

City of Rutland, Vermont

City Master Plan

**Adopted by the Rutland City Board of Aldermen
December 16, 2002**

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Planning Process

This plan is an update of the master plan adopted in 1997, which expires in December 2002. During the intervening five years since the 1992 plan, significant changes took place in the City, especially relating to long term economic development strategies, transportation improvements, housing strategies and continued development downtown.

The current document seeks to build on the strengths of the original plan while properly incorporating new issues and proposals. Elements included are consistent with the requirements of 24 V.S.A. Chapter 117, which requires public hearings by both the Planning Commission and the Board of Aldermen prior to final approval by the Board of Aldermen.

Statute defines 12 planning goals to be addressed within the context of 10 technical elements contained in the plan. Appendix 1 is an index correlating the goals and elements within the body of the text.

In drafting the plan, the Planning Commission relied on projects already defined as priorities within the community. Rather than defining entirely new goals and objectives devised for the purpose, the Commission views the plan as an opportunity to compile information about many initiatives already in progress. All have involved public meetings or intensive municipal review, and each has gained the support of the appropriate departments, agencies and neighborhood organizations.

Cooperation of the Regional Planning Commission, City Department of Education and other departments and agencies was solicited early in the process. Reports on improvements to Routes 4 and 7, relocation of the railyard, and the CEDS economic development plan drafted for U.S. EDA are all relied on heavily.

The public hearing phase of adopting this plan will tell the Commission if they got it right, if the priorities in the plan accurately reflect the public's understanding of how the goals and projects fit together. Given the high quality of community involvement in major projects over the past five years, the Commission is confident the plan will meet with approval.

1.2 State and Regional Context

Rutland, the second largest City in the State, is situated in the broad portion of the Lower Otter Creek Valley in west central Vermont. The City covers 8.3 square miles, or about 5,230 acres of mostly level and gently sloping land. The elevation ranges from approximately 500 to 900 feet above mean sea level. The City owns additional lands in the Town of Mendon watershed area. The five parcels of land comprising the water shed are situated between Pico Peak East Mountain and Blue Ridge Mountain.

The City is at the crossroads of key US Route 4, connecting east west to White River Junction and Glens Falls, N.Y., and US Route 7, connecting north south to Burlington and Bennington.

Historically, Rutland's development was based on its location in the valley, surrounded by important natural resources such as slate, marble and limestone. Although they no longer play a primary role in the region's economy they contributed to the early development of the physical and cultural base of the community and continue to play an important economic role. More recently, the adjacent Green Mountains' growth as a resort center contributes significantly to the region's economy.

1.3 City Historic Perspective

Rutland City was granted a charter by the Vermont Legislature as an entity separate from Rutland Town in 1892. Vigorous industrial activity carried Rutland well into the twentieth century. The neighboring towns' residents used the expanded trolley and train systems to travel downtown for their shopping. By 1924, the increased use of the automobile drove the trolley system out of business. The trolley tracks were replaced with parking spaces in the downtown and the regional importance of US routes 4 and 7 grew.

During the 1920's Rutland was a thriving center of commerce, attracting established industries from other towns in the region and supplying the needs of the railroads, the construction trade and the marble industry. However, a sharp downturn in the marble industry following World War II sent local manufacturers to seek other markets. By 1953, passenger rail service was discontinued, and by 1964 the entire downtown railroad complex was demolished, except for one track and two sheds. Today the City continues to grow, with tourism (especially ski resorts), services and diversified manufacturing as a base.

SECTION 2: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

2.1 Rutland City, The Regional Center

The City of Rutland recognizes its historical role as the economic, cultural and social leader of the region, and as the region's growth center. This plan sets forth the various goals and objects the City will pursue to fulfill this role.

The important goals of this plan are:

- a. to continue to develop the City's leadership role in the Region,
- b. to manage the City's resources,
- c. to enhance the quality of life for all of the City's residents,
- d. to promote a new regional awareness, and
- e. to encourage coordination and co-operation among the various branches of City government and the towns of the region.

2.2 Statement of Major Issues

In order to achieve these goals the City of Rutland must focus on the major issues that it faces in its five year plan. The major issues are:

Economic Development
 Transportation
 Housing
 Coordination of Capital Improvements
 Solid Waste Management
 Environmental Quality
 Educational Services
 Cultural Resources

2.3 Economic Development

Economic development should create jobs and promote economic growth and tax base enhancement while preserving the residential quality of our neighborhoods. Given the limited amount of undeveloped land in the City, and the need to conserve some areas for open space and recreation, the primary potential for development is in rehabilitating existing residential, commercial and industrial developments.

Recognizing the regional interdependence of the economic base, the City acknowledges the need for close collaboration with other regional economic development organizations and supporters from the private sector. In addition to coordinating regional recruiting efforts, the agencies must act together to develop plans that will qualify the City and the region for funding available through Federal agencies such as EDA, HUD, USDA and DOT.

The primary focus of the City's economic development efforts will be attraction of investment into established commercial districts. Other efforts will be undertaken consistent with land use designations defined in this Plan.

The redevelopment investments undertaken by private developers over the last five years, and the effective operation of both the Rutland Redevelopment Authority and The Downtown Rutland Partnership indicate that both the public and private sectors recognize this avenue as feasible and desirable.

2.3a Downtown Redevelopment

Downtown redevelopment has been a catalyst for economic development in the City. Downtown Rutland should be an attractive place for residents and visitors to shop, work, live and recreate. Preservation of historic buildings, the attraction of suitable shops, offices, eating places and cultural facilities and improved access will help to bring this about.

2.3b Gateway Redevelopment

Concurrent with Downtown improvements and the opening of Diamond Run Mall, significant investment has taken place in the Gateway areas of Main Street and Woodstock Avenue. This growth is significant in that it has been fueled largely by private investment, with minimal public involvement required to prime the pump. This growth demonstrates strong, regionally based private interest in local investment.

The relocation of the Rutland rail switching yard will create dynamic opportunities for improvement of the Strongs Avenue gateway into Downtown. Every effort will be made to enhance traditional land uses, streamline transportation access and preserve adjacent neighborhoods.

2.3c Job Creation

Diversified economic development will provide new and varied jobs for City and regional residents. Diversification is a major contributor to economic stability. It will help the City become less susceptible to changes in individual industries, and enhance the range of salaries available to local employees. Some business will tend to provide entry level opportunities while others will require skilled labor at higher salaries.

2.3d Tax Base Enhancement

Commercial and industrial development is encouraged whenever possible to expand the tax base, to relieve the burden on residential property owners, and to enable the city to provide its services at an adequate level.

Industrial uses are encouraged as designated in the Land Use Plan along West Street, Strongs Avenue, Park Street and Gleason Road. New industrial sites will also be created within the new rail yard and in areas served by the enhanced rail infrastructure. As these areas have traditionally served industrial uses, this concept is consistent with smart growth objectives.

Commercial uses are encouraged as designated along Routes 4, 7 and West Street, in the Downtown and in the Neighborhood Mixed Use District.

Service and Health related businesses are encouraged in the Planned Office Park districts.

2.3e Preservation of Neighborhoods

Economic development should not compromise the quality and preservation of residential neighborhoods. The buffering effects of the Planned Office Parks, Historic Districts and Gateway District are a means for controlling the adverse effects of adjacent land uses.

In all areas of the City, neighborhoods' qualities can be protected through continued planning and zoning regulations.

2.4 Transportation

Rutland City, by virtue of its geographic placement at the crossroads of major highways, carries a major traffic burden that affects residents and businesses alike. Streets in the City system include City streets, and State and Federal highways. Planning for maintenance of this infrastructure is complex.

Increased traffic on Routes 4 & 7 has hampered access to homes and businesses, created barriers to pedestrian and vehicular flow and caused a significant public safety hazard. This congestion has generated neighborhood "cut-through" traffic, cars that use residential streets to circumvent congested areas.

Aesthetic quality and pedestrian safety need to be insured. Continuing encroachment by through traffic on our residential streets needs to be curbed.

Rutland City supports regional transportation planning to solve problems caused by continuing development, and detrimental impacts upon the City. Rutland City supports development in the area contributing to the economic health of the region.

2.4a Improvements to 4 & 7

The alignment of U.S. Routes 4 & 7 causes the City of Rutland to be segmented, thereby isolating various community functions and creating barriers to pedestrians and neighborhood vehicular travel.

Simply widening U.S. Routes 4 & 7 is not a viable solution. Widening would increase the segmentation of the City, destroy historic structure and public park lands in the Main Street Historic District, damage front yard setbacks on those routes, and still not solve the long range traffic problem. Neighborhood cut-through traffic and congestion would continue to lessen the quality of life, harm property values, impair the sense of community in multiple neighborhoods, and reduce the public safety, health and welfare of the citizens of the City.

Improvements to Routes 4 & 7 should be limited to those consistent in scope to improvements made over the last five years. Adding turning lanes within the existing street width has improved Main Street. Other “spot” improvements, and integration of corridor upgrades with the railyard relocation project, will help reduce congestion. Further widening of these streets, however, is not endorsed.

Studies such as the 2001 analysis of upgrades to Routes 4 and 7 in Rutland City and Rutland Town are strongly encouraged. Such intermunicipal collaborations are required to craft comprehensive solutions to transportation problems. The City will continue to urge the State to support such efforts and fund the improvements they recommend.

2.4b Bypass

State policymakers have determined that a bypass around Rutland City is not feasible in the foreseeable future. Instead, the State has pledged to help the communities involved, primarily Rutland City and Rutland Town, plan and implement those improvement to the existing Route 4 and 7 corridors that will improve safety, ease congestion, preserve neighborhoods and encourage economic development. The City calls on the State to honor this pledge and aggressively pursue improvements to these highways.

2.4c Downtown Access, Parking and Circulation

Redevelopment will affect access, signalization, circulation and parking needs for Downtown. Several steps are proposed to mitigate congestion.

Two significant projects are under way as this plan is adopted that will enter the implementation phase during the next five years. Each has multiple elements that will be phased in over time. They will improve access to Downtown and circulation within all quadrants of the city. The two projects are:

- 1) Relocation of the railroad switching yard. Switching operations will be moved from the Howe Center vicinity to a site straddling the City-Town line between Rt. 7 and Otter Creek. A new access road will be built connecting Rt. 4 to Downtown, providing access to commercial properties throughout the southwest quadrant of the city and reducing congestion on Rt. 7. Land currently occupied by the railyard will be freed for redevelopment.

- 2) Improvements to Routes 4 and 7. Following on a State sponsored study of highway upgrades to improve safety and reduce congestion in Rutland City and Rutland Town, the municipalities will jointly work with the State to implement the recommended upgrades.

