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INTRODUCTION

To gather public input for the interim Town Plan the Planning Commission held meetings with representatives from eleven different organizations in Town, which provided a cross section of views from individuals who are extensively involved in the community. It is the intent of the Planning Commission continue with further citizen group meetings when returning to completing the updating of the Town Plan, which is estimated will proceed in about three months. The intervening time will be used to complete a number of Commission tasks which we believe should not be delayed until a new plan is completed and approved. The Commissions goal is to completely update a new Town Plan by the next Town Meeting.

This Interim Plan includes updates to the resources and housing sections, also the addition of a section on Child Care. Further, corrections have been made in the balance of the text where changes since the year 2000 have rendered the subject matter obsolete.

It is hoped that this Interim Plan indicates the desire of the Planning Commission to develop a vision of the future which is achievable and reflects the wishes of our citizens.

SECTION A: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

I. Statement of Goals, Objectives, Policies and Programs

Topic: Land Use: Planned Development

Goal: To plan for the inevitable growth and development of the town.

Objective: To continue orderly growth by locating growth areas for residential and commercial development, which will facilitate the expansion of public utilities and community, services while retaining the character of the community.

Policy: The town should revise its zoning ordinance to ensure that growth is managed and development is encouraged within the limits of the village and town.

Program: The Town Planning Commission will undertake an update and revision of the town-zoning ordinance to comply with demands for controlled growth with an eye on subdivision growth and thoughtful minimal planning.

Topic: Land Use Plan: Employment Opportunities

Goal: To attract business activities which will employ area residents.

Objective: To develop within the town those locations and services which will be attractive to commercial and professional investors who may locate in the community.

Policy: The town should coordinate with the Rutland Economic Development Corporation (REDC), the Rutland Area Chamber of Commerce, Rutland Region Education alliance, and the Regional Planning Commission to establish programs for expanding job opportunities within the county and the town. Develop a resource center for materials, which would support business development and financial assistance.

Program: The town is a member of the REDC. There is a need to study the opportunities for job development within Pittsford. The town will solicit input from local businesses for ways to improve the business environment.

Topic: Land Use Plan: Economic Stability

Goal: To promote a vital local economy to serve area needs in a convenient and attractive manner.

Objective: To develop facilities compatible with the village and town character which will foster expansion of community services and development of a commercial and professional district.

Policy: The town should work with the Rutland Economic Development Corporation and similar business development organizations to determine the nature of community infrastructure and incentive, which will be conducive to business expansion.

Program: The town is a member of REDC and the Rutland Regional Planning Commission with the intent of using consultation services and grants to support business growth and expansion of public services.

Topic: Land Use Plan: Diversification

Goal: To create adequate supporting services for targeted industry and commercial enterprises which will promote economic diversification within the community.

Objective: To locate services and industry which can be expanded or developed within the industrial zone.

Policy: The town should research the opportunities for expanding existing facilities or building additional municipal or private water and sewage systems to satisfy industrial requirements.

Program: The town should research and pursue development opportunities and requirements for enhancement of infrastructure supporting industrial growth.

Topic: Transportation Plan: Village District

Goal: To provide for safe, convenient, economic transportation management and services within the village district.

Objective: To continue to reduce traffic congestion and improve parking and pedestrian safety within the village.

Policy: The town should continue to seek alternatives to reduce the traffic density and calm traffic within the district. Options should be for improving sidewalks and pedestrian security and there is a need for a safe route for children to walk to school, summer school and the recreational facility and for increasing areas available for on street or off street parking.

Program: The town should pursue a traffic calming study and review-policing policy

Topic: Transportation Plan: Highway Maintenance

Goal: To improve the surface condition and longevity of the town's total highway system consistent with rural and village land use patterns.

Objective: To expand the level of annual maintenance on town roads so that more total road miles are repaired each year and paved surfaces are prepared and maintained sufficiently so that a newly paved surface will accept at least 10 years of wear before resurfacing.

Policy: The town has established a program for assessing the condition of road surfaces and has developed a maintenance strategy and capital budget, which prioritizes road repairs; this program includes improved maintenance, safer roads, and longer wearing surfaces.

Program: The town will continue to manage and is developing a road surface management system for tracking the subsurface and surface condition of all town roads. The town will continue constructing a master plan and a capital program for both short term and long-term maintenance and expansion of paved and unpaved surfaces.

Topic: Transportation Plan: Public Transportation

Goal: To increase opportunities for all citizens, but particularly elderly or disabled citizens, to access community and regional services.

Objective: To assess the use of public transportation on a scheduled basis throughout the town.

Policy: The town will support regularly scheduled bus service from Pittsford to neighboring communities as a means to reduce commuter traffic and facilitate movement to medical, shopping and other services.

Program: The town will coordinate with the Regional Planning Commission to conduct a survey of community interest and will perform a cost-benefit analysis on the subject of scheduled service by "THE BUS." The Marble Valley Transit has scheduled routes between Middlebury and Rutland and should be supported by Town Government.

Topic: Utility and Facility Plan

- Goal: To expand and or maintain all public services within the town to meet the needs of public health, residential and business growth.
- Objective: To develop a master plan and capital budget for acquisition of equipment and management of facility expansion.
- Policy: The town should coordinate with the Regional Planning Commission and REDC to construct a 5-year program for capital investment.
- Program: The town will appoint a committee to prepare a capital plan and budget for annual submission at the Town Meeting.

Topic: Policies on Preservation of Resources: Stream Quality

- Goal: Protect, preserve, and improve the quality and quantity of surface waters for a variety of uses.
- Objective: Encourage creation and maintenance of buffer zones of a width adequate to reduce loading of sediments and nutrients into our waterways.
- Policy: The town should adopt development standards to protect streams.
- Program: Encourage greater awareness of the need for and benefits of using best land management practices in areas adjacent to water resources.
As a part of the zoning and subdivision ordinances, the town will develop land use standards, which will protect stream quality.

Topic: Policies on Preservation of Resources: Public Water Supply

- Goal: Protect, preserve and improve the quality and quantity of existing and potential ground water resources.
The town should encourage private sectors to protect and preserve their aquifers.
Encourage adopting measures to safeguard our town's water resources.
- Objective: Current and alternate drinking water supplies shall be protected.
- Policy: The town is in the process of renewing the public well head protection plan.
- Program: The town will support acquisition of the two private aquifer areas by the private users.

Topic: Policies on Preservation of Resources: Agricultural Lands

- Goal: To conserve agricultural lands and to encourage and strengthen agricultural practices.
- Objective: To maintain open space and the historically rural character of the community by continuing agricultural practices as an economic resource.
- Policy: The town should encourage product diversification as a means to sustain agricultural growth within a changing economy.
- Program: The town will explore the merits of establishing an Agriculture Preservation Committee of local residents and the Vermont Department of Agriculture to explore economically viable farming practices and products.

Topic: Policies on Preservation of Resources: Forests

- Goal: To conserve forestry resources.
- Objective: To encourage forestry management programs which improve the quality of wood lots as a timber resource and support the containment of wildlife habitat.
- Policy: The town should encourage landowners to utilize state resources to manage their forested lands.
- Program: The town will support the "Current Use" or "Land Use" management program and will encourage improved support services for sustainable forestry practices.

Topic: Policies on Preservation of Resources: Recreation

- Goal: To develop a broad range of recreational resources for use by all citizens within the town.
- Objective: To develop a comprehensive parks and recreation program for year round use of all community resources. To update the town's recreation plan.
- Policy: The town will continue to have a trails committee to organize the recreational trails program into the town recreation plan and should thoroughly review the recreation plan in light of community interests and expanded facilities.
- Program: The town will continue to enhance the trails network and review additional options available to utilize recreational assets on a whole year basis.

Topic: Educational Facilities Plan: Continuing Education

- Goal: To offer educational and cultural opportunities for all ages through an organized evening and summer program of classes and activities.
- Objective: To develop a community program of "creative education" using Pittsford residents to instruct small classes in subjects ranging from music, hobbies, athletic programs, language training, computer education, etc.
- Policy: The town should establish an education program, which will take advantage of the skills residents have developed which can be taught to others. The town should attempt to fully utilize available community facilities such as school, town hall, recreation area, library, etc. for this instruction.
- Program: The town will continue to build on current programs offered by the Library and the Recreation Department. Guidelines for instruction, facilities management, insurance, student fees, and program management will be determined by the Recreation Committee.

Topics: Housing Plan

- Goal: To meet the full spectrum of housing demands of both current and future residents.
- Objective: To encourage the availability of decent, safe and sanitary housing for all residents in a visually attractive environment within a wide range of costs.
- Policy: The town should continue to encourage reasonable control of residential development to balance the demands for all types of housing while planning for efficient community services and facilities.
- Program: There is a need to define areas most appropriate for development of residential housing to meet the full range of demands of the housing market.

