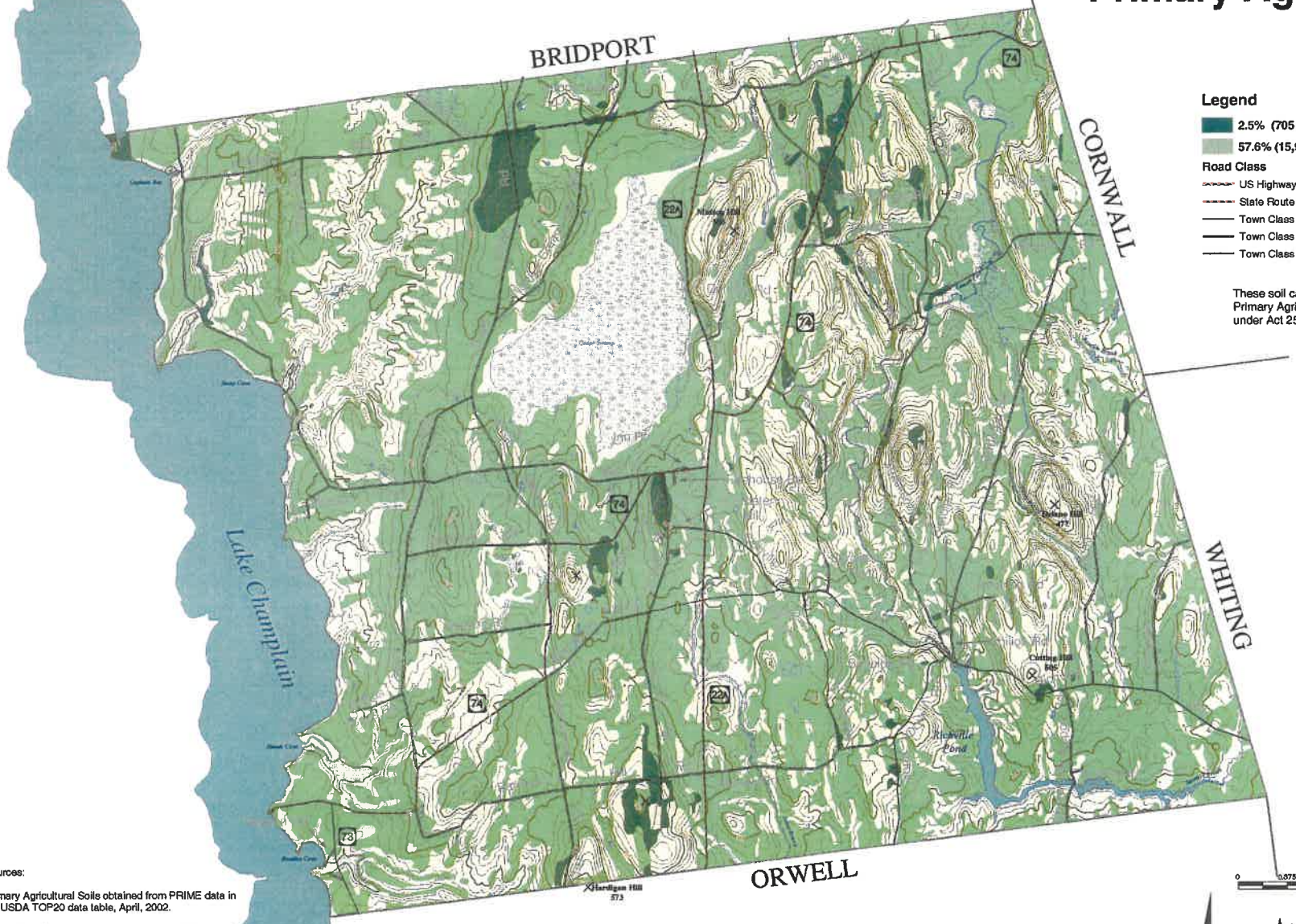
Shoreham Elementary School, 1970-2001



Source: Shoreham's Annual Town Reports

Town of Shoreham

Primary Agricultural Soils



Legend

- 2.5% (705 acres) - National Prime Agricultural Soils
- 57.6% (15,944 acres) - Statewide and Local Agricultural Soils

Road Class

- US Highway
- State Route or Class 1
- Town Class 2
- Town Class 3
- Town Class 4

These soil categories are considered Primary Agricultural Soils for planning under Act 250.

Contour Interval 20 Foot

0 0.375 0.75 1.5 2.25 Miles

This map intended for planning purposes

N

Addison County REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

GIS

Sources:

Primary Agricultural Soils obtained from PRIME data in VT USDA TOP20 data table, April, 2002.