The City is in a major growth period. Circumstances can change quickly, and the City must be flexible to respond to new opportunities. Therefore, it must be anticipated that certain transportation projects will arise during the life of this plan that will need to be addressed, even though they can not be anticipated in the writing of this plan.

2.4d Public Transit

The City supports and encourages public transit in the City and the region, and the Regional Commission's planning efforts to maximize access to transportation services to all people of the region. Continuation of air service and initiation of passenger rail service are important to the growth of the region.

2.5 Housing

The availability of affordable housing is essential to the continued growth and progress of Rutland City. Housing has a direct impact on every aspect of community life. Rutland has historically been home to a diverse population that requires varied housing options. Families, single persons, the elderly and persons with disabilities and special needs are all part of our community. Consequently, their needs must be considered in the construction or rehabilitation of housing.

2.5a Rehabilitation

Priority should be given to preserving the existing housing stock in the City. The City will continue its collaboration with Rutland Housing Authority, Rutland County Community Land Trust, Rutland West Neighborhood Housing Services, and other regional service providers to ensure that public housing resources are strategically applied.

Existing housing should be used effectively. Attention should be paid to the maintenance and rehabilitation of older houses so they will be clean, safe and economically viable for the owners.

The conversion of housing to office and other commercial uses should be limited to those locations along major travel corridors, consistent with Land Use designations.

2.5b New Construction

Creation of new residential areas in well designed; aesthetically pleasing settings such as planned residential developments and other forms of clustered or attached housing is encouraged. Use of public-private partnerships to develop strategies for alternative financing and creative housing designs will foster cooperative efforts between tenants, landlords, homeowners and City officials.

Areas of new residential growth, identified in the Proposed Land Use Plan, prescribe residential development that will promote conservation of natural areas, minimize the need for expanded infrastructure, and encourage a mixed income population through clustered development and upper story rehabilitation Downtown.

2.5c Rentals

The Mixed Residential District and the use upper story residential units in the Downtown are designed to increase the potential for rental stock. While the current level of code enforcement is commended, an assessment and restructuring of the current building codes and their level of enforcement relating to historic buildings should be undertaken to encourage the preservation and economic use of these structures.

2.6 Permit Process

In order to facilitate the permit process, the City should adopt new zoning regulations in support of the Municipal Plan.

The City should also work with State and Federal regulatory agencies to streamline permitting and remove barriers to desired growth. Reduced permitting processes can be an effective inducement for business to locate in areas where growth is desired, such as central business districts, commercial gateways, planned office parks, and industrial parks. Examples of constructive streamlining are flexible life safety codes for historic buildings and umbrella permits.

2.7 Coordination of Capital Improvements

The Capital Improvement Program is a significant part of the City's planning process. This Master Plan is intended to set the stage for implementation of a full capital budget. Toward this end, a Capital Budget Committee shall be formed that will include the Mayor, the chairs of the Board of Aldermen, Planning Commission, School Board and Redevelopment Authority. This committee will develop, review and update on an annual basis the capital budget for presentation to the Board of Aldermen.

Rutland has long provided high quality public services to a wide range of users within the City and in neighboring towns. These services include state-of-the-art water and sewer plants, fire protection and cooperative police services. The City is also home to Rutland Regional Medical Center, the Regional Ambulance Service, Rutland Free Library, Rutland High School and Stafford Technical Center, and a wide array of community service organizations

2.8 Water/Sewer

The completion of the new water filtration plant and water storage facilities provides Rutland with the water supply infrastructure to meet its foreseeable needs well into the future.

However, the aging water distribution system, much of which was constructed in the previous century, will inevitably require increasing investments to maintain the existing level of service. The construction of additional storage facilities at the outlying area(s) to improve fire protection should be considered.

The City's sewer treatment facilities are efficient, effective and adequate for all anticipated demands in the foreseeable future.

The sanitary sewer collection system received extensive rehabilitation in the mid to late 1980's and is generally in good condition. However, there are several older sewer pipes that will need repair or replacement in future years.

Separate storm sewer facilities are needed in many areas of the City, particularly the Downtown district. A storm sewer running from the renovated downtown shopping plaza to East Creek was constructed in 1996. This facility provides the initial portion of a drainage system that should be extended throughout the business district as funds are available.

A combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) project was begun in 1993 and continues. This project, which is expected to take several years, is designed to eliminate or treat the overflows.

2.9 Sidewalks and Roads

The City must focus its attention on safe and efficient movement of traffic, both vehicular and pedestrian.

2.10 Administration, Parks and Recreation

The following community facility projects, among others, are encouraged during the next five years: a regional recreation center, upgrade of parks, implementation of a bike route plan and upgrades to Downtown street lighting

2.11 Coordination of Departments and Process

In order to further expedite the coordination of the use of facilities, staff expertise is required in the areas of housing, redevelopment and planning. Any City decision on hiring or departmental organization relating to Community Development should ensure that appropriate expertise is available to the City in these three fields.

2.12 Solid Waste Management

Solid waste disposal problems are not unique to the City of Rutland. Due to Federal and State regulations, solid waste disposal is one of the most expensive services for the City. The residents, businesses and industries of Rutland generate approximately 31,992 tons of solid waste per year. The cost of disposal at this time is \$80 - \$95 per ton. The City and the other members of the Solid Waste District use their confined tonnage to negotiate low costs, long term disposal and recycling services.

2.12a Recycling

The Rutland County Solid Waste District has adopted a recycling ordinance establishing mandatory curbside recycling in the City.

2.12b Other Options

In addition to recycling and siting a regional landfill, Rutland City supports other solid waste management practices, such as reduction and composting. Consumer education should be undertaken supporting the use of reusable products and the management of household hazardous wastes. Commercial and industrial enterprises can also reduce waste. Leftover byproducts for resale or reprocessing should be marketed. Business and industry which recycle and make new products out of waste materials should be supported.

The Solid Waste District currently provides waste disposal through a transfer station in the City, recycling, yard waste composting, unregulated and household hazardous waste collection, construction waste recycling, tire and metal disposal and asbestos disposal.

2.13 Environmental Quality

2.13a Built Environment: Gateways, Historic Districts

Historic designation is a major means of protecting the City's Historic and Architectural resources. The two designated Historic Districts shown on the Historic Districts mapping include most of the significant resources relating to the early years of the City and the current downtown. There are also many buildings in the gateway areas, not included in the National Register, that contribute to the City's architectural heritage.

Design Control Districts have been proposed as a part of the Proposed Land Use Plan. The purpose of the Districts is to protect the historic integrity and aesthetic value of these highly visible historic and gateway areas.

2.13b Natural Environment: Open Space, Recreation and Water Quality

Only relatively small parcels of prime agricultural soils remain in agricultural or forest use within the City. Due to the highly developed urban context, the City plans conservation of selected open space as a recreation resource, rather than for agricultural or forest use. Certain parcels in industrial zones may be recommended for conversion to industrial use as an alternative to development in outlying areas.

The City should have a strategy for creation of trails and bike paths to circle the City and have multiple spokes into Downtown. Such facilities are popular for recreation and, if properly routed, can ease congestion by providing a viable alternate means of transportation.

As part of the Proposed Land Use Plan, Design Control Districts have been designated in order to minimize the development of the natural resource areas identified in the Natural and Cultural Resources map that are appropriate for residential development, recreation uses or open space.

2.13c Renewable Energy

The City encourages efficient energy use and development of renewable energy sources as a means of minimizing the effects of intensive land use on air quality.

2.14 Educational Services

The City benefits from a range of educational opportunities for its residents. In addition to the public schools the following institutions are located within the city: Christ the King School, Creative Solutions School, Green Mountain Christian School, Mount Saint Joseph Academy, Mountain View Community School, Rutland Area Christian School, and Rutland Learning Center, Inc. The Vermont Achievement Center, a highly regarded institution for special needs students, is also located in the City.

In 1996 a resolution was adopted by referendum calling for a citywide voucher program. This program has not received Legislative approval. Rutland High School participates in the public school choice program instituted in 1997.

The Rutland Public School System needs to provide a solid foundation that allows students of all ages to develop a life long learning program. The curriculum should be comprehensive and allow each student to develop their potential to the fullest and to prepare them for a variety of post high school opportunities. Adult and vocational training should offer programs vital to the area's economic growth.

2.14a Regional Role

Rutland High School and the Stafford Technical Center serve both the City and the region. Continued participation in the Rutland Region Education Alliance is important. That organization will seek opportunities to use resources to their fullest and provide the best possible educational programs for students throughout the region.

The operation of a Vermont Interactive Television studio at the Stafford Center has brought the education system into closer contact with the business community. The City should seek more opportunities of this kind.

2.14b Funding

Education taxes are raised by the State under Act 60. The State tax structure raises a State education property tax, a local-share education property tax. Both are imposed on real property; business personal property is not subject to this tax. These taxes and other general state aid taxes for education fund approximately 73% of the school district's budget.

An ongoing study of regionalization of the Stafford Technical Center should be done, with the emphasis on reducing costs to the taxpayers.

2.14c Higher Education

The City of Rutland should determine if any educational opportunities are lacking in Rutland and devise ways to rectify the shortcomings. Full advantage should be taken of the presence of College of St. Joseph, Community College of Vermont and UVM Extension within the City itself, and Castleton State College and Green Mountain College in neighboring towns. These institutions are significant in improving the workforce and general quality of life for all residents.

2.14d Preparing Youth for Local Industry

The City of Rutland should ensure that offered courses are in tune with market demands through the Regional Advisory Board of the Stafford Technical Center. The City will continue support of the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) in its efforts to enhance job training in the Rutland area.

2.15 Cultural Resources

In addition to its historic resources, Rutland can pride itself on being host to the Chaffee Art Gallery, Moonbrook Arts Union, Rutland Historical Society, the Paramount Theatre, Crossroads Arts Council, the Nella Grimm Fox Room of the Free Library and others. The City's Recreation Department also hosts a series of cultural events.

SECTION 3: STATISTICAL INFORMATION {PRIVATE }

Sources: Rutland Regional Economic Development Corporation
U.S. Census

3.1 Population Trends and Projections

As the table below shows, the population of Rutland City has been fairly stable over the past sixty years.

TABLE 1

POPULATION - CITY OF RUTLAND

<u>1940</u>	<u>1950</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>
17,082	17,659	18,325	19,293	18,436	18,230	17,292

Sources: 1940-2000: U.S. Census

The peak year of population, 1970, coincided with an overall increase in the population statewide. The increase in the rate of population from 1970 to 2000 however, was less in Rutland County than in the rest of the state. The City of Rutland, as can be seen above, lost population from 1970 to 1990. Given that the City of Rutland has fixed boundaries, and few remaining undeveloped areas, it is reasonable to assume that the population figures will continue to remain stable, at least for the next five years.