Topic: Housing Plan: Rehabilitation

- Goal: To provide decent, safe and sanitary housing for all residents in a visually attractive environment and within a wide range of costs.
- Objective: To improve the condition of existing low and moderate income housing and to locate new options for meeting housing needs.
- Policy: The town supports the Bennington Rutland Opportunity Council (BROC) and the Rutland West Neighborhood Housing Services and will continue to work with BROC and other similar organizations to acquire grants and low interest revolving loans for improving the maintenance and safety of affordable housing while creating new housing to meet community demand.
- Program: The town has made application to the Vermont Community Development Program and has worked with BROC to acquire funding for the provision of rental and single family low to moderate income dwellings within the community. The town will continue to work with BROC and similar organizations.

II. Town Background Information

A. Physical Characteristics

The Town of Pittsford lies between the Taconic Mountains to the west and the Green Mountains to the east. Otter Creek, which winds its way between Florence and Pittsford, is the second largest watershed in the State of Vermont which flows into Lake Champlain. Florence and Pittsford is located within the Vermont Valley biophysical region. Furnace Brook also flows southwesterly through the town and has provided the source for power in the past.

On the west side of the Otter Creek, in a wide valley, is the Village of Florence, a rural and industrial zone of Pittsford. While the valley floor is generally within the 100-year flood plain, there several number of farms in operation. Because of its history as a source of marble and crushed stone, the valley is also Pittsford's primary industrial area. The hills to the west of Florence are generally steep slopes (15% or greater) with soil deficiencies which present limitations for development.

East of the Otter Creek, Pittsford is located in an area of favorable slopes and soils. This holds true except for lands along the East Creek which runs from the Chittenden reservoir through East Pittsford in a flood plain that was a 300 acre lake until a 1947 flood destroyed the dam.

Cox Mountain, Blueberry Hill, Biddie Knob, and Bald Peak all present limitations to extensive development due to their steep slope and poor soils. The most prevalent problems are unfavorable permeability, shallow depth to bedrock and an excessive amount of stone. These higher elevations retain rainfall providing for water supplies while supporting woodlands and marshes necessary for wildlife. Development here should be limited so as not to disturb the delicate nature of these areas.

B. Population

Pittsford's population increased 16.83% from 2,590 in 1980 to 3,026 in 1991 establishing the town as an urban municipality. Pittsford reached a population peak in 1991 growing from its recent lowest level in 1900 when the population was only 1,899. In 1791 the population was 850. The population grew to over 2,100 by 1870 then declined to 1,775 in 1890. By 1910 the population had increased to around 2,500 and has fluctuated over the following forty years or so. Pittsford's present population is about 3,200.

The town's central location in relation to both ski areas and lake regions has provided a general increase in seasonal residents. The number of seasonal residences, however, dropped 3.75% from 80 units in 1980 to 77 in 1991.

C. Economic Base

Pittsford's economy relies on manufacturing, commercial service enterprises, agriculture and tourism. Manufacturing activities consist of lumber, printing, woodworking, highway supplies, and processing of calcium carbonate.

Agricultural activities occur throughout the town. Commercial and service enterprises are found primarily on the main highways through the village, and sections of Routes 3 and 7. Additional local employment is provided by the Vermont Police Academy while many residents also work in Rutland City and County.

Town revenues are based upon property tax assessment of the grand list of property values of residential and commercial property as well as a property tax on business equipment, user fees for water and sewer, and a Village tax.

The following chart shows the distribution of taxes (not acreage) based upon the assessed grand list values in 2001 by categories determined by the Vermont State Lister's coding:

Property Type	% of Total Tax
Residential	45.68
Seasonal	3.00
Commercial	6.78
Industrial & Utilities	21.08
Farming	1.61
Woodland	0.57
Miscellaneous & Public Land	2.13
Personal Property	19.16

Pittsford is undertaking an effort to increase the level of commercial, professional, and industrial investment in the community. Construction or expansion of infrastructure should reinforce the general character and planned growth patterns of the area. Private capital, public funds, grants and loans should be used to finance this growth.

Supporting the town's interest in economic renewal is a program endorsed by the Agency of Transportation (AOT) to revitalize the village commercial zone. The AOT and the state legislature have directed funding to scope a reconstruction of Route 7, the main street through the village. The street level will be lowered for greater traffic safety and parking access and curbing and sidewalks constructed for greater pedestrian safety.

Town government consists of an elected Selectboard of five members, which establishes town policy and a town manager who administers policy and manages community services and fiscal programs.

SECTION B: FUNCTIONAL PLANS WITH SUPPORTING DATA

I. Land Use Plan

A. Traditional Land Use Patterns

Settlement patterns in Pittsford were initially determined by available waterpower, transportation routes and quality agricultural land. The combination of these factors led logically to the development along the Otter Creek valley while industries were attracted to the Florence area because of the availability of raw materials, primarily marble.

The Village of Pittsford developed above the Otter Creek flood plain on a major north-south transportation route, which became Route 7. Most of the town's commercial and service activities and community facilities are located within the village area. The village and town were merged in 1988 upon approval of the state legislature.

While the village is primarily residential, it is also the focus of an effort to attract commercial and professional facilities to the town. Portions of the Route 7 and Route 3 corridors leading into and through the village have been commercially zoned. As public services are expanded and traffic patterns are changed, it is hoped the extended village will become a center for a commercial/retail and professional facilities supporting the residential character of the area.

Florence, located on the west side of Route 7 and the Otter Creek, developed as an industrial center focusing upon marble and chemical processing. The railroad was important in the early development of the area and retains its importance as a spur of the Vermont Railway supporting activities in the area, particularly OMYA, Inc., a multinational corporation producing processed marble.

Other significant properties within the town are the Vermont Police Academy and Fire Fighting Academy as well as many seasonal homes and two summer children's camps. Individual residences and farmsteads are located throughout the town with agricultural land comprising almost one-half of the town's total area. It is this agricultural activity which defines the character of the town and which this plan and its associated zoning and subdivision ordinances will attempt to retain.

Several acres of forested land also exists in the town in the form of preserves or other lands unavailable for development. These properties include 1,787 acres owned by the Nature Conservancy, a 109 acre portion of the Proctor Town Forest, a 360 acre parcel owned by the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife, 55 acres owned by the Historical Society, 14 acres in a town forest, a 48 acre town recreational area, and 43 acres owned by the school district. These properties comprise a natural resource, which this plan endorses as worthy of retention in their natural state.

B. Future Land Use Areas

The following land use areas reflect the town's future plans for management of growth while considering the environmental constraints such as flood plains, wetlands, and steep slopes found throughout the community. Taken together, these areas provide a variety of agricultural, business, residential and recreational opportunities.

1. Village

This area is mostly the former Village of Pittsford. The Plan proposes to maintain the village's traditional social and physical character. Some portions of the village are long established and have little room for expansion, being suitable mainly for residences, neighborhood commercial uses, and recreation. The Village is also the site for much of the state and local governmental uses. The Pittsford Green Historic District, established in 1982 in the National Historic register, is seen by many as having potential as a focus for future community activities.

2. Rural

Rural Areas are those areas outside the village not otherwise designated for commercial, industrial or conservation. A large portion of the area is not served by municipal water or sewer. Growth in this area should be managed consistent with the character of the area, the availability of services, and the site conditions.

A planning objective of the town is to preserve the rural character, which has traditionally defined the community, by managing the development of open space and woodland while fostering economic growth.

Several areas of the town are especially adapted for agricultural activity. Farming contributes to the economic base of the community and defines the character of the town. Agricultural lands preserve open space and sanctuary for wildlife and waterfowl, utilize the flood plain in ways other business cannot, and foster the retention of forested areas as natural and economic resources. Throughout this plan, the town promotes the preservation and reclamation of land for farming. Furthermore the town endorses the Vermont "Current Use" Land program, which supports farmers in their efforts to maintain open spaces.

3. Industrial

Land in the Florence vicinity has traditionally been agricultural and industrial and offers potential for further industrial expansion. A rail spur serves the area; there is a direct truck access from Route 7; high voltage power service is provided; municipal water is available. While municipal services do not presently exist in Florence for wastewater treatment, consideration has been given to developing a sewer treatment facility. The proposed industrial area is composed primarily of land owned by OMYA and the Rail Road. Other sites adjacent to OMYA lands, and along access to the OMYA lands are also considered to have potential for industrial uses but may require substantial resources to make them useable for industrial purposes.

4. Commercial

Current and projected patterns of commercial growth within the town. These areas include the access into and out of the village along sections of Route 7. Appropriate uses within these zones are such as commercial, service, office, retail and wholesale sales, public and private clubs, drive-in establishments, commercial camp, commercial recreation, bank, art gallery, grocery store/market, research and development facility, shooting range, restaurant, shopping complex. Also included are all similar, accessory, related, and compatible uses.