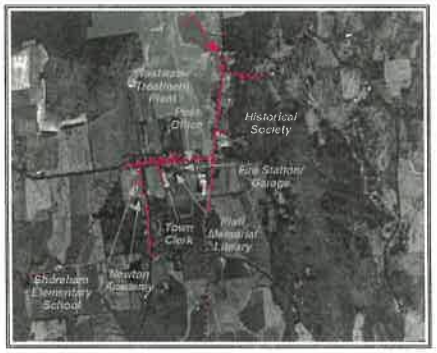
Road Centerlines: VT Agency of Transportation (1:5000)

Road Names: E911 Contacts for Towns (2002)

ACRPC 4/2005

Town of Shoreham

Transportation, Facilities Education and Road Names



Village Inset Legend

- Town Propertys
- Sewer Line

Legend

- US Highway
- State Route or Class 1
- Town Class 2
- Town Class 3
- Town Class 4

Sources:

Road Centerlines: VT Agency of Transportation (1:5000)

Road Names: E911 Contacts for Towns (2002)

ACRPC 4/2008

0 0.4 0.8 1.6 2.4 Miles

N

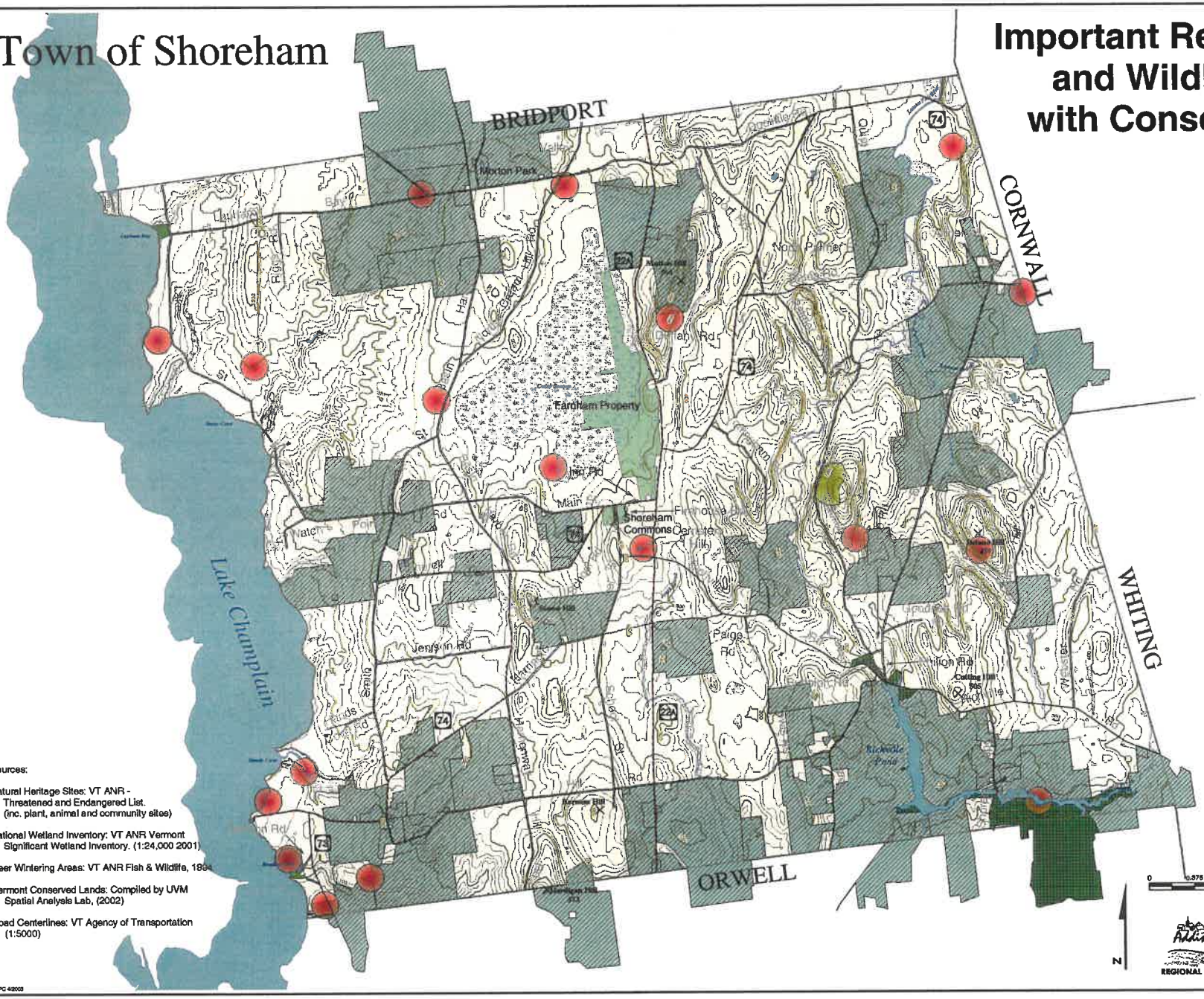
This map intended for planning purposes

Addison County Regional Planning Commission

GIS

Town of Shoreham

Important Resource Areas and Wildlife Habitat with Conserved Lands



Sources:

Natural Heritage Sites: VT ANR - Threatened and Endangered List. (inc. plant, animal and community sites)

National Wetland Inventory: VT ANR Vermont Significant Wetland Inventory. (1:24,000 2001)

Deer Wintering Areas: VT ANR Fish & Wildlife, 199

Vermont Conserved Lands: Compiled by UVM Spatial Analysis Lab, (2002)

Road Centerlines: VT Agency of Transportation (1:5000)

This map intended for planning purposes

Addison County Regional Planning Commission

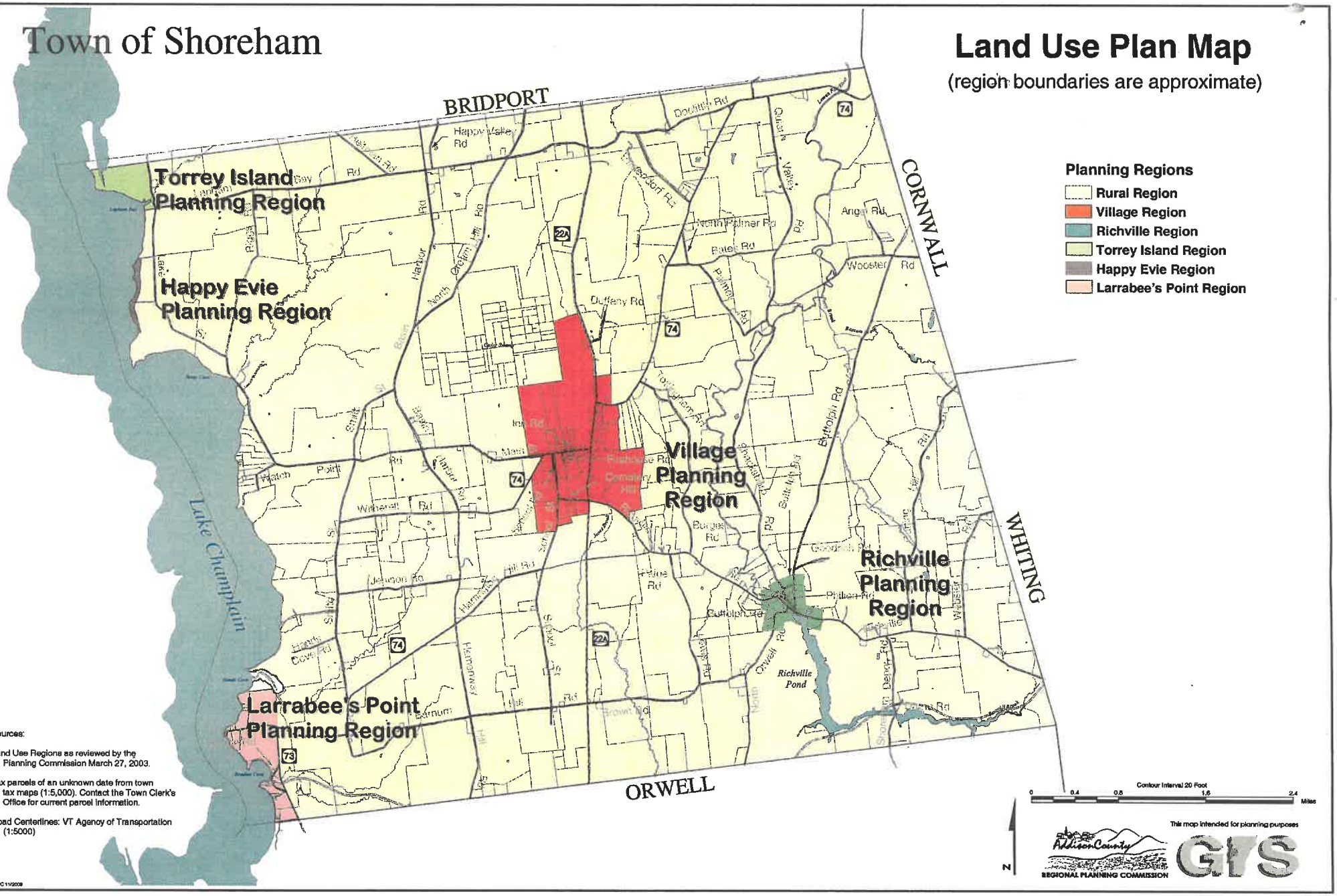
GIS

ACRPC 4/2003

Town of Shoreham

Land Use Plan Map

(region boundaries are approximate)



Sources:

Land Use Regions as reviewed by the Planning Commission March 27, 2003.

Tax parcels of an unknown date from town tax maps (1:5,000). Contact the Town Clerk's Office for current parcel information.

Road Centerlines: VT Agency of Transportation (1:5000)

ACRPC 11/2009