What is probably more important than absolute population figures in a Master Plan such as this is information about the types of people currently and expected to be living in the area: their ages, income, housing needs, educational level, and family sizes. This information is provided in the next section.

3.2 Socio-Economic Structure

The following tables and graphs have been included to show in a "snapshot" view the current statistics for the City of Rutland. Data from Rutland County and the State are also shown to give some comparison information.

3.2a Employment

TABLE 2

PLACE OF WORK - 2000
CITY OF RUTLAND

Rutland City Civilian Labor Force	8,551
Rutland City Employed Population	8,104
Unemployed Percent of Labor Force	5%
Residents in Armed Forces	17
% Local Jobs Held by Rutland City Residents	67%
% Residents Working Outside City	2%

Sources: US Census Bureau 2000

3.2b Economic Comparison

TABLE 3

DEMOGRAPHIC-ECONOMIC COMPARISON, RUTLAND CITY,
RUTLAND COUNTY, STATE OF VERMONT

	CITY	COUNTY	STATE
Population, 2000	17,292	63,400	608,827
% Share County	27%	100%	N/A
Housing Units	7,919	32,311	294,382
Employment, 2000 Annual Avg. (1)	12,924	28,942	296,349
Per Capita Income, 1999	17,075	18,874	20,625
% of County Per Capita Income	90%	100%	N/A
Average Annual Wage, 2000(1)	\$28,420	\$26,570	\$28,920
% Population ANFC			
Property Tax Rate, 2001 (2)	\$2.66	\$1.98	\$1.90
Average Residential Value, 2001 (2)	\$82,888		

Source: US Census 2000, unless otherwise indicated

(1) Vermont Department of Employment and Training

(2) Vermont Division of Property Valuation and Review – Res. 1 on less than 6 acres

Per capital income at town level is reported only from the Census, and 1990 is the most recent year available.

Vermont Department of Taxes 1999 Effective Tax Rates for state and county.

3.2c Education Comparison

TABLE 4

DEMOGRAPHIC-EDUCATION COMPARISON, RUTLAND CITY,
RUTLAND COUNTY, STATE OF VERMONT

	CITY	COUNTY	STATE
Population, 2000	17,292	63,400	608,827
% over age 25 HS Grad	34.6%	35.8%	32.4%
Median Age, 2000	39.3	39.5	37.7
HS Drop-out Rate, 3 year avg. (1)			3%
Fair Haven	1.9%		
Mill River	3.3%		
Otter Valley	3.3%		
Poultney	2.2%		
Proctor	1.8%		
Rutland	2.4%		
West Rutland	3.2%		

Source: US Census 2000, unless otherwise indicated
(1) Vermont Department of Employment and Training

3.2d Income Comparison

TABLE 5

INCOME COMPARISON, RUTLAND CITY,
RUTLAND COUNTY, STATE OF VERMONT, UNITED STATES

	CITY	COUNTY	STATE	U.S.
Per Capita Income	\$17,075	\$18,874	\$20,625	\$21,587
Median Household Income	\$30,478	\$36,743	\$40,856	\$41,994
Median Family Income	\$41,561	\$44,752	\$48,625	\$50,046
Individuals Percent Below Poverty Level	15.4%	10.9%	9.4%	12.4%
Families Percent Below Poverty Level	10.3%	7.1%	6.3%	9.2%

3.3 Housing

Statistics on affordable housing, publicly assisted housing, and housing trends, see the Housing Element, sections 8.1c, 8.1d, and 8.1e respectively.

SECTION 4: LAND USE PLAN

4.1 Introduction

The City's pattern of development was set during the nineteenth century, evolving around railroad and industrial uses. The placement of the rail yard dictated a street grid that remains in place today. The central business district grew up across from the rail yards, industrial uses located close to rail spurs, and residential neighborhoods grew where they were convenient to the employment of the time. Rutland was a compact city. This left the City with an attractive historic building stock and meaningful landmarks that create a distinct community identity.

The next generation of growth took place along Routes 4 and 7, the areas now called the gateways. This growth continues, and planning for it poses one of the major planning challenges facing the City. This pattern corresponds more to the 1950's suburban style; less compact commercial development designed for automobile as well as pedestrian access, single use areas that further separate residential areas from employment centers, a lack of public open space and poorly defined boundaries separating uses.

Smaller uses have evolved in and between neighborhoods scattered throughout the City. There is little commercial or industrial land left to be developed within the city limits. Judicious planning for these parcels is a key objective of this document. The special needs of these areas are addressed in the description of land use districts that follows.

Rutland City's land use plan must be viewed in conjunction with the broader economic context of the Rutland region. The junction of major highways and rail lines within the city creates unique opportunities for growth using long-established infrastructure. The corridors defined by the Bennington to Burlington rail line, with connections to Whitehall, NY and Bellows Falls, and US Routes 4, 4A and 7, which run paralleled to the rail lines in many areas, facilitate development that balances its transportation needs between highway and rail. Thus land in the commercial and industrial zones abutting the rail corridor, and also served by the National Highway System, become prime sites for development under a practical application of "smart growth" principles.

Rutland's location and role in the regional economy make it a working model for "smart growth." However, smart growth is an evolving concept; it has many different definitions depending which constituency one is addressing any what type of community is involved. It is therefore useful to delineate the principal tenets that define Rutland's interpretation of smart growth:

- Rutland seeks to maximize the benefit of existing infrastructure. Renovation and new construction on infill sites are primary objectives, along with new development in areas that can be reasonably served by the City's systems without compromising community objectives for conservation districts and public areas.

- Rutland recognizes that many different types of businesses are required to serve the regional market. Some businesses are reasonably located downtown; others requiring larger sites and direct automobile access are encouraged in established gateway districts. Commercial and industrial uses are encouraged in established zones and in rail/highway corridors.
- Rutland does not seek gentrification, the practice of displacing neighborhood populations to accommodate upscale development. While growth in the Grand List is a positive outcome of development activity, it is also important to retain reasonable stock of affordable housing, ensuring that workers needed for commercial growth will find adequate housing opportunities in the community.
- Rutland does not support implementation of regional “growth boundaries” that arbitrarily limit areas in which growth will be permitted. Historically these policies have resulted in inequitable restrictions on land values and severe reductions in affordable housing. Rather, the City will implement reasonable zoning guidelines and work with neighboring municipalities to help develop regional land use policies that encourage responsible growth without compromising environmental standards.

Land use issues of particular importance are discussed below:

4.2 Natural Constraints

When planning for the future of a community, it is important to consider environmental conditions. The natural features that affect development in the City are: steep slopes, flood plains, wildlife habitat, highlands and ridgelines, primary agricultural and primary forest lands.

4.2a Agricultural and Forest Lands

The City, settled in the lower section of the Otter Creek Valley, was built on lands that the United State Soil Conservation Service (USSCS) classifies as primary and secondary agricultural soils. Since approximately 85% of the City has been developed, only relatively small parcels of prime agricultural soils remain in agricultural or forest use.

Of this remaining resource, approximately 250 acres is primary agricultural land (along the Otter Creek) and approximately 400 acres is primary forest land (in and around Pine Hill Park). In the case of the Otter Creek land, the City recognized the benefit of commercial use of this land as an alternative to sprawl development farther from the urban center, which outweighs its historical or future use for agriculture. In the case of Pine Hill Park, however, the City recognizes its unique potential for recreational uses and is developing strategies for its conservation as an open space recreation resource. The City of Rutland also holds 4,400 acres of "Class A:" Watershed in Mendon. This property should receive the highest level of protection as long as the City derives its' drinking water supply from Mendon Brook.

4.2b Steep Slopes, Highlands and Ridgelines

At the edges of the Otter Creek Valley, the topography rises to the Taconic Mountain Range, to the West and to the Green Mountains to the East. Within the City, there are areas along the east and west boundaries which contain slopes in excess of 15%. Of these areas, only those in Pine Hill Park and just south of Pine Hill Park are of a significant size and undeveloped. Development of these areas should be carefully planned to minimize soil erosion.

The Pine Hill area, on the west side, contains the highest elevation within the City at a height of 999 feet above mean sea level. This area creates a natural backdrop for the City when viewed from the east along Stratton and Allen Streets or from the higher elevations on Main Street and Center Street. Because of its undeveloped nature, it offers a pleasant contrast to the skyline of the City's Downtown.

The forested hillside of Pine Hill Park and open field areas along the Otter Creek to the west help frame the city and provide a natural backdrop to the skyline. Future development should be sensitive to these natural resources and view corridors.

4.2c Flood Plains and Wetlands

The Otter Creek is fed by four tributaries that flow through the City, each of which produces a flood plain and to in some cases feed wetlands. Of these water sources, the East Creek and the Otter Creek plains are the most significant and to a lesser degree, Tenney Brook, Moon Brook and Mussey Brook. Development of these areas is limited because of federal flood plain regulation and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers jurisdiction in the filling of over one acre of wetland.

Other significant water bodies are Patch Pond, Muddy Pond and Rocky Pond. These ponds are all found in the northwest section of the City and contribute to the flows in East Creek.

Restrictions on development in wetlands and flood plains are included in the City's zoning bylaws. These regulations must be addressed when building in a flood plain.

4.2d Wildlife Habitat

On the eastern boundary of the City, just north of the Rutland Regional Medical Center, is the City's only official wildlife habitat, a deer wintering area. The State of Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife has established regulations controlling development in or near critical habitat. The City supports those regulations.

4.3 Development Potential

Given the limited amount of undeveloped land in the City of Rutland, and the need to conserve some areas for open space and recreation, the primary potential for development is in rehabilitation existing residential, commercial and industrial developments, and utilizing undeveloped areas previously zoned for these uses. Recent renovation of major sites by developers, and the continued efforts of both the Rutland Redevelopment Authority and The Downtown Rutland Partnership, indicate that the City and the private sector both recognize this potential.

Care must be taken to ensure a balance between residential and commercial/industrial growth so that residents' desires to maintain the integrity of their neighborhoods are satisfied.

The ability of a development to enhance job opportunities should always be given ~~full~~ priority consideration, especially in designated growth areas. Developments should be evaluated according to their potential to improve the quality of life and economic stability of the Rutland community.

Additionally, the compact nature of the City's development patterns affords opportunities to design land use and transportation systems that will make economical use of energy resources. Cluster development and concentration of business uses in established commercial areas reduce energy use over continued strip development outside of existing districts. Alternate modes of transportation, particularly public transit and pedestrian/bike ways are also viable in an urban setting.