5. Rural Commercial

The Rural Commercial Areas are located along portions of Route 3. The intent is to provide an area where light commercial uses would be permitted that would not detract from the residential atmosphere common throughout most of Route 3 but would permit residents to engage in activities that are somewhat more intensive than customary home occupations but not as intensive as the uses in the commercial areas.

6. Flood Plain Overlay

A floodplain is the flat land adjacent to rivers and streams that is periodically inundated to varying depths during flooding periods. The Federal Insurance Administration uses the 100-year flood frequency as the standard for delineating flood hazard areas. The 100-year flood has a one percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year. The flood of 1927 is estimated to be a 100-year frequency and was used as a standard for mapping Pittsford's floodplains. An applicant may appeal the Floodplain boundaries through the program.

There are currently 48 structures that lie in the floodplain. 44 are residential buildings, 3 are commercial, and 1 is unknown. There are also 2 fire hydrants in the flood plain¹. Much of the floodplain in the Town of Pittsford

¹ VCGI Data

is along the Otter Creek. Among these are the Otter Creek valley and portions of East Creek and Furnace Brook. As of 2-28-2006, there were 9 NFIP policies in-force, amounting to \$1, 539,400 insurance coverage².

Future structures in these areas are discouraged. The potential for flood damage in these areas is high and is likely to cause expense to land owners, the Town, and State and Federal Government.

An important function of floodplains is the storage and conveyance of floodwaters. New development and the associated fill placed in a floodplain can obstruct flood flows and reduce the ability of the floodplain to store water, which can subsequently cause floodwaters to rise to higher levels on upstream and adjacent properties. The Municipality should consider the effects of floodplain encroachment on all properties when making land use planning and management decisions.

The town should limit building and other investments in river corridors. In addition to preventing future flood losses to structures built in hazardous areas, this approach avoids constraining a river, allowing the stream or river, over time to become more stable. Statute 24 V.S.A. §4424 specifically authorizes towns to adopt zoning for shorelines, floodplains, and other hazardous areas, including fluvial erosion zones. .

Most communities in Vermont rely solely on the minimum standards of the NFIP to protect their communities from flood hazards. Floodplain management based solely on NFIP minimum regulations allow for development in floodplains that will reduce the floodplain's ability to convey and store water and will cumulatively result in increases in the 100-year flood elevation. A rise in floodwaters not only can cause properties that were once flood-free to now be flood-prone but can also cause increases in the velocity of floodwaters, thereby increasing the potential for erosion of stream banks during flooding.

In addition to not preserving the floodplains' flood storage and conveyance functions, NFIP minimum standards do not preserve other natural and beneficial functions of the floodplain, such as water quality maintenance and protection, groundwater recharge and discharge, and biologic resources and functions, which can have negative impacts on a community's economic and other resources. Communities may adopt more stringent regulations and are eligible to receive insurance premium discounts for their residents through participation in the Community Rating System.

(See Floodplain Map)

7. Wetlands Overlay

Several areas within Pittsford have been designated as wetlands. Uses in the wetlands are limited to seasonal recreational, agricultural, and open space. With the exception of agricultural buildings, if permitted by State and or Federal Jurisdictions, limited recreational use, and very limited other uses, construction within the wetlands is generally prohibited.

Areas within the Wetland Overlay are firstly considered as Wetlands. However, the land within the Wetland Overlay still retains its original Zoning District classification as is subject to the regulations for the applicable district as well as Wetlands Regulations.

8. Conservation

The conservation areas are land above the eight hundred (800) foot contour and are generally characterized by dense forests, steep hills with shallow or otherwise fragile soils, stream banks, and elevations where development is limited. Some of the more prominent areas within this district are Cox Mountain, Biddie Knob, Bald Peak, and Blueberry Hill. Other protected areas include lands owned by the Nature Conservancy and the town of Proctor, and some land owned by Pittsford and the State of Vermont. These lands are important sources for water supplies. They provide habitat for wildlife and offer scenic vistas of Pittsford which are essential components of the tourist industry. Development between the eight (800) foot and the eleven hundred (1,100) foot contours should be limited to residential and agricultural uses on lots of at least 2 acres, above 1,100 feet where residential uses prove feasible, given the availability of water and on-site sewage disposal, lots should be at least 5 acres.

² http://bsa.nfipstat.com/reports/1011_200702.htm#VTT

It is strongly suggested that the town consider within our zoning regulations which will impose specific limitations on portions of the town which are sensitive to view amenity or highly sensitive to development due to erosion, etc.

The zoning ordinance should include regulations limiting development along ridge lines, the development of telecommunications towers, along with the placement of signs.

9. Mineral Resources

Earth resources, such as sand, gravel, crushed stone, aggregate, calcium carbonate, dimensional, structural or architectural stone products are not only of value to the owner of the property on or under which such resources are located, but provide a direct and indirect source of employment and in the case of sand, gravel, crushed stone and aggregate, provide materials that are essential to construction of homes and businesses and maintenance of roads.

Although the extraction, processing and transportation of the earth and mineral resources that are located in Pittsford may create adverse and undesirable impacts on neighboring and surrounding land uses, such impacts, in and of themselves, may not be sufficiently adverse to warrant the prevention or prohibition of such extraction and processing. With appropriate consideration for surrounding land uses and proper mitigation measures, extraction of earth resources may be permitted on appropriately located sites in the town.

Granite, slate, marble, talc, and even asbestos are mined in Vermont. The minerals most commonly extracted in Rutland County are Slate, Marble, Kaolin and Iron ores. There are sufficient deposits of these minerals statewide to last for millennia at current rates of consumption. Currently, there are 18 working mines in Rutland County³. Though mineral resources seem inexhaustible in quantity, there is an increasing demand as the populations increase. Also, the public may decide that quarrying many of these deposits is unacceptable, reducing the useable supply. Operating gravel quarries, for example, may have reserves sufficient for only the next 20 years.

The extraction and processing of mineral resources is also a significant economic activity in Vermont and Rutland County. According to the 2000 census, mining provides 109 people in Rutland County with full time jobs. Omya Inc., producer of finely ground calcium carbonate, has one of its six North American production plants in Florence, hamlet of Pittsford. Calcium carbonate is manufactured for the food, medicines, paper, paint, and plastic industries. The plant produces dry and slurry products that are transported primarily by rail cars. Omya Inc. stimulates significant economic activity in the Town of Pittsford, and in the greater area, and is seen as a key business in the growth and success of the town in the future.

10. Agricultural/Forestry Resources

Outside of the Pittsford Village, remains a rural area with a variety of active farm (beef, dairy, sheep, hay, vegetable, etc.) and farm-related businesses. Farmland consist of a variety of foods and other farm goods produced in Pittsford beef, lamb, eggs, vegetables, honey, maple syrup, Christmas trees and specialty “value-added” foods such as jams and home canned goods.

Pittsford has seen a shift in the size and number of farms over the past ten years. While there has been a decrease in the number of acres in active farm production, there has simultaneously been an increase in the overall number of productive farms. This can be explained by the loss of large dairy farms which require a high number of acres, and an increase in specialized market farms which tend to be smaller in acreage.

Several dairy farms are being operated by farmers close to retirement age. When younger generations decide not to take over the farm or might not have someone to carry on, some farms simply go out of business. The loss has slowed more recently.

³ Census 2000

Agricultural lands developed for other uses are often fragmented into parcels that are not large enough to support a viable farm operation. Although much of the agricultural soils are still undeveloped in these situations, the difficulty of managing these separately owned properties for a single agricultural enterprise could exclude their use for agriculture now and in the future.

One challenge identified by farmers is the changing workforce in this Region. Many of the farms with large seasonal production needs (for example, vegetable or dairy producers) are finding it difficult to find highly productive local workers when they need them.

The management practices of farming and forestry operations directly relate to the health of the region's soils and waters. Accepted Agricultural Practices (Farming) and Acceptable Management Practices (Forestry) are state law restrictions that when implemented balance water quality improvements with the need to sustain a healthy, economically viable agricultural industry.

Medium and Large Farm Operations, a state designation based on the number of animals on the farms, are more stringently regulated to protect water quality. There are many technical and financial resources available to farms to develop and implement comprehensive farm management plans that address environmental considerations. The purpose of these programs is to help agricultural producers address nutrient management needs with the help of on-farm consultant assistance to improve management practices that will positively affect water quality and farm sustainability. These statewide programs are designed to reduce nonpoint pollutant discharges through implementation of improved farming techniques rather than investments in structures and equipment.

The transformation over the past decade of the dairy industry to consolidated, larger operations has made it difficult for smaller farms to compete in the national market. In the mountainous areas of this Region farms are removed from major transportation networks, or don't have the room to operate efficiently on smaller tracts of land (given the terrain) and have been losing ground as milk prices have dropped. Organic milk currently pays a better price than conventional milk to local farmers. This has been an incentive for some to convert their operations but, for dairy farms, this is a major investment with uncertain long-term economic gains.