4.4 Tax Implications of Development

The City of Rutland maintains a high level of infrastructure and services, all of which require maintenance and occasional upgrading. There are fixed costs that must be borne regardless of the level of use. To the extent commercial users do not contribute to these fixed costs, residential tax payers must pick up the tab.

As a regional hub, the City is home to many tax exempt institutions and land uses, such as the courts, library, fairgrounds, churches, hospital and waste treatment plants. These institutions require services yet remove significant parcels of land from the Grand List.

It is therefore incumbent upon the City to encourage the most effective possible use of taxable commercial property and the infrastructure for developments that will enhance the City's Grand List and thus help pay the bills.

Education taxes are raised by the State under Act 60. The State tax structure raises a State education property tax, a local-share education property tax. Both are imposed on real property; business personal property is not subject to this tax. These taxes and other general state aid taxes for education fund approximately 73% of the school district's budget.

Public decisions are not made strictly on an economic basis, nor should they be. However, the consequences of land use policies on all revenues, including taxes, user fees and subsidies, should be addressed.

4.5 Cultural Features

The cultural features that should be taken into consideration when planning developments are: major parks and playgrounds, historic architectural districts and community facilities.

4.5a Major Parks and Playgrounds

The major parks, playgrounds and walking paths shown on the Natural and Cultural Resources Map include: Pine Hill Park, Giorgetti Park, Msgr. Connor Park, St. Josephs Field, Whites Field, Rutland High School, Stafford Technical Center and Rotary Field. These amenities are all located in proximity to flood plain areas and are fairly evenly distributed throughout the City. A concept designed to connect these functions with foot paths or bike routes has been designed to strengthen the resource and is in the early phases of implementation.

4.5b Historic Districts

The central core of the Downtown is a designated Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places.

This area, with its retail shops, municipal buildings, Center Street Alley, and Depot Park, forms a major amenity in the Downtown. This resource has been strengthened with the redevelopment of the adjacent shopping plaza and the redesign of Depot Park to serve as a more prominent public space.

The Rutland Downtown Partnership's landscape and wayfinding plans are effective guides for landscape and streetscape improvements downtown, and are being adapted for use in other parts of the City. The program narrative is attached as an appendix for information purposes only.

A similar plan should be developed for the Court House Historic District and for Gateway Districts. A report on the need for design review in these areas has been prepared in conjunction with this plan.

4.5c Streetscape and Sidewalks

Integral to the preservation and public use of the City's cultural features is the ability of citizens to circulate freely among them. This requires access on foot, bicycle and public transit as well as private automobile. Since little open land exists within the City, most connectors must be built within the existing street grid. Sidewalks are an imperative. Off street walking paths are advised in those areas where they are feasible. Bike routes should be incorporated into the street plan. Of primary importance is preservation of the traditional character of Rutland's neighborhoods by maintaining safe, attractive pedestrian connections throughout the City on a system of well designed sidewalks and paths.

4.6 Gateways

The gateway areas differ from historic districts in that they are not listed on the National Register of Historic Places and design issues have more to do with general aesthetics than historic preservation. Gateways are designated for design review.

4.7 Visual Quality

Above and beyond treatment of historic districts, the City must consider its overall visual quality and the image it conveys to visitors and residents. This image has improved significantly since 1990 but there is still more to be done. Poorly planned strip development dating from the 1950's and later, the vast array of telephone, electric and cable wires strung throughout the City, all contribute to a cluttered visual quality. Inappropriate development in historic districts diminishes the value of those areas as well as the City's image.

4.8 Suggested Guidelines for Future Implementation

- a) Historic designation is a major means for protecting the City's historic and architectural resources. The two designated districts, shown on the Historic Districts and Complexes map, include most of the significant historic areas. There are many buildings in the gateway areas, not included on the National Register, which contribute to the overall character of the City's architectural heritage. These areas will be addressed in the Land Use Designations section that follows.
- b) Design Control is proposed as a part of this plan. The purpose of design control is to protect the historic integrity and aesthetic value of these highly visible gateway or historic areas.
- c) Design Control Districts and Planned Office Park Districts are recommended in order to ensure appropriate development in the sensitive areas identified on the Natural and Cultural Resources Map.
- d) Consideration should be given to placing utility wires underground where feasible in the context of a neighborhood or development area.
- e) The gateway along Route 7 South conveys a cluttered commercial image. The underutilized Fairgrounds reflects ambiguous future direction and poorly defined visual elements.
- f) The gateway on West Street presents a poor image as a result of the chaotic juxtaposition of land uses, confusing roadway alignment and signage.

g) The gateway on Route 4 east, like Route 7, suffers from poorly defined strip development, lack of edge definition and vegetation, lack of separation of sidewalks from the travel corridor and cluttered signage.

h) The Strongs Avenue approach into Downtown lacks proper curbs, landscaping and signage. A major commercial complex, Howe Center, is located in this area and could be used as a catalyst for improving the public thoroughfare and abutting properties. The proposed relocation of the rail switching yard will generate significant opportunities to upgrade this corridor.

4.9 Zoning

Rutland's first zoning ordinance was adopted January 24, 1948. Consequently, existing land use is generally patterned after that ordinance, the exceptions being the uses already existing when the ordinance was passed, and those uses allowed by the granting of variances. Most of those variances have been in the Residential zones to allow a higher density, for example, allowing conversion of a single-family house into a three-family apartment building.

Since most of the undeveloped land was zoned Residential A, most of the new development has been single and two-family residential, with some multi-family development occurring close to the downtown area.

Commercial and industrial growth generally has also occurred where appropriately zoned. The major changes in commercial land use have been (1) development of a shopping mall downtown in the former railroad yards, and (2) development of highway-oriented businesses along North Main Street, South Main Street and Woodstock Avenue. The City recognized the continued importance of both types of business development in appropriate districts to satisfy modern commercial and retail markets, and enhance Rutland's competitive position as a commercial hub.

As shown on Figure 5, Existing Land Use Map, aspects of Rutland's land use can be summarized as follows:

- a) Central Business District (CBD) where the principal shopping, banking, entertainment and governmental activities are located.
- b) High density residential areas adjacent to the CBD.
- c) Medium density residential areas surrounding the high density residential.
- d) Low density in the rest of the residential areas.
- e) Industrial areas, generally adjacent to the railroad lines, especially in the southwest quadrant.

- f) Additional "strip development" commercial areas along major arteries.
- g) Privately owned undeveloped and/or farm land in the outlying areas.
- h) Publicly owned land, open space and developed, in various areas.

An estimate of the breakdown of land uses as follows:

- 56% single-family houses
- 24% multi-family units
- 13% commercial/industrial
- 7% public and/or open land

An estimate of the number of acres and percentages of the various zoning districts is as follows:

<u>Zoning District</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Residence A (RA)	3700	71
Residence B (RB)	751	14
Residence C (RC)	165	3
Business A (BA)	2	-
Business B (BB)	185	4
Business/Entertainment (BE)	60	1
Industrial (I)	367	7
TOTALS	5230	100

Approximately 80% of Rutland is zoned for various types of housing, while 13% is zoned for business and industry. It is clear from comparing the land use breakdown with the zoning districts breakdown that the bulk of public and/or open land is presently in a residential zone.

4.10 Housing

Housing issues are presented in the separate Housing Plan section.

4.11 Special Considerations

4.11a Umbrella Permits

A basic tenet of Vermont's planning strategy is to encourage effective redevelopment of existing commercial districts, especially downtowns, while discouraging strip development along highways in outlying areas. Effective permitting procedures are in place to control the negative effects of growth but Rutland would like to go farther by creating incentives for growth in business districts. This can be

accomplished by use of "umbrella" permits. Business districts and industrial parks would either be exempt from permits or issued a permit covering the entire project. As individual parcels are developed, those parcels would be exempt from further review provided they are consistent with the terms of the umbrella permit.

4.11b Cluster Development

Clustering allows for development on lots smaller than those specified in the zoning ordinance, providing land area is set aside for permanent common use, usually as open space or for agriculture. Clustering site design allows for more economical use of land. Infrastructure and energy costs are reduced because of the reduction in street and utility installations. Although small lot sizes will limit its applicability, the land use designation planned office park encourages the concept of cluster design.

4.11c Site Plan Review

Generally, new development is an asset to a community. However, sometimes commercial and industrial development, and in some cases multi-family dwellings, have a negative effect on the area in which they are located. For this reason, the State enabling legislation makes provisions for the Planning Commission to do a site plan review of all new development or redevelopment of structures and land uses except for one and two-family dwellings. This Plan therefore allows for a Development Review Board to review all but single and two-family dwellings. Through this public review, a more harmonious and safer development is expected to result. The Development Review Board allows the City to impose appropriate conditions and safeguards with respect to the adequacy of traffic access, of circulation and parking, and of landscaping and screening, and to protect the utilization of renewable energy resources.

4.11d Open Space and Access

The special land use designation, Park District, provides a means of preserving natural spaces and man-made features of cultural or aesthetic importance. Success will depend, in part, on the ability of the public to gain access to these areas in a manner that is not disruptive to the element to be preserved. Pedestrian ways and bike paths are important in this regard. Thought should be given in planning pedestrian ways and bike paths to maximize synergism with Park District areas.

4.11e Special Transportation Needs

Passenger rail service is anticipated as a major ongoing transportation element in the Transportation Plan. Passenger rail facilities are located where they have efficient access to highways and the public transportation network, and provide safe pedestrian and bicycle access.

4.12 LAND USE DISTRICTS

There are eleven general land use designations established within the City:

1. Single Family Residential District (SFR)
2. Mixed Residential District (MR)
3. Conservation Residential District
4. Neighborhood Mixed Use District
5. Gateway Business District
6. Downtown Business District
7. Courthouse District
8. Planned Office Park District
9. Industrial District
10. Light Industrial District
11. Park District

There is one special designation that, in certain districts, applies in combination with the general designations:

12. Design Control District
 - 12.A. Downtown Historic District
 - 12.B. Courthouse Historic District
 - 12.C. Gateway Business Districts

The general designations are defined as follows:

1. Single Family Residential District (SFR)

Single Family Residential is the prime designation for single-family homes on 10,000 square foot or larger lots. Most districts with this designation have already been developed in this pattern. Future subdivision developments in these districts should be encouraged to cluster in order to preserve open space.

General Goals for Single Family Districts

1. To provide medium density residential developments.
2. To preserve the quality of existing single family residential neighborhoods.

2. Mixed Residential District (MR)

The Mixed Residential District is the highest density residential designation and should be retained as such in the future. Located close to the core of the City, these areas contain the neighborhoods referred to in this document as the "Downtown Buffer Zones". To meet increasing demand for this type of area, Mixed Residential Districts may be expanded.

General Goals for Mixed Residential Districts

1. To provide high density residential developments.
2. To enhance the diversity of available housing and preserve the quality and property values in existing mixed residential neighborhoods.
3. To insure the continued viability of the Downtown Buffer Zones.

3. Conservation Residential District (CR)

The Conservation Residential District is the least density residential designation, establishing larger lot sizes intended to conserve aspects of open land while still enabling residential development.

General Goals for Conservation Residential Districts

1. To provide low density residential developments in areas where it is desired to preserve open space.
2. To further enhance the diversity of available housing in all market segments.
3. To provide for cluster development where appropriate to retain open common areas.

4. Neighborhood Mixed Use District

This is a unique designation intended to encourage the diversity of uses and the small scale neighborhood atmosphere that exist in many parts of the City. The allowed uses include single and multi-family residential, retail, small scale commercial, and light industrial.

General Goals for Neighborhood Mixed Use

1. To accommodate a diversity of uses in areas that have traditionally supported multiple uses.
2. To preserve the character of traditionally eclectic neighborhoods.

Business districts help preserve the integrity of residential and recreational areas by concentrating commercial activity in areas easily accessible by major arterials. While limited commercial activity is permitted in Neighborhood Mixed Use districts, most is located in Downtown and Gateway Business Districts. The Gateways include the corridors along Routes 4 (West Street) and 7 (Main Street, North and South).

5. Gateway Business District (GB)

Gateway Business Districts respond to the special needs of the established gateways into the City and Downtown. Given the varied characteristics of the different gateways, their commercial makeup and historical significance, different levels of district designation may be devised to reflect localized needs. Notwithstanding special designations, certain standards will be held in common by all gateways: their orientation to automobile traffic, their aesthetic importance as entries into the City and the Downtown, and the need to create appropriate buffers as these districts blend into surrounding residential neighborhoods. These districts require Site Plan Review and Design Review through the Development Review Board.

General Goals for Gateway Business Districts

1. Create attractive, commercially efficient entries into the City and Downtown, presenting an appropriate aesthetic experience while highlighting customer-oriented retail and service opportunities.
2. Create appropriate neighborhood buffers as the commercial strip blends into surrounding residential areas.
3. Encourage appropriate development in established commercial districts.

6. Downtown Business District (DB)

The Downtown Business Districts should accommodate retail, service and entertainment facilities consistent with the traditional role of the central business district. Special attention will be paid to the creative reuse of historic buildings, especially exploring residential opportunities on upper floors. This will be a design control district

General Goals of the Downtown Business District

1. These uses will accommodate modern retail trends, shopper preferences and community needs while preserving the salient characteristics of the historic downtown.
2. Reinforce Rutland's role as the commercial hub of Rutland County, providing products, services and amenities consistent with a healthy, active urban core.
3. Pursue opportunities to develop housing on the upper floors of historic downtown buildings, adding a strong residential component to the downtown mix.

7. Courthouse District

The Courthouse District is a registered historic district adjacent to downtown. Graced with a significant stock of historic residences, it hosts the Rutland Free Library, Superior Court, Historical Society and several churches and many professional offices. This is a design control district.

General Goals for the Courthouse District

1. Preservation of a significant historic district
2. Revitalization of the district as an active low-density professional and service district with a high concentration of cultural and community institutions.

8. Planned Office Park District

Rutland is the hub for health care services serving central Vermont. Since proximity to Rutland Region Medical Center is important for medical practices and related businesses, it is desirable to establish a special business district in the Allen Street/ Stratton Road corridor.

Uses for the Planned Office Park include health care related facilities such as medical offices, clinics, labs and pharmacies. Other business uses that have space requirements similar to health care offices shall also be permitted as long as they conform to the general goals and objectives set forth for this land use designation.

Certain high density residential uses, such as senior housing or medical care facilities, shall be permitted.

General Goals and Objectives for the Planned Office Park

1. Concentrate development in a clustered arrangement. Site plans for the development of each site should identify and protect significant natural features.
2. Maximize retention of open space and buffer areas. Broad, landscaped buffers should be established along major roads and along boundaries shared with residential areas.
3. Curb cuts should be limited to major arterials and collector roads. Traffic congestion will continue to increase if curb cuts are not limited.
4. Limit retail and general services to those serving the business community in the immediate area and neighborhood retail as would be expected in a Mixed Residential district.

9. Industrial District

Industry is one of the most intensive uses of land. While contemporary planners seek to separate industrial uses from residential and commercial areas, many of Rutland's industrial zones were established more than a century ago and are immediately adjacent to - and in some cases intermingled

with - lower density uses. Industrial uses need good access to transportation, and access to public water and sewer.

The present pattern of development should be retained, especially in areas with good access to arteries and railroad lines. Industrial uses include manufacturing, commercial or business uses, and warehousing.

General Goals for Industrial Districts

1. To provide areas for industrial growth within the City.
2. To maximize the use of existing infrastructure.

10. Light Industrial District

The Light Industrial District responds to instances where industrial uses are closely intermingled with residential, calling for a somewhat more restrictive definition of the Industrial district. Specifically prohibited in Light Industrial districts are: correctional facilities, public utility power generating plants and transformers, regional solid waste management facilities, hazardous waste facilities, and state-owned and operated institutions or facilities. Otherwise, all uses allowed in an Industrial District are allowed in a Light Industrial Districts.

General Goals for Light Industrial Districts

1. To provide areas for industrial growth within the City.
2. To maximize the use of existing infrastructure.
3. To moderate the scale of industrial development closely integrated with residential areas.

11. Park District

Aside from the numerous neighborhood parks throughout the City, the only significant piece of publicly owned natural open space is Pine Hill Park. Any development of the Pine Hill Park should provide for a high degree of public access, while maintaining the natural qualities of the site. The City should continue its efforts to secure ownership of Rock and Muddy Ponds as park of the Pine Hill Park property.

The former "Poor Farm", on Woodstock Avenue, is proposed as a Conservation Business or Park area. The purpose is to maximize the development potential of the property, keeping open the ability to retain the site as a public open space.

General Goals for Park District

1. To preserve the natural conditions of Pine Hill Park.
2. To increase accessibility of the Park to the public.

Special Designations

The special designations that act in tandem to the general land use designations are Conservation Overlay and Design Control.

12. Design Control Districts

Design Control is an overlay of certain land use district designations applied to preserve the visual and historical integrity of the building stock, and to foster safe, attractive and commercially effective design in key gateway areas. Design Control is applied to the Downtown Historic District, the Courthouse Historic District and all Gateway Business Districts.

A. Downtown

Under the Rutland Downtown Redevelopment Plan, as amended in November 1992, the Downtown Historic District, listed in the National Register of Historic Places and the Vermont State Register of Historic Places, is designated a design review district, subject to architectural and design guidelines included in the Redevelopment Plan. An architectural review committee is established, and an ordinance has been passed by the Board of Aldermen to provide for enforcement of the design guidelines.

B. Courthouse Historic District

This, the second City district listed on the National Register of Historic Places, will be under review of the Design Review Board. The Courthouse District does not lie within the Downtown Redevelopment Area and is not covered by those established design guidelines. The procedures for establishing design control in the Main Street District are as follows: the Planning Commission shall prepare a report describing the problems in the proposed district that warrant design review. After public hearing, the Commission shall forward to the Aldermen the recommendation that a district be created. The Aldermen will then formally establish the district as a zoning amendment and incorporate the guidelines into all applicable zoning ordinances.

C. City Gateways

The purpose for designating the gateways as design review districts is to improve the visual effect of the approaches into the City and the downtown, to minimize the effects of vehicular traffic, to accentuate the historic features within the gateways, and to improve pedestrian facilities.

General Goals of the Design Control Districts

1. Maintenance and improvement of economic viability
 - a. To promote the design of buildings and spaces in a manner that strengthens the districts' economic base while enhancing their attractiveness.
 - b. To stabilize or strengthen property values.
2. Preservation and enhancement of visual qualities
 - a. To achieve visual compatibility with the existing character of the downtown and its gateways.
 - b. To maintain important open spaces and views that reinforces the visual quality of the districts.
3. Protection of historical, architectural and cultural heritage
 - a. To assure that the renovation and alteration of existing structures, as well as the construction of new buildings commercial uses, is done in a manner to maintain and enhance the character of the districts.
 - b. To maintain those qualities in the districts that bring value to the community, including a sense of place and an identifiable focal point for commercial and social activities.
 - c. To promote community awareness of historical and design issues.
4. Consistency in Administration
 - a. To avoid unreasonable or arbitrary requirements for development.
 - b. To assure expeditious plan review.

D. Conservation Review

Notwithstanding the specialized requirements of design review as applied to specific business and historic districts, it is also desirable that a heightened awareness of open land, natural resources and cultural features be incorporated in all reviews conducted by the Design Review Board, including those within Conservation Districts. Special attention should be given to management of natural features such as agricultural lands, bodies of water, high elevations, flood plains, scenic overlooks, or other natural settings. The specific objective is to protect all or part of such natural attributes for public enjoyment and, when economically and environmentally feasible, to carry out economic development activities in harmony with the natural surroundings.

In order to best anticipate issues that could affect the development potential of a specific area within these districts, developers should refer to the Natural and Cultural Features Map.

In order to ensure a high standard of conservation practice, a developer may be required to submit site plan maps; topographical surveys; utilities plans; plans for handling raw materials and by-products of manufacturing processes; maps of existing and proposed streets; maps showing proposed cut and fill, and original contours; drainage plans; waste treatment facilities; plans for buffering surrounding land uses; plans for forest management; and methods proposed for retaining, conveying or controlling open land.

Provisions should be made for developers to gain "umbrella" approval for larger parcels, limiting review of specific uses to those that do not fall within the parameters of the umbrella permit.

General Goals for the Conservation Review

1. Minimize adverse affects on cultural, natural and fragile areas and conserve the use of energy by clustering development. Site plans for development of each site should identify, and when possible protect, significant natural features.
2. Maximize the use of buffering elements in order to minimize adverse visual effects of development.
3. Minimize the use of curb cuts in order to decrease conflicting traffic patterns and congestion along the major arteries.

SECTION 5: TRANSPORTATION PLAN

5.1 Existing Functional Classification System

The purpose of the classification of the roadway network is to organize the network according to the functions of each segment. The main functions of roadways are to provide for through traffic flow and access to adjacent land. The Existing Traffic Map shows the existing roadway classification network for the City.