As for vegetable production, there are an increasing number of farmers producing organically. Some are driven by their own commitment to practice good land stewardship, others are responding to consumer demand. Whatever their initial incentive, reducing or eliminating their use of conventional pesticides and using best practices such as integrated pest management have increased consumer choice and created a higher value product.

Farms in the Pittsford are adjusting to new modes of operation. Dairy farms formed their own cooperatives, giving them greater leverage in the national marketplace and a better price on milk for the individual farms. Others are transitioning to organic milk, responding to a national demand. Still others are raising beef cattle and other grazing animals. And many farms are returning to or emphasizing diversification of products and marketing methods including the production of value-added products that bring a higher return than focusing on a single commodity subject to globalized price structures. A shift from dairy to a variety of other agricultural products is also occurring in the Region.

One of the key forces supporting smaller farms is the growing interest among consumers in purchasing local food products. Statewide efforts to promote the "Vermont Seal of Quality" and purchase of locally produced goods are reportedly increasing sales by local food producers.

The VT Department of Agriculture, Foods and Markets estimates that if Vermonters were to shift just 10% of their food purchases to buying locally grown food products, an additional \$130 million could be added to Vermont's economy. In part, this trend is the result of media reports about the potential dangers of mass-produced food products, and a growing attention to eating healthy.

A growing number of consumers are searching for ways to identify where their food is coming from. Consumers are taking advantage of increasing opportunities to buy products at a local farm stand or farmer's market, or from major grocery chains that are starting to purchase from local producers and advertise the availability of these products.

A growing number of farms are being used for horses either simply to board and pasture, or as riding stables and arenas that tend to be viewed as more commercial ventures than agricultural uses. The recreation and sport of equine stables in Pittsford has been well accepted.

The median age of farmers in this region is rising. As current farmers approach retirement, new farmers need to be located. There are a number of statewide efforts to link new farmers with available mentors, business planning assistance, and land (Vermont Land Link, Vermont Land Trust, etc).

There are a number of organizations (e.g. Vermont Land Trust and The Nature Conservancy) as well as State programs that focus attention on preserving valued farm and forest lands through donations, purchase or “conservation easements” which pay the landowners to keep the land in agricultural use versus parceling it off and selling it for development. There has been significant action in the Town of Pittsford through these types of models. The conserved land establishes and maintains undeveloped land that will remain an opportunity for agriculture and forestry that would not exist if the land were developed.

Despite its obvious benefits, some potential shortcomings have been identified as this method has matured. For example, there are concerns about how the purchase of development rights will affect future generations of farmers who will not have the opportunity to parcel off some of their land when funds are tight. There is also a concern about what happens to the land if a landowner stops farming. Other concerns revolve around rising land and housing prices in close proximity to conserved lands perhaps due to the presence of these lands. These concerns have caused increased scrutiny of these programs and is spurring ongoing improvements to the ways in which conservation occurs.

Pittsford has been known for agriculture and there are a number of State programs to support the viability of the agriculture sector, in recent times there hasn't been a strong, coordinated and visible effort to support this sector in the Town of Pittsford. The Pittsford Preservation Corporation has recently assisted in conserving 113.76 acres at the MacComber Farm on Route 3 in 2005 and has a vision of going further with conserving farmland in the Town of Pittsford. A greater collaboration between agencies, Non-Profit groups and agricultural organizations working for continued agriculture could be utilized to further farmland protection in our town. Some people suggest that Rutland County somehow feels less agricultural and rural than other parts of the state. In Rutland County organizations such as United States Department of Agriculture and Vermont Department of Agriculture could play a role in assisting conserving open farmland as well as the Non-Profit groups'. The Vermont Housing Conservation Program provides grants to assist local conservation easements if the Town's people so choose to participate.

In order to proactively protect agricultural and forest lands, Pittsford might consider developing subdivision regulations. Farm operations are exempt from local zoning laws but farms have to follow the Vermont Agriculture AAP's, Pittsford has identified the rural district for agriculture. Providing a separation or attention to how surrounding parcels are developed can help avert some of the potential conflict between farm business operations and residential homes. Likewise, subdivision regulations can consider the impact a land division and development scheme would have on forestlands and agricultural parcels when making decisions in this regard.

One issue faced by new farmers is the cost of land. Many new farmers lease land in the beginning while they test their business ideas and build a customer base. A popular economic development strategy is to create “incubator” space for new businesses to get started. Burlington's Intervale has successfully applied this model to farming by providing support via low-cost lease agreements and equipment sharing to new farmers. There is a group of individuals and organizations working on bringing this model to the Rutland area. Pittsford farmers might seek out this information.

Another effort would be to ensure that retiring farmers in Pittsford are aware of Land Link, a program aimed at matching new farmers with lands to lease or manage, and the myriad of other resources available at the national, state and local level.

One way to address the issue of viability is to concentrate on increasing the amount of product purchased at a local level. There are a number of successful models across the Northeast where “buy local” campaigns have significantly raised the demand for locally produced goods and products – thereby supporting existing operations and opening up the opportunity for additional farms and forest-related businesses to be created. The Town should support local Farmers Market in the Green.

With the continued growth of importation of plants and forest products, especially from other parts of the world, there are an increasing number of non-native insects being introduced. If these insect populations are left unchecked, there could be significant negative effects felt by the Pittsford local farm and forest economies.

Hemlock wooly adelgid and Asian longhorned beetles, also the emerald ash borer. Only the hemlock wooly adelgid has thus far been found in Vermont, and this is a very recent phenomenon.

Stafford Technical School, high school programs focused on agriculture and forestry, and relevant degree programs of area colleges, are all preparing a new generation of farm and forest employees and owners. There may also be a need for a special training program through Department of Employment Training Board that helps to fill the gap in the near future. The Rutland County Workforce Investment Board works with employment issues across many important industries in the County, and may need to focus on agriculture as well in the coming years. Financial incentives to seasonal employees may be an enticement. Elsewhere there are programs designed to recruit a pool of workers interested in seasonal agriculture jobs.

Pittsford Actions

Pittsford will strive to accomplish the following actions in the coming years:

Work with interested groups (Pittsford Preservation Conservation, Vermont Land Link, Vermont Land Trust) to better support the retention and viability of agricultural lands through their land use plans and regulations.

- Work with area farmers and the Rutland Area Farm and Food Link to identify gaps in infrastructure needed to increase supply of agricultural products produced in the Region.
- Work with land trusts to examine the effects of land conservation techniques and to devise ways of countering unintended consequences such as escalating land and housing costs.
- Partner with other organizations to create a farm incubator in the Rutland Region to help new farmers get started in Pittsford.
- Support partnerships with Natural Resource Agencies to plan for sustainable farming and forestry.
- Where housing or other development on lands suitable for agriculture and forestry is proposed, help shape land use regulations and development review to encourage cluster housing to allow for the continuation of large tracts.

II. Transportation Plan

A. Existing Transportation Network

Pittsford's highway network includes state Routes 7 and 3, which are classified as minor arterials. Route 7 has also been designated as part of the National Highway System per the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA). Other collector roads linking adjacent towns and the industrial, commercial areas and residential areas, as well as local streets complete the functional network.

The arterial highways serve as the major traffic corridor along the western portion of Vermont. Route 7 from Rutland and Route 3 carrying traffic from Route 4 through Proctor onto Route 7 are principal avenues for transport of materials. Traffic density is rising yearly creating a strain on the village district where there is insufficient space to increase the road's carrying capacity, improve parking, or protect pedestrians.

West Creek Road passes through Florence from Brandon to Proctor and is important for moving agricultural and industrial materials. Much of the work required has been done or is scheduled for the near future, and will continue as needed. There is one railroad overpass along this road, which is extremely narrow and offers only a 12-foot overhead clearance. The Agency of Transportation, in its long-range plan, has scheduled this overpass for reconstruction.

Whipple Hollow Road from West Rutland into Florence allows traffic to exit Route 4 into the industrial zone. This collector, like the West Creek Road, is in need of extensive resurfacing to insure the smooth flow of traffic.

Several other collectors serve to connect adjacent towns. There is a mix of paved and unpaved roads, typical of community networks in Vermont with load limits of 24,000 pounds. Interspersed among these roads are four covered wooden bridges, which further reduce the carrying capacity of those roads to 16,000 pounds.

The Vermont Railway parallels the Otter Creek through the corridor, crossing at three points in the town. The railway is a primary carrier for raw materials and goods and provides a spur into the industrial district. Some passenger service has been restored between Middlebury and Burlington; and it is hoped this will expand to serve the Rutland area as well.

Local support of the Rutland State Airport would ensure Federal support of this vital link.