5.1a Arterials

These are the major roadways through the City, which connect with major points in the region and State. They are U.S. Routes 4 (Woodstock Ave.), 4A (West St) & 7 Main Street. These arterials carry large volumes of traffic, more than 500 vehicles per hour. They also connect the four quadrants of the City with the central business district. In this role they serve pedestrian and bicycle traffic as well as vehicular traffic.

The City's approach to traffic enhancement will thus reflect the interests of neighborhood cohesion and pedestrian and bicycle circulation as well as vehicular circulation. This approach will at times contradict tradition traffic design practices, such as widening roads to speed the flow of traffic. Rather it recognized that a certain amount of controlled congestion facilitates pedestrians and bicycles, and thus has a beneficial effect on the community overall. As is the case downtown, a slower pace of traffic can also enhance access to businesses located along the route. The key is in designing traffic patterns that minimize driver frustration while maximizing access.

It is also important to note that the City owns the rights-of-way for Routes 4 and 7 within City limits and maintains these routes as part of the City street system. In most towns the State owns these routes.

5.1b Collectors

The role of the collector is to provide for both land access and movement within residential communities and industrial areas. Collectors penetrate but should not have continuity through residential areas. The collector also acts as a connection between the arterial and the local streets. Their purpose is to bring the traffic from the local streets to the arterials in an organized manner with a minimum of intersections. Conflicts arise when the collector roads are misused as arterials in order to avoid congested conditions on the actual arterials.

5.1c Local Streets

The local streets form the balance of the roadway network. These streets fulfill the function of accessing adjacent land uses, they are not meant to carry through traffic. To prevent or discourage through traffic, local streets should be laid out so that they do not permit or encourage these movements. Speeds should be slow and daily volumes below 1,000 vehicles per day.

5.2 Traffic Management: Overview

As the hub of regional commerce, the City recognized the importance of an integrated, intermodal transportation system that maximized options for transporting goods and passengers while limiting the negative effects on neighborhoods and the environment. In this vein, the concept of transportation corridors linking communities throughout the region takes on added importance. A key example is the City's strategy for rail upgraded and industrial development in conjunction with the new Rutland railyard. This locally based project is of significant regional importance when viewed in the context of the north-south corridor running from Bennington to Burlington and on to the Canadian border. Improvement of the railyard, and effective redevelopment of the industrial parcels abutting it, will increase the diversity of options for transportation along the corridor while responding to the most basic principles of Smart Growth.

Traditional corridor development strategy, as reflected in the Federal TEA-21 transportation authorization bill, concentrates on interstate highway corridors. While this has obvious applications in major urban areas and between major markets, it is limited in its usefulness in western Vermont. The construction of a new interstate highway running the length of the state is not supported by the State, and such a highway is not anticipated in this plan. Rather, the City endorses the concept that the north-south rail line and the NHS highway (Route 7) that runs parallel to it be viewed as a corridor in lieu of an interstate highway corridor.

This will enable communities along the corridor, Rutland City among them, to consider strategies for dividing the freight and passenger load between rail and highway whenever the opportunity arises. Whether this includes extending passenger rail the length of the state or building spurs to serve important industrial or commercial facilities, such improvements will be considered in the context of corridor transportation, taking into consideration the potential for improvements to affect the overall corridor infrastructure and not be viewed as isolated, independent projects.

At the local level, this policy translates into the following specific issues and strategies.

The City's traffic related constraints stem from congestion, mixed functional use and limitations of intersection geometry and signalization. Increased traffic on Routes 4 and 7 has hampered access to homes and businesses, created barriers to pedestrian and vehicular flow and caused a public safety hazard.

Aesthetics of arterial and collector streets, and pedestrian safety need to be assured. Encroachment by through traffic on local streets needs to be reduced.

Rutland City supports regional planning to address general transportation issues related to economic growth and appropriate development. Regional planning needs to recognize Rutland City's special role as a commercial hub; regional support may be required to address issues that in another setting might be viewed as strictly local in scope. In Rutland city's case, local issues may have regional implications.

The City is actively involved with the Regional Transportation Council and collaborates with the Regional Planning Commission.

The City also pursues local transportation solutions in close collaboration with neighboring municipalities. Use of intermunicipal committees comprised of elected selectmen and their designees is seen as an effective means of solving problems that cross town lines.

It is also important to emphasize that the major arterials are City streets, owned and maintained by the City. This differs from surrounding communities where the State owns the arterials.

5.2a Upgrade Initiatives

In 2000-01 the City participated with Rutland Town, the Regional Planning Commission and VTrans on a study of upgrades to the Route 4 and 7 corridors in the City/Town area. (Federal Project No. NH 020-1(20)SC) This study resulted in a series of recommendations ranging from new pavement markings to minor realignments, mostly within existing rights of way, as well as streetscape improvements. The City supports these findings and encourages their expedient implementation.

Another major street improvement is construction of an access road in conjunction with the relocation of the rail switching yard. This access road will run from US Rt. 4 South into the downtown core, providing truck access to numerous commercial sites and reducing the volume on the segment of US Rt. 7 between Rt.4 and Business Rt. 4.

5.3 Areas of Inappropriate Usage

Inappropriate usage occurs when the actual usage of the infrastructure is in incompatible with the intended usage. The conflict areas shown on the Existing Traffic Map relate to the arterials through the City. The source of these conflicts stem from the arterials on the one hand serving the flow of through traffic and on the other serving as a collector, and in some instances even as a local street.

Woodstock Avenue and the "Stratton-Allen Bypass" both suffer from mixed functional usage. Woodstock Avenue is an arterial being used as a collector and local street, and Stratton and Allen are collectors being used as arterials. The solution lies in discouraging the inappropriate use in each case. The control of curb cuts and the use of center turning lanes should be expanded to the extent possible given the existence of many small lots along the routes.

5.4 Intersections

The Existing Traffic Map shows the location of the intersections within the City that experience the greatest levels of congestion. Improvements will be sought through implementation of the upgrades recommended in the Route 4-7 upgrades study cited above.

What is often more frustrating for the motorist than delay at an isolated intersection is the cumulative effect of delays at successive intersections, and the difficulty of making turns onto and off of arterials and collectors. This problem is most severe along the Route 4 and Route 7 corridors.

5.5 Neighborhood Cut-through Traffic

One of the results of congestion on major roadways and in downtown is the use of local streets by drivers seeking to avoid congestion on collectors or arterials. The City adopted a truck ordinance in 1992 limiting truck traffic to certain designated routes. The dispersion of business destinations in mixed use neighborhoods makes enforcement difficult. Those who drive through neighborhoods are chiefly residents of the region and frequent visitors, as occasional visitors do not know the shortcuts.

- a) Southeast, along Stratton Road, Allen Street and Killington Avenue. Cut-through traffic combines with local traffic related to the hospital and professional offices to create significant congestion.
- b) Southwest, along Strongs Avenue, River Street, Park Street and Dorr Drive. This volume has decreased since the opening of the Southwest Bypass, but congestion is still a concern in residential neighborhoods.
- c) Northwest, along Crescent Street, Pierpoint Avenue and Grove Street. There is a chronic problem with heavy trucks using these cut-throughs between North Main Street and Business Route 4.
- d) Northeast, along North Street Extension, Hillside Road and Temple Street. Residential streets are being used to bypass the intersection of Main Street and Woodstock Avenue.

5.6 Other Problems

- a) Widening West Street, Main Street and Woodstock Avenue has been suggested in the past, but the City does not support this approach. Widening streets will speed the flow of traffic at the expense of pedestrian safety. This contradicts the City's policy of encouraging pedestrians and alternate modes of transportation, such as bicycles and public buses.
- b) The southwest quadrant of the City has for decades been cut off from the central business district by railroad tracks. Vehicular traffic has been routed either to River Street or Pine Street, both of which gain access to downtown through congested intersections. Pedestrian access has been

improved in recent years but continued efforts to improve connections between downtown and the southwest neighborhood continue to be a priority.

- c) Left turns onto busy main roads from unsignalized intersections often experience very long delays. The exceptions are where adjacent traffic signals on the major road provide a break in the traffic by stopping the oncoming stream.
- d) Through truck traffic on arterials and collectors is forced to mix with local traffic, causing congestion and safety hazards for local traffic and pedestrians.

5.7 Rail Improvements

5.7a Rail Switching Yard Relocation

Rutland City, in collaboration with Rutland Town and VTrans, is developing designs for a relocation of the rail-switching yard currently located downtown. This is a major project with significant local and regional implications. Benefits to the City include:

- Improved capacity to handle growing freight rail traffic.
- The potential for new intermodal facilities in conjunction with the new railyard and on redevelopment sites reclaimed during the relocation.
- Reduced congestion downtown and in the southwest neighborhood.
- Improved public safety through reduction of equipment movements in congested areas and reduced presence of hazardous materials close to residential and commercial areas.
- Improved truck access to downtown and other commercial districts through construction of a new access road.
- Reduced traffic, especially local destination truck traffic, on a congested segment of US Rt. 7 and the Strongs Avenue gateway.
- Creation of prime commercial/industrial development sites within existing growth centers.

The City supports the extension of passenger rail service along the entire western rail corridor from Bennington to Burlington. The City believes that connecting the service to the major Burlington metropolitan market is key to bolstering ridership and establishing the market viability of extended passenger rail service in Vermont.

5.8 Proposed Transportation Improvements

Rutland's anticipated street development will happen in existing neighborhoods where it will have minimal effect on natural surroundings. Rail improvements will be sited in commercial and industrial areas that will also enhance the potential for multimodal facilities.

5.8a Short Term Improvements

1. Continue planning for relocation of the railroad-switching yard currently operating in the downtown area. Develop financing plans and pursue major project funding. Maintain the joint intermunicipal oversight committee established with Rutland Town to ensure the interests of both municipalities are properly accommodated.
2. Pursue implementation of the upgrades recommended in the 2002 Routes 4-7 study. Continue the close collaboration established with Rutland Town to ensure seamless connections between City and Town elements of the work plan. Encourage the State to phase these improvements when necessary to expedite them and collaborate with the City Department of Public Works to use local management of projects whenever possible.
3. Upgrade Strongs Avenue the entire length from South Main Street to Washington Street, improving the visual quality and access to businesses along a major gateway access to downtown.
4. Continue to monitor all railroad grade crossings within the City to ensure that they remain safe for the traveling public.
5. Continue collaboration with the Town of Woodstock to identify improvements to US Rt. 4 leading from Interstate 89 to Rutland City.

5.8b Mid Term Improvements

1. Continue development of the new rail switching yard. Secure all permits and construction funding. Work with private property owners within the project limits and in adjacent neighborhoods to ensure the most efficient use of upgraded land resources to increase commercial investment and employment opportunities.
2. Complete implementation of recommended Route 4-7 improvements.
3. Extend Park Street to connect with Dorr Drive and improve Park Street the entire length from Main Street to its terminus at Dorr Drive.

5.8c Long Term Improvements

1. Long term improvements will be defined through continues collaboration with VTrans and other communities located along routes that affect the City. Regional growth will be a key determinant of future needs, as growth almost anywhere in the region affects Rutland City, the community at the hub.

2. Special attention will be paid to the need to transport commercial goods, resources and tourist traffic into and out of the region. While major new highway construct is not currently considered a viable option, the City shall remain open to the future possibility of such development if it is required to support a diverse, sustainable, productive economy. Such projects could include a bypass and an east-west connector to the Interstate Highway System.

5.8d Parking

The City recognizes a responsibility to manage public parking downtown. Parking is a matter of policy. The City shall provide parking at a level it judges advantageous for growth of commerce. This may include surface and structured parking. At the same time, it is recognized that control of the parking supply is integral to any effective strategy to encourage a shift to alternative transportation modes.

Consistent with 24 VSA Sections 4303(22), 4382(d) and 4407(4), amended by the legislature in H.715 (1996 adj. session), the City may, at its own discretion, allow an employer's issuance of transit passes, or other evidence of reduced demand, to be accepted in lieu parking spaces that might otherwise be required by a building project. Availability of free public transportation may be recognized as such evidence. Notwithstanding this allowance, the City may require private property owners and developers to create or contribute to parking to accommodate their tenants and customers.

5.9 Alternative Transportation Modes

5.9a Public Transportation

The City has made a major commitment to development of public transportation as a key element of the regional transportation mix.

The convenient availability of public transportation is important to the City's transportation strategy. Consistent with other State and regional plans, the City encourages a shift from use of private cars to public transportation and other alternative modes, reducing traffic congestion and enhancing air quality.

5.9b The Bus

Serving Rutland for over 25 years, the Marble Valley Regional Transit District, commonly known as "The Bus", is the largest non-urban public transit system in the State of Vermont. In Rutland County, MVRTD provides transportation to the general public through Fixed Route Service, Demand and Responsive Service, Dial A Ride, Rideshare, Medicaid Brokerage Transportation, Elders on the Go, and Resort Shuttle Transportation for employees and tourists. It also provides service to several Social and Human Services agencies. MVRTD increases self sufficiency and the quality of life for the elderly and handicapped, and is a vital resource for those who need alternative transportation.

MVRTD is also active in supplying transportation services to the resort community in the Sherburne/Killington area. MVRTD envisions adding a shuttle loop service from Rutland to the resort area. This service will be very beneficial, especially when passenger rail service comes to Rutland.

5.8c Multi-Modal Transit Center

MVRT, the City and the State have collaborated on development of a multi-modal transit center in Rutland's central business district. The facility is designed to be the regional hub for public bus service and private intercity bus service, providing seamless inter-modal linkages for the public. The facility will also offer Park n Ride, Rideshare, and Transportation Brokerage services. Ownership of the facility has transferred to the State of Vermont; the City may be asked by the State to participate in various aspects of the facility's management in the future, and will address such opportunities as they arise.

5.9d Rail Service

The City is actively pursuing opportunities to retain and expand passenger rail service through either Amtrak or private rail operators, or both. The new passenger rail station located in Downtown Rutland has the capacity to handle significant growth, including full ticketing by Amtrak personnel and baggage checking. The City supports extension of passenger service to Burlington and, eventually, south to Manchester and Bennington.

5.9e Air Service

Air service for the region is provided by Rutland State Airport in North Clarendon, minutes from downtown. The City supports retention of passenger service as well as freight handling at the airport. In the regional economic environment anticipated over the life of this plan, air transportation is important in servicing businesses that want to locate in Rutland but need ready access to outside destinations.

5.9f Bicycle Paths

In 2000 Rutland DPW adopted a plan for bikes routes to be incorporated into the street grid, tying together the four quadrants of the city and extending into the downtown business district. This plan, funded by the Vermont Transportation Enhancement Program, recognizes that bike routes can best be established by using the rights of way already under City control, especially in areas where little open land is available for dedicated paths. Despite the technical difficulties of mixing bicycles with vehicular traffic in an urban setting, the City nonetheless endorses and supports all reasonable projects that encourage increased usage of this alternative mode. In practical applications, bicycles can ease congestion and reduce the environmental impact of transportation.

Given their potential to address multiple community needs, pedestrian and bicycle facilities should also be evaluated for their recreational utility.

5.10 Pedestrian Circulation

An important advantage of locating in an urban area is the ability to get around on foot. The City strives to provide safe, attractive pedestrian access within and between neighborhoods. Several key concepts contribute to this objective:

- a) A pedestrian way between the southwest neighborhood and the central business district was constructed in the late 1990's, providing for the first time, a safe, well-maintained means of crossing the railroad tracks that have long divided the City. Future improvements undertaken in conjunction with the railyard relocation project will endeavor to extend this amenity southward from downtown to the Howe Center Business Park and Strongs Avenue.
- b) Traffic control downtown should foster a smooth flow of traffic without allowing cars to travel at too great a speed. Slower automobile traffic makes the street feel safer for pedestrians. Toward this end, the development of one way streets is discouraged and on-street parking encouraged.
- c) The upgrading of the City's signalization system greatly improved the safety of many pedestrian crossings. Further implementation of the recommendations of the Rt. 4-7 improvement plan cited above will further improve conditions for pedestrians. This aspect of public safety is a key element of the City's policy toward corridor improvements.

SECTION 6: COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN

The Community Facilities Plan is presented in three subsections: 6.1 Public Safety (Police, Fire Department); 6.2 Infrastructure (Water, Sewer, Solid Waste); and 6.3 Recreation.

6.1 Public Safety

6.1a Police Department

The Rutland City Police Department has authorized 50 employee positions. Forty are sworn police officers and 10 are non-sworn civilian positions. The sworn officer positions include the Chief, one Captain, one Lieutenant, six Sergeants, six Corporals and 26 Police Officers. The civilian positions include five Dispatchers, two Record Clerks, one Secretary, one Animal Control Officer and one Parking Enforcement Officer.

In 1989, in order to minimize political influence on the police and make the Police Department more community-oriented, the City Charter was changed to establish a five-member civilian police Commission to select the chief and oversee the department. The five commissioners are appointed by the Mayor and ratified by the Board of Aldermen for three-year staggering terms. They serve as volunteers, without compensation, and they meet as a body once every month.

In 1990, the city realized that its future economic success would depend on the revitalization of the downtown commercial district and improvement of facilities that would draw the interest of business. Since these improvements, many more people are attracted to this area. The economic improvements and revitalization of the City is an ongoing process and in view of the successes thus far is expected to continue will into the future. However, as more people flow through and settle in the area, experience has taught us that as the numbers rise in any given area there is a commensurate increase in crime and consequently in the need for increased police services. In 1995, the City of Rutland experienced the arrival of gang members in our community. This was the first time that Rutland Police experienced an organized crime influence originating from other cities outside the State of Vermont.

The Rutland Police Department has been offering the Drug Abuse and Resistance Education (DARE) for the past 11 years. In the last four years, the police have employed two sworn officers as School Resource Officers at the high school level and at the Intermediate and Middle School level. A DARE introduction is given in the spring of each year at the Elementary School level. As discussed with other administrators throughout the state, it is found that the partnership with the Rutland City School System is unprecedented. The Rutland Police Department enjoys an excellent relationship with area schools and has strong partnerships with area businesses, schools, senior citizens, hospital, governmental agencies and others.

There has been minimal turnover in the Police Department, resulting in an experienced organization. A 12-hour patrol shift schedule was negotiated with the police union and implemented in January 1993. The 12-hour schedule remains in operation as it provides more effective coverage than a 40 hour per week plan. Also in 1993, the Police Department jumped into the technological world by coming on-line with the Vermont Incident Based Reporting System (VIBRS) by Spillman Technologies, which is a statewide Computer Aided Dispatch and Records Management System. Upgrades to the computers and software were made possible through federal and state grants. It enables almost all law enforcement personnel and reporting systems to interact with each other throughout the State of Vermont gaining greater crime fighting efficiencies. In 2001, the Police Department installed a Live Scan fingerprinting and mugshot system, bringing it into the 21st century for immediate identification of arrested persons. This year new computers, portable radios, handheld PC's (HP Jornada 720), ballistic vests and traffic vests were issued for each officer. Additionally, the department purchased new riot control outfits and shields. Our efforts have been focused on providing the most up-to-date equipment to make our officer's job more effective and safer.

Many businesses and clubs contribute to the Police Department's cooperative efforts throughout the year, such as the Mayor's Fund to combat drugs and the Kids-n-Kops program. The Kids-n-Kops program received rave reviews for police officers who are greeted by children from local schools, ages 5-12, asking for a baseball card with the officer's photo.

Rutland's United Neighborhoods, by 2005, will come together to create a network of neighbors who will work in partnership with the police to promote a spirit of active cooperation, mutual respect and shared responsibility in the community.

RUN partners with the Community Policing Initiative. Each neighborhood has a police supervisor and a group of officers. Police are present at neighborhood meetings and committed to assisting with neighborhood education and community building activities.

In 2000 the Rutland City Police Department moved into its new home at 108 West Street. This move allowed for much needed work space and more importantly a facility that is much safer for the general public as well as the staff. In September of 2000, the Rutland County Sheriff's Department moved into the rented space in the new building. This has proven to be very beneficial for both agencies and has allowed for more cooperative arrangement between the agencies by sharing of some resources and entering into partnerships for grant applications.

The Rutland Police Department must continue to update equipment and needs to increase the number of dispatchers from the current 5 full-time dispatchers to 6 full-time dispatchers over the next year and to 8 full-time dispatchers five years from now. Also the Police Department needs to expand to 41 full-time sworn officers over the next year from the current 40 full-time sworn officers, and be able to increase the number of School Resource Officers to 3 full-time sworn officers, from the 2 School Resource Officers currently in the Rutland schools.

6.1b Fire Department

The City’s Fire Department is located on Center Street at the corner of South Main Street. The department is staffed by 29 full-time firefighters, a full-time Fire Chief and 25 part-time, on-call firefighters. Major fire fighting equipment includes three pumpers, one 102-foot aerial platform truck, one 75-foot quint, pumper ladder combination vehicle, one 35-foot bucket truck and one service vehicle.