Town roads in Vermont are classified as Class 2 which are usually paved all season surfaces, Class 3 being a mix of paved and unpaved all-season roads, and Class 4 which are generally narrow, unpaved seasonal roads. Snow plowing on Class 4 and on private roads is the responsibility of the landowner. A road or a trail may be "discontinued" by the town, however; should future development occur, the town may resume highway maintenance.

B. Transportation Plan

Pittsford is a member of the Rutland Regional Transportation Council. The development interests of Pittsford have played an important role in both local and regional transportation policy.

A proposed project is a relocation/realignment around the village of Pittsford. Increased traffic density has reduced the potential of the village for commercial uses. One option for a Pittsford-Brandon bypass is a route through the industrial zone, which would effectively remove heavy trucks from the village and focus them through zone more appropriate to their requirements. Other bypass alternatives have been examined. Studies are being done by the Regional Transportation Council to assess community needs and better define the traffic problems.

The Federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) has provided funding for restoration of sidewalks, maintenance of roadside parks, and construction of bicycle paths. All of these, and other programs, are being reviewed by various town commissions for implementation into the community plan.

The Route 7 Steering Committee in the Spring of 2000 completed a Route 7 scoping report including the slight realignment of Route 7 including 8-foot shoulders, passing lanes, sidewalk and curbing through the village. The Route 7 upgrade has been delayed due to State funding.

Pittsford has no public transportation resources, although on demand service is available for handicapped access and transport for medical treatment. This is currently available through the Marble Valley Regional Transportation District (THE BUS), which could also provide scheduled service from Pittsford to Rutland City and adjacent towns. Since the town would be required to subsidize the program, it would need approval at the town's annual meeting.

III. Utility and Facility Plan

A. Health Care & Human Services

Primary care needs are met through facilities located mainly in Rutland City. The Rutland Regional Medical Center is an acute care institution with outpatient clinics, e.g. cancer, dialysis, etc. and is supported in the home by the Rutland Visiting Nurses Association. Ambulance and medical air evacuation are provided by the Rutland Regional Ambulance Service with Pittsford First Response providing immediate care and patient stabilization services. Other medical services are available throughout the county.

B. Child Care

Ensuring accessible, affordable and quality child care is an integral part of any community. Most young families today require some type of child care outside of the home. Recognizing this reality, childcare is a critical community need. Nine licensed childcare providers exist in Pittsford. Five are home based, two are childcare centers and two are school based. An additional thirty sites exist within a 6.6 mile radius based on figures available from the State website. While this may appear adequate, it is not clear from currently available data how adequately current facilities for childcare serve the needs of the town.

Children are fundamentally important to the town's future. Appropriate and affordable child care are a vital part of a community's future and may well be a factor in future growth and the ability to attract and retain families who currently live in the town or might choose to purchase property. The six-mile radius reflects the opportunity for childcare in a community where a parent(s) might commute to work. There is a correlation between

strong economies and the availability of safe and affordable childcare. Additionally, the town zoning ordinances should not now or in the future create zoning barriers to prohibit the existence of childcare facilities.

Goal: Conduct town wide survey to specify whether childcare facilities meet current and future needs and demands of the town residents.

C. Police Protection

The town uses a system of constables and special or auxiliary policemen, who must be trained and certified through the Vermont Police Academy. The Vermont State Police and the Rutland County Sheriff's Department provide additional police services.

D. Fire Protection

Fire protection is provided by a 40-member volunteer fire department with a main station in Pittsford and a substation at the OMYA plant in Florence. Fire fighting equipment includes three pump trucks, a tanker, a 75-foot extension ladder truck, an emergency generator truck, and an equipment truck. Additional fire support is available through the Rutland County Mutual Fire Association. Expansion of residential living and commercial development along Route 3 to Proctor as well as Route 7 North and South of the village district may necessitate an expansion of water service to support fire protection needs.

With funds from FEMA, a siren was installed behind the Town Office to alert citizens of immanent danger due to environmental or public safety issues.

E. Solid Waste Disposal (Trash and Recyclables)

Pittsford operates a solid waste transfer station which accepts residential garbage for compacting and transfer to the regional solid waste collection center. All manner of recyclables are accepted if properly cleaned and sorted before deposit at the station. The solid waste district conducts a collection of household hazardous wastes four times a year. Construction debris, metals and some other products can be discarded at the regional station in Rutland. Pittsford operates the transfer station on a fee basis per bag of garbage and admits residents who have purchased a residential bumper sticker. Pittsford is a member of the Rutland Regional Solid Waste District.

F. Cable Television, Telephone, Electric Service

In some areas of the town, cable TV is provided by Comcast of Rutland with other digital and satellite companies available. Residential and commercial electric power is supplied by Central Vermont Public Service while Verizon offers local residential and business telephone service.

Comcast's Channel 15 is the official public access service for Pittsford.

G. Sewer Connection

A new sewage treatment plant was built in 2002, however, design and construction defects have created a number of operational problems, which must be resolved before the plant meets operating standards. Also, it has been determined that storm water is entering the sewer lines at various locations, which, when added to normal flow, exceeds the design capacity of the plant. The result is that the plant does not have any surplus capacity to add any new users.

Residents outside the service area of the treatment plant must install private septic systems, which meet state standards. They require an installation permit from the state and are inspected by the town health officer before the system is covered. Permit forms for both systems are available from the town clerk.

H. Public Water Service

The Pittsford municipal water system consists of five springs located on the Nickwackett dairy farm in North Chittenden on Nickwackett Mountain and one spring (Sand Spring) located approximately one mile south, the surrounding lands have been purchased by the Town of Pittsford to protect the water supply. The Nickwackett water supply is stored in three reservoirs on Plains Road with capacities of 25,000, 175,000 and 800,000 gallons. Pittsford water system currently uses one-third of its capacity.

The Florence Wellhead Area that serves Florence was constructed in 1982 and is supported by a 40,000 gallon storage tank. Additional industrial growth in the industrial zone may necessitate enlargement of this storage capacity. The Town of Pittsford has purchased 30 acres of agricultural land around the Florence Wellhead Area, to protect Water Quality. The Florence water system has met its use capacity at this time. The pipeline on both Florence and Pittsford is in need replacement due to age and size of the pipeline. The systems pipes are now aged and inadequate in many areas and the Route 7 reconstruction will allow for upgrades

Two privately owned water systems serve the Corn Hill Estates and the Sugarwood Ridge development. Testing and quality control for these systems is supervised by the state Water Resources Authority.

The land surrounding the Corn Hill Estates water supply is presently for sale. The residents of Corn Hill Estates should be encouraged to purchase the property to assure future protection of their water supply. It is recommended for the Landowners look into Vermont State Grants to protect their water quality and that the Town of Pittsford support such an effort. Residents of the Pittsford Water District and the Florence Water District may connect to these public water systems as appropriate. Currently, residents outside the water district are supplied by private wells or springs. All connections and installations to public water supply require an inspection by the water superintendent before the system is closed.

Additional service lines can be installed to meet the needs of commercial or residential developers with these costs borne by the developer. Examples of these extensions might be Route 3 to Proctor and along Route 7 north and south of the village district

IV. Statement of Preservation Policies

A. Recreation and Open Space

Open space is important to the town as a component of local planning and serves two functions: Firstly, it protects and enhances natural resources; and secondly, it is intimately related to the economic growth of the area by virtue of its appeal to potential land owners and to visitors who view it as part of the region's character. The town exercises local control of open space and recreational facilities through zoning and proposed subdivision regulations.

From this plan's narrative concerning the management of rural, agricultural and conservation zones, it should be apparent that Pittsford is determined to limit growth in such a way that open space is not wantonly developed while, at the same time, business investment is encouraged to create a more vital economic base in the community.

Pittsford has encouraged the actions of the Nature Conservancy, and others to preserve undeveloped land. The town and school district own several parcels within the community boundaries and outside the town in Chittenden where development is prohibited and forestry management practices are followed. The town now has a Forest Management Plan developed in 2007.

There is an opportunity to develop a scenic road system, which would include several historic sites within the town. Some of these are: covered bridges, an eighteenth century iron furnace, stone farmhouses, the site of the Revolutionary War's Fort Vengeance and Fort Mott, as well as several caverns, hiking trails and vistas. The views with the Taconic Mountains on the west, Green Mountains on the east, and the beautiful Otter Creek valley

can be incorporated into road system to showcase the natural and historic beauty of the town while providing opportunities for picnicking, hiking and camping areas.

The community has developed and maintains the seasonal Pittsford Recreational Area consisting of a swimming area with beach, tennis courts, softball and youth league ball fields and a picnic area. Baseball and softball programs are provided for all ages. The town sponsors a Red Cross approved learn-to-swim program and a soccer day camp in affiliation with the North American Soccer Association. In the winter, little league basketball plays in the Lothrop Elementary School.

Several resident committees manage the athletic and recreational programs. The Recreational Trails Committee which is working to develop and expand a series of hiking, skiing, and biking trails throughout the town. It is hoped that this network can be linked with the trails already developed by the state and local snowmobile associations. The trails system will be marked and become part of a statewide health and recreation trails program

B. Inventory of Existing Pittsford Recreational Facilities

<u>Name</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Owner:</u>
Pittsford Recreation Area	Public Recreation	Furnace Road	Pittsford
Camp Sangamon for Boys	Summer Camp	Sangamon Road	Private
Camp Betsy Cox for Girls	Summer Camp	Sangamon Road	Private
Golf Driving Range	Driving Range	Route 7 North	Private.
Pittsford Ice Caves	Exploring Cave	Goat Farm Road	Historical Society
Pittsford Recreation Trails Network Trails (109 acres located in Pittsford off Whipple Hollow Rd.) –	Various Public/Private	Proctor Town Forest	Town of Proctor
Pittsford Town Forest		Plains Road	Pittsford
Pittsford Town Forest (290 acres-forest management plan on file) –Located on Middle Rd, Chittenden			
Sugar Hollow Preserve Forest (282.1 Acres) - Sugar Hollow Rd- The Nature Conservancy			
High Pond Preserve Forest (1,513.7 Acres) - Fire Hill Road, Florence – The Nature Conservancy			
Proctor-Pittsford Country Club	Golf Course	Corn Hill Road	Private
Sugar Hollow Driving Range	Driving Range	Route 7 South	Commercial
Taranovich Recreation Fields	Athletic Fields	Route 7 South	Private
Pomainville’s Wildlife Management Area- 360 acres - VT. Fish & Wildlife Dept. (Occurred in 2004)			

C. Recreational Water Resources

The need to maintain and improve water quality in the town's ponds and streams is vital to preserving drinking water quality and recreational water resources. Several recreational water locations exist within the town. The largest, Otter Creek, flows through several communities and industrial areas prior to its reaching Pittsford where the Pittsford wastewater treatment plant discharges treated water into the flow. The State Water Resources Board has indicated that the water quality condition along the range of the Otter Creek and its tributaries is to be cleaned to a Class B water source. Class B waters are suitable for bathing and recreational use, irrigation and agricultural uses, good fish habitat, and as a public water resource after filtration and disinfection.

The Furnace Brook is considered a wild stream by the Department of Fish and Wildlife and contains a significant population of rainbow, brown, and native brook trout.

The upper Castleton River watershed (privately owned) is 2 miles south of Butler Swamp in Florence consisting of 70 undeveloped acres. A blue heron rookery is located at this site.

The Kendrick Pond (publicly owned) impoundment, a former ice collection pond, which dam would need reconstruction and which holds approximately three acres.

D. Wildlife Habitats

Habitat is the area that a species of wild plant or animal needs to live. Species feed; take shelter, travel, and breed and produce young according to habitat preferences, which can range from very strict to very general, depending on the species. Human activities have direct impacts on the quality and quantity of habitat available for wildlife. As human population grows and as human activities encompass more of the undeveloped lands in our town, wildlife habitats can be destroyed or compromised such that they no longer meet the needs of wildlife populations.

A variety of bats have been found in the Vermont Valley and are beneficial in control of insect populations biophysical region of the State. The following are several steps that maintain suitable habitat for bats:

- Maintain connectivity between forestland and riparian/wetland habitats.
- Promote sustainable use of forests, thereby providing a mixture of age classes and a supply of larger dead and dying trees.
- Maintain forested buffers along the town's water bodies, particularly Otter Creek.
- Protect existing caves and mines used by bats.
- Endangered Indiana bats have been found locally

In Pittsford, the most serious cause of habitat loss and alteration include development activities in relatively wild places, in wetlands, or in scarce ecosystems. Other stressors include the introduction of non-native species, and some agricultural and forestry activities. Aquatic systems are most threatened by stream channel changes, sedimentation, inadequate fish passages, shoreline development, dams, water-manipulations and aquatic invasive such as milfoil, water chestnut and purple loosestrife, etc.

Suitable habitat is the key to survival of wild animals and plants. Habitat provides all of an individual's needs for food, shelter, and reproduction. Degradation of the habitat can result in increased stress, reduced vigor, and reduced reproductive success.

Habitat requirements may change during a species' lifetime according to the stages of its life cycle. Many animal species make use of several types of habitats during the course of a single day. One of those habitats critical wintering areas are for deer or spawning areas for lake trout.

Development activities cause both direct and indirect impacts to wildlife habitat. Habitat may be lost outright, as in the cutting of deer wintering areas or the filling of wetlands.

Indirect impacts include the fragmentation of habitat and greater human presence, making travel and reproductive success more difficult for wildlife, or the alteration of water levels in wetlands or floodplains. Increase human activity may have the effect of forcing shy and wary species deeper into the woods when, for example, a residential subdivision is created at the edge of a well-frequented migration corridor, making less of the existing habitat actually usable for those species.

E. Aquatic Ecosystems

Alteration of aquatic ecosystems results in changes to a variety of habitats that support an intricate community of plant and animal life. Entire populations or particular life stages of a species may be affected by the change. Species shifts can have broader implications for the ecosystem as a whole in terms of its structure and functions. Symbiotic and predator-prey relationships may be thrown out of balance or the productivity of certain species may be depressed for some period of time.

As documented by the Non-Game and Natural Heritage Program within the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department, the Rutland Region is home to a wide variety of the State's rare community types.

F. Wetland Ecosystems

Wetlands are a vital part of Vermont's ecosystems. They are perhaps the most biologically productive areas of the state, and rank among the richest in terms of the variety of plant and animal life they support. Many species use wetlands for part of their lives; certain other species depend entirely on wetlands for their survival.

Vermont's wetlands are part of the Atlantic Flyway, a major route taken by migratory birds in the spring and fall. The Town of Pittsford falls within this Atlantic Flyway. Wetlands along this flyway are critical resting and

feeding areas for Canada and snow geese, numerous species of ducks, and a wide variety of other waterfowl such as herons, egrets, rails, bitterns, marsh and sedge wrens and some other songbirds.

V. Educational Facilities Plan

The Pittsford School District five member Board of Directors oversees the operation of the K-6 Lothrop Elementary School. The original school opened in 1912 and served grades 1-12. With renovations in 1967, 1985, 1992 and 1995, the building now serves 262 elementary students. The building has 16 classrooms, a library/resource center, computer lab, music room, art room, student support center, principal, guidance, and secretary office space, and a health station within the main building. The cafeteria and physical education facilities are housed in the former Town Hall, which was purchased by the school district in 1967.

The Lothrop School buildings are in good physical condition. The age of the buildings necessitates constant maintenance but no major renovations are anticipated over the next five years.

Lothrop provides student transportation for approximately ninety-five percent of the student body. Six buses, ranging in age from one year to 13 years old, cover approximately 32,000 miles of rural roads in a normal school year. The town road crew works closely with the school during the winter months to assure safe transportation for students.

The present facilities can support a student population of 350-360. Enrollment projections for the next ten years indicate a downward trend with a projection of around 260 pupils for the 2004-05 school year. Increased development within the community will affect these enrollment projections. Planning for such development should be done in collaboration with the Board of Directors for the Pittsford School District.

Students in grades 7-12 attend Otter Valley Union High School. This Union High School serves the towns of Brandon, Goshen, Leicester, Pittsford, Sudbury and Whiting with a present enrollment of 775 students. A 1995 bond is addressing many of the facility needs at the Otter Valley Union High School. The Town of Pittsford is assessed for the Otter Valley expenditures based upon its annual enrollment as compared to the union as a whole. Pittsford presently pays about 32 percent of the Otter Valley expenses.

Students attending Otter Valley Union High School as juniors and seniors have access to the Rutland Technical Center. The cost of vocational education is assessed separately to the town. The Otter Valley School Board is made of thirteen members with four members representing the Town of Pittsford. The budget for the Union High School is developed by the Union School Board and presented to all six towns in the union for their approval.

The Pittsford School District and the Otter Valley School district are part of the Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union. RNEU serves the towns of Brandon, Chittenden, Goshen, Leicester, Mendon, Pittsford, Sudbury, and Whiting. RNEU supports a superintendent of schools, a business manager and office staff, a special education director and services, and a curriculum director and services for the above towns. Towns are assessed based upon their annual student enrollment as compared to the district as a whole. The supervisory union board is comprised of three members from each school district. Each school district has three votes at the supervisory union level.

VI. Energy Plan

Pittsford is primarily a residential community with electrical power provided by the Central Vermont Public Service Corporation. The single largest industry in the area, OMYA, is provided power by the Vermont Marble Power Division. Pittsford has not suffered from a shortage of available energy nor does it appear that this will be a problem as the town expands its commercial and industrial base.

Although the town does not utilize a building code, it does endorse the efforts of the dDistrict Environmental Commission in lowering water use in toilets, installing reduced flow shower heads, etc. when it considers an Act 250 permit. The town has also recognized the use of compact fluorescent bulbs as saving energy.

Within the town, the water department maintains an inspection program of water lines and facilities for leaks. Furthermore, the town is contracting for inspection of all sewer lines and storm drains for the purpose of eliminating infiltration into the wastewater treatment plant. This should reduce the quantity of water treated at the plant and the amount of processed water released into Otter Creek while also reducing the demand for electrical usage at the plant.

Neither solar power nor windpower are used to any significant degree within Pittsford, although both have been tried and found successful on a limited scale. The town is very interested in the use of alternative sources for energy such as passive solar, water and windpower wherever these may be appropriate.

It should be apparent from reading this plan that Pittsford is pursuing a variety of programs to increase economic prosperity in the town. Several of these efforts focus upon improving the condition of the village and commercial districts to support a centralized community. This would be a pedestrian area for the most part which would reduce the necessity for extensive driving distances to satisfy consumer needs.

Another program undertaken by the town is the development of bike paths. In addition to their recreational advantages, these would provide an alternative mode of transportation which could also reduce the number of automobiles on the highways.

Based upon the household size in Pittsford and upon population projections, the following number of housing units may be needed this decade to accommodate increases in resident populations:

A range from	a Low of	to a High of
1990-2000	35	335.

The town does not have a large number of rental units available either as single family homes or as multiple family dwellings. Some of the units currently being used require lead paint abatement, plumbing or electrical upgrades or other work to meet current state codes. The town can develop grant programs to rehabilitate these structures and to finance others which will meet the community's housing requirements.

The demand for residential housing of all types, across the full spectrum of costs, must be given consideration in town planning and zoning. Planning should specifically encourage provisions for affordable housing. Development of apartments and rental units would address this need in part, though rental housing creates the potential for increased school enrollment and the resulting increases in property taxes. Construction of new apartment buildings and rental units is encouraged over conversion of existing dwellings into multiple family units to address the demand for affordable housing.

Housing for senior citizens has been enhanced through the development of the Pittsford Commons residential living condominiums and the Village Manor apartments. This type of residence and other community living accommodations are congruent with the town's plans for a revitalized village with pedestrian services and commercial center to support a central residential district.

VII. Housing

Pittsford's housing stock consists primarily of wood framed, single family homes scattered throughout the community. The two largest concentrations of homes are in Pittsford Village and Florence. Together they account for a substantial proportion of all homes in the Town.

Housing is the most dominant feature of Pittsford's built environment. Housing costs, including construction, maintenance, and taxation, are the single most important financial expense and investment of most residents. Promoting a balanced community with opportunity for residents of all income levels and life stages is an important role of the Town.

Basic Housing Information⁴

The number of housing units in Pittsford has increased steadily each decade since 1940. Between 1960 and 2000, the total more than doubled, to 1,388. Of those, 68% were single family homes, 9% were in two-family homes, 8.5% were mobile homes, and the remainder were in larger multi-family structures.

Renters made up 24% of the town's population in 2000, slightly below the average of 30% for Rutland County and comparable with most mid-sized communities aside from Rutland City and Fair Haven.

Homes used on a seasonal basis accounted for just 3.5% of the total in 2000, among the lowest proportions in the County. Finally, according to the US Census, the median home value in Pittsford placed the town exactly at the mid-point of the County.

Householders

The increase in housing units over the last 35 years has not been met by an equal growth in the Town's population. Since 1970, the number of housing units in town has jumped by 75%. During that same time period, however, the town's population grew by just 36%. A dramatically declining average household size is the principal reason. Trends toward families having fewer children, larger numbers of elderly persons in the population, and young adults choosing to wait longer before marriage and having children have each contributed to this decline.

Persons age 65 and older made up 13% of Pittsford's population in 2000 (a figure that is comparable with statewide numbers). It is interesting to note, however, that households led by persons 65 and over accounted for 20% of all renter-occupied units and 21% of all owner-occupied homes (Statewide, the figures were 17% and 23%, respectively). This suggests that there are many home being led by persons on moderate or fixed incomes. It is expected that in the seven years since the 2000 Census, these numbers and percentages have increased, based on the number of people age 55-64 at the time.

Single parent households accounted for nearly 26% of all family households with children in 2000. And while this figure is comparable with a Rutland County figure of 28%, it underscores a housing, transportation, and childcare need in the town.

One final note of interest: nearly 38% of Pittsford population in the year 2000 lived in a different home five years prior. Of those, one quarter relocated from outside Rutland County. These figures highlight how, even in a relatively stable community such as Pittsford, there can be tremendous turnover.

Cost and Affordability of Housing

The affordability of housing includes a set of figures that varies from family to family. What one family is able and willing to pay for their home, and its related costs, can vary substantially. In general, though, housing is considered to be "affordable" to a household when the standard costs amount to no more than 30% of a household's gross income. (This does not include related costs such as water & sewer, transportation, taxes, etc.).

In the year 2000, 36% of all renters paid more than 30% of their income towards housing. Slightly below the Region-wide and Statewide averages, but troubling for those individuals. Among homeowners in Pittsford, 32% of households *with* a mortgage and 5% of owners *without* a mortgage were paying more than 30% of their income to housing. These figures are comparable to the 24% and 15% Statewide and County-wide numbers.⁵

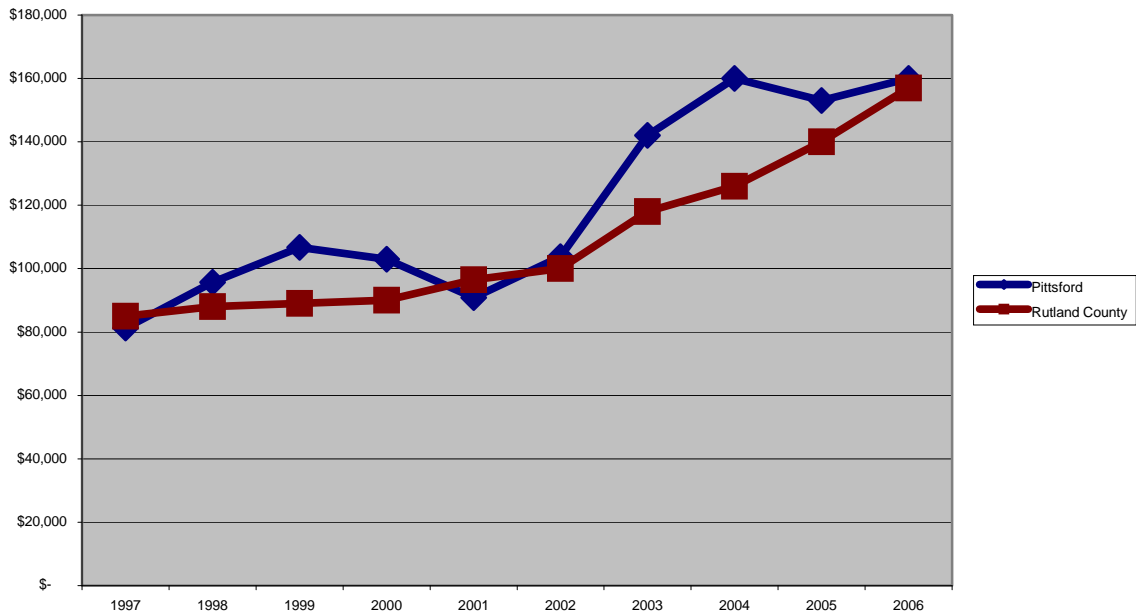
According to the 2005 Rutland County housing Needs Assessment, Pittsford's affordability for both first-time and "move-up" homeowners – those seeking to grow into larger homes – is comparable with that of other similarly-sized towns in the Rutland Region. Home sale price, for single family homes on less than six acres of land, have doubled over the past ten years, but that increase has essentially mirrored the trend across Rutland County. Over that same time period, median family adjust gross income in Pittsford increased by 54%, from \$37,400 in 1997 to \$53,400 in 2006⁶. While this data cannot be used for a direct comparison, it does suggest that housing costs have outstripped gains in incomes over the past decade.

⁴ US CENSUS BUREAU, SUMMARY FILE 1 & 3, 2000

⁵ US CENSUS BUREAU, 2000. SUMMARY FILES 1 & 3

⁶ WWW.HOUSINGDATA.ORG - MEDIAN FAMILY ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME, 1997 – 2006 – VISITED 7-16-2007

Median Home Sale Prices (under 6 acres), Pittsford & Rutland County: 1997-2006



Source:
Ver

Mont Department of Taxes, property transfer tax, accumulated data reports 1997-2006.
<http://www.state.vt.us/tax/statisticsproprans.shtml>, visited 7-1-2007

Local Subsidized Housing

Currently, there are 30 subsidized or below-market housing units for elderly persons in Pittsford. This figure is roughly comparable to those of other towns in the Region with similar populations. There is a gap, however, in subsidized “family” units in the Town. At present there are no such units in Pittsford, while other communities such as Fair Haven, Brandon, Castleton, and Rutland town each have over 20.

Regional Housing Challenges

It is important to note in this section that while the market for subsidized, or lower-cost traditional housing, may not be present in Pittsford, it *is* present on a regional basis. And the Region, of course, is nothing more than a collection of individual communities. Each has a responsibility to assist where possible the Region’s lower-income families.

The *2005 Rutland County Housing Needs Assessment* identified several segments of the population that are facing especially difficult searches for housing that is affordable. Among the study’s conclusions are three key points:

- The County’s non-elderly, low-income renters are currently underserved by the supply of subsidized rental housing, especially with respect to the distribution of Section 8 housing certificates.
- Rental affordability problems are almost entirely limited to those earning less than \$20,000; while they represent just over half the renters in the County, they account for 80% of those experiencing high rent burdens. Families with fixed or low incomes are faced with ongoing difficult decisions about which bills to pay. Homelessness (including those living on the street

and those forced to co-habitate with other families) is an ongoing issue throughout the Region and State.

- The market for moderate-income, first time homebuyers is tied closely to mortgage rates. When mortgage rates are low, first time homebuyers can make payments towards the mortgage's principal instead of having to pay high interest rates.
- The greatest concern for potential first-time homebuyers is the need for a stronger local job base to provide households with the minimum income of about \$32,000 to afford a first home (2004 data).

Housing Challenges in Pittsford

Water & Sewer Capacity

Any future housing development in the Village is severely restricted by sewer plant capacity and undersized water lines in some locations. Presently the reserve capacity of the sewer plant is overcome by stormwater infiltration into sections of the piping system such that at times the flow rate considerably exceeds the plant capacity, and creates problems in control of effluent within regulatory standards. There are efforts presently underway to mitigate this problem, however the outcome is still uncertain.

Upgrading of water piping along Route 7, the main street of the village, is awaiting state upgrading of the roadway. Solving these problems will be a multi-million dollar expenditure for the Town, funding for which has yet to be determined.

The net result of this situation is that growth in the Village, residential or commercial, is restricted and any growth will probably occur through sprawl in rural areas. Solving the water and sewer problems is critical to encouraging growth in the Village and managing growth in the Town.

Aging Housing Stock

Nearly half of the town's housing units were built prior to 1939, almost 70 years ago. While age of housing is not *necessarily* synonymous with condition of housing, older homes do tend to have greater maintenance costs. In Pittsford, the substantial elderly population living in owner-occupied homes (see the first page of this section) – many of whom live on fixed incomes - may be facing maintenance work and costs beyond their means. This problem is not just a local one – substantial older housing exists throughout the State – but it has the potential to be a growing one. The challenge in the future will be not only for senior citizens and others to keep up with maintenance work, but also for new families seeking to buy older homes and facing the challenge of both buying a home and making substantial improvements if previous residents were unable to do them.

Transportation

The *Rutland Regional Plan* identifies the cost of transportation as one of the big “hidden” costs of housing. People who live within walking distance of services, stores, and their places of employment can, potentially, substantially reduce their costs by having just one car in a family, or even no vehicles. The same holds true for households that live near to reliable public transportation. In Pittsford, limited services and stores are available in the village center. In 2006, an infrequent but regular bus service was initiated linking Middlebury and Rutland; this is expected to somewhat alleviate this need. With these options, it is possible that Village residents can use fewer vehicles, or at least have the opportunity to use them less frequently. Outside of the Village, however, and for substantial numbers of commuters throughout the town, transportation is a cost that is simply a factor of living in Pittsford.

Housing Goal:

- Safe, affordable housing that meets the needs of current and future Pittsford residents

Housing Policies

- Encourage an equitable distribution of housing throughout the community and a variety of housing options that meets the needs of a diversity of social and income groups, particularly households of low and moderate income.
- Encourage the preservation and rehabilitation of the town's existing housing stock.

Housing Actions:

- Collaborate with not-for-profit housing organizations such as the Rutland County Community Land Trust, the Bennington-Rutland Opportunity Council, and NeighborWorks of Western Vermont to pursue options and meet housing needs of Pittsford residents.
- Provide information to landlords and homeowners about State and non-profit-funded housing re-habilitation programs.
- Examine potential for the town's zoning regulations to allow for higher density housing while maintaining Pittsford's historic character. Specifically:
 - Re-examine minimum lot sizes and setbacks, especially in the Village and in Florence
 - Encourage development outside of village areas to take place in a clustered form that concentrates homes and infrastructure while conserving usable land for forestry, agricultural, or recreational purposes.
 - Permitting the conversion of larger homes and structures to multi-family housing
- Prepare a capital budget and program for the expansion of the Town's water & sewer systems.
Provide homeowners and landlords with information on USDA Rural Development grant and loan programs for housing rehabilitation

SECTION C: RELATIONSHIP OF PLAN WITH PLANS AND TRENDS OF REGION AND NEIGHBORS

Planning is a necessary tool for enabling conditions that allow as many Vermonters as possible the opportunity to become builders, investors and competitors in a worldwide market place. We are looking to expand cottage industries, home-based work, and entrepreneurial ventures that preserve and revitalize the rural economy of the town yet have minimal impact on the infrastructure or the environment.

Adjacent town plans have been reviewed to insure that there is no conflict between Pittsford's development and conservation goals and those of neighboring communities and the Rutland Regional Boards' Plan. For the most part, Rutland County towns are focused on the same objectives, as is Pittsford: preservation of rural and open space, conservation of natural resources, controlled residential growth to meet the needs of all residents, and development of manufacturing and commercial services for improving local economies.

To the north of Pittsford, Brandon has designated low density and multi-use housing along with conservation as primary land uses. This is compatible with the agricultural and conservation uses designated by Pittsford. Whereas Brandon has a commercial downtown and does not list Route 7 as a commercial zone, Pittsford has identified portions of this highway as an area for expansion of services north of the village district. Representatives of Pittsford and Brandon serve on the joint committee evaluating relocation/realignment options for Route 7 around these towns. There is also some interest in coordinating a bicycle trail between Pittsford and Brandon which would join each town to the Otter Valley High School on the town line.

Route 3 from Pittsford passes directly through the center of Proctor and carries a large volume of truck traffic between the various facilities owned by the OMYA, Inc. Proctor is primarily an industrial community which is presently focused on redeveloping industrial space in the town center vacated by Vermont Marble. West Rutland and Rutland Town are primarily manufacturing, commercial, and dense residential areas bordering Pittsford to the south. The growth centers there abut conservation and commercial land in Pittsford and are compatible with growth patterns and forecasted expansion in the town. Improvements on Whipple Hollow Road will facilitate movement of traffic from Route 4 and West Rutland into the industrial zone of Pittsford.

SECTION D: IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM AND PRIORITIES

Pittsford has long recognized the need to manage land use through administrative zoning reviews. As the focus on town planning has expanded, though, so have the needs to review the zoning ordinance. Previously identified land use areas have been modification to meet changing patterns of housing and transportation. Residential growth patterns need to be evaluated to ensure accommodation for all residents. And commercial growth has become much more important as the town expands to support economic revitalization and diversity.

The zoning regulations will be revised to satisfy the goals and objectives of this plan.

A new series of land use maps have been prepared by the Regional Planning Commission. These maps will include town wide septic suitability, natural and conservation resources, flood plain, zoning, highway, and others as may be appropriate for business planning and town management.

As identified in the opening section of this plan, the goals and objectives outlined for the next several years will be satisfied by a variety of committees and citizen groups. Some of these such as planning and recreation will have new challenges and responsibilities while other committees will be formed by the selectmen to administer programs.

A capital budget and long range plan for town planning, growth, and major purchases will be developed to support managed development. Concurrent with this effort will be a long-range transportation management plan which will consider all modes of transport available within and necessary to the town to support the movement of goods and persons as well as the need for recreational roads and trails.

Finally, the town will continue investigating a variety of resources available to support the community's growth. Among these will be the Vermont Industrial Development Authority, Community Development Block Grants from several agencies, Historical grants, state planning funds, business capital from the Rutland Regional Planning Commission and local private investment. Pittsford will coordinate with the Rutland Economic Development Corporation in its efforts to create new jobs in the county.

Pittsford is taking a bold step through this plan to become more aggressive in managing town resources and encouraging town growth. It is the town's intent to protect against land speculation, pollution, destruction of natural resources and problems of highway development while developing a more vibrant community. This endeavor will be based on a program of quality public services expanded to meet growth, education appropriate to prepare graduates for business and the workplace, and an economy capable of supporting the community without undue tax stress on the property owner.

August 22, 2007

Approved by:

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