The Fire Department has an ISO 4 rating. The department responds to over 1500 alarms and special service calls each year and conducts numerous fire prevention and public fire safety education programs. The department is trained in Hazardous Materials Response at the Operations Level and has members trained in Technical Rescue, including confined space rescue. The department is a member of the Rutland County Fire Mutual Aid Association, which has 27 member departments that assist each other at major fires and emergencies.

6.1c Emergency Management

In 2002 the City consolidated its emergency management function within the Fire Department. Combined with the new E911 service, this arrangement provided quick response to all emergency situations.

6.2 Infrastructure

6.2a Water

Virtually 100% of the City of Rutland has municipal water service. In addition, portions of Rutland Town, particularly the commercial/industrial areas along Route 7 South, the town school, and Norwood Park are served by the City’s water system. The municipal water supply meets all State and Federal regulations for drinking water quality.

The City of Rutland presently provides water to 5,727 metered customers. There are 120 customers who are not metered but who pay a set rate to the City. The total number of billed customers is thus 5,847. The above numbers include 131 customers in the Town of Rutland. Water usage in public and private schools and City buildings is not billed.

The current average daily demand is 2.4 million gallons per day and the current average daily per capita consumption is 120 gallons per day. This compares to the 212 gpd average in Rutland over the past 20 years. The ten largest water consumers served by the City’s water supply are listed below.

General Electric (Plant #2)	71,109 gpd
Foley’s Laundry	50,064 gpd
General Electric	49,482 gpd
Rutland Regional Medical Center	46,482 gpd
Rutland Housing (Forest Park, Sheldon Towers, Templewood)	30,198 gpd

Holiday Inn	24,370 gpd
Pleasant Manor	16,573 gpd
Rutland Correctional Facility	12,109 gpd
McKerley Health Facility	10,183 gpd
Comfort Inn	9,899 gpd

The City draws its supply from a dam and intake facility on Mendon Brook, about 3 miles north of the City. In 1921, the City purchased the water rights to part of the North Branch of the Cold River, including Brewer Brook and Rooney Brook, giving a water capacity that is yet to be fully utilized. In 1995 the City completed construction and put on-line a new water filtration plant and 2.5 mg storage tank.

In conjunction with the filtration plant project, facilities were installed to enable the City to draw water from East Creek in the event of an emergency affecting the primary water supply.

The City has contracted with Natgun Corp. to construct a second 2.5-mg storage tank, which will be completed and on-line in the fall of 2002.

With the above items in place the City will be able to meet its water consumption demands for the foreseeable future.

6.2b Sewer

The City's municipal sewage system, as with the municipal water system, serves virtually all the City. In addition, portions of the Town of Rutland, particularly the commercial/industrial areas along Route 7 South, are served by the City's sewer system. A private sewer pipe, the Alpine Pipeline, carries wastewater from commercial and residential areas along Route 4 in the Towns of Killington, Mendon and Rutland Town to the City's treatment facility. The Alpine Pipeline also carries wastewater from the Killington Ski Area and the Killington Access Road to the City's treatment facility. The Rutland Economic Development Corporation's Airport Industrial Park in the Town of Clarendon is also connected to the system.

The sewer treatment facility, located on Otter Creek, was certified in October 1988 and has a design capacity of 6.8 million gallons per day. The current use is approximately 4.5 million gallons per day. Through the inter-municipal sewer ordinance, Rutland Town is allowed 10.7% of this capacity and Mendon and Killington allotted 5% each.

Many of the older lines carry a combination of stormwater and sewage to the treatment plant. These lines are subject to overflow during heavy rainfalls. The points of combined sewer outflow (CSO) are located on the East Creek and Otter Creek. These CSO's are the focus of a corrective planning program designed to treat or eliminate these overflows.

Upon completion of the project to treat or eliminate CSO's, the City's sewage treatment facility will be able to meet the City's demand for wastewater treatment for the foreseeable future.

6.2c Waste Generation

The City of Rutland generates approximately 31,068 tons of solid waste each year. Of that gross, residential use generates 9,950 tons, industrial use generates 4,644 tons and commercial use generates 16,474 tons per year. With current voluntary recycling efforts, the waste flows net: residential 9,050 tons; industrial 2,782 tons; and commercial 10,755 tons per year.

6.2d Recycling

In general, about 70% of municipal solid waste (MSW) could be recycled and therefore not appear in disposal options. However, even with the most optimistic recycling programs, the capture rate is generally 30%-40%. In September of 1989, the Board of Aldermen voted in existence the first mandatory recycling ordinance in the State of Vermont. Since, without implementation of the ordinance, residents currently recycle 9% of their gross generation; there should be a significant increase in the recycling capture rate.

6.2e Disposal

The City and other member towns in the Rutland County Solid Waste District are engaged in the process of locating a regional landfill to take the place of local landfills that are closing, and to come into compliance with the new State Solid Waste Legislation, Act 78.

Currently, the City sends its solid waste to Claremont, NH, since the incineration plant is not operating, and since no other landfills in the state can accept Rutland's solid waste. The cost of disposal at this time is \$80 to \$100 per ton.

6.2f Telecommunications

The City recognized the importance of telecommunications and the internet to economic and community development. While not in a position to initiate such investment, the City will try to support all bona fide proposals to extend upgraded telecommunications and broadband service into the Rutland market. Such connections are vital to efforts to bolster telecommuting and e-commerce economic opportunities that are so consistent with the community goals of conservation and smart growth.

The City is launching a preliminary e-government web site in 2002, creating the potential to extend city services online. This will enable citizens to stay better informed on City issues and will assist in economic development.

6.3 Recreation

6.3a Recreation Plan: Executive Summary

The Recreation and Parks Department has been providing recreational services to the residents of this community for over 75 years. Over these past decades, Rutland has changed. Recreational and

cultural needs of this community have changed, the demographics have changed, and even the economic base has changed. To stay relevant to the community, this Department has changed as well.

The Department is in the middle of one of its greatest periods of change. In June 2001, the Board of Aldermen and the Mayor accepted a new organizational chart for the Recreation and Parks Department. The Department still has three basic divisions: administrative, recreation and parks. The full-time positions are as follows: a superintendent, a recreation director, a parks director, a business manager, three program directors, a program coordinator/van driver, a secretary, a mechanic, a custodian, a grounds technician and a maintenance person.

The Department has jumped into the 21st Century by acquiring new “state of the art” software to help with registrations, reservations and scheduling. With this new software, computers have been networked for better internal access and efficiency. A new logo is being developed that will better serve the Department’s marketing needs.

The Department has 14 different facilities to oversee, including a temporary recreation center in an old elementary school. Although the Department is grateful to the School Department for making the facility available, it is inadequate for a permanent home for the Recreation and Parks Department.

The Rutland City Recreation and Parks Department is in the process of updating its own master plan. Presented here is a brief summary of the existing plan with some additional goals.

6.3b Mission Statement

Rutland Recreation and Parks Department believes recreational, cultural and leisure time activities enhance the quality of life for citizens of this community. We are dedicated to protecting and preserving our natural resources. We meet the demands of the community through effective use of financial and human resources. Our professional staff and volunteers design and deliver quality activities and services to all people. We are committed to sound fiscal policies.

6.3c Goals and Objectives

Long Term Goals

- Work cooperatively with regional municipal leaders to develop a regional recreation plan and regional recreation facility.
- Acquire additional land adjacent to Pine Hill Park.

Short Term Goals

- Offer high quality recreational, cultural and leisure time programs and services to the residents of Rutland City regardless of age, sex, race, skill, income level, or physical or developmental challenges.
- Operate in a fiscally conservative and responsible manner.

- Create a fund a capital improvements budget.
- Work cooperatively with other organizations.
- Obtain more adequate green space to meet the current and future needs of the residents of Rutland City.
- Offer clean, safe, efficient, code compliant and accessible facilities.
- Maximize available green space and gym space cooperatively with other organizations within the City.
- Protect our natural resources for the enjoyment of future generations.

6.3d Implementation Opportunities

Several projects under study offer important opportunities for the use of public spaces. These illustrate well the ways in which public spaces contribute to the social and commercial goals of the community while respecting cultural and aesthetic values.

- Funding is being sought for a major redesign of Main Street Park. Running along South Main Street from Killington Avenue to West Street, the park connects downtown with the primary flow of traffic. The redesign will enhance the aesthetics of the historic park, provide improved pedestrian circulation – especially crossing Route 7 – consistent with proposals in the Routes 4 & 7 upgrade program (see Transportation), improve circulation within the park itself, and improve access to the downtown business district.
- The new site for the rail-switching yard abuts Otter Creek, providing a unique opportunity to develop a pedestrian/bike path and perhaps other amenities in the buffer area between the yard and the creek. These improvements will be undertaken as in integral part of the yard construction project.

SECTION 7: EDUCATION

7.1 Overview of Resources

Rutland is home to a healthy mix of public and independent schools. In addition to the City's public schools, the following institutions are located within Rutland City: Christ the King School, Creative Solutions School, Green Mountain Christian School, and Rutland Learning Center, Inc. The Vermont Achievement Center, a highly regarded institution for special needs students, is also located in the city.

Rutland High School has traditionally drawn students from surrounding "tuitioning towns," smaller municipalities that do not have their own schools or belong to a supervisory union. Tuitioning towns in the Rutland area include Chittenden, Danby, Hubbardton, Ira, Mendon, Middletown Springs and Rutland Town.

The Stafford Technical Center, located on the same campus with Rutland High School, provides a thorough program of technical education and job training, working in close collaboration with many employers in the Rutland area. Rutland's Workforce Investment Board (WIB) actively pursues job training programs that will strengthen the local marketplace.

In March 1996, voters in Rutland City approved by referendum a voucher initiative called the "Schoolchildren First Scholarships" program. Implementation requires legislative approval to amend the City Charter. The legislature has not yet taken up the request. Rutland High School does participate in the limited school choice program passed by the legislature in 1997.

Institutions of higher education in Rutland City include the College of St. Joseph, Community College of Vermont and University of Vermont Extension. Other regional institutions include Castleton State College and Green Mountain College.

7.2 Rutland City Public Schools

The following section describes the condition of the public school system, which is generally quite strong. It should be noted that challenges face the schools in maintaining facilities; roof, boilers and sports facilities require upgrades and several buildings need expansions. It is expected that these improvements will be funded through bonding, which requires approval of the voters.

7.2a Existing Educational Facilities and Enrollment

The Rutland City Public School District is comprised of six schools and three special programs serving almost 3,000 students, led by a talented and dedicated administration, faculty and staff of approximately 450.

Northeast and Northwest Schools serve approximately 300 students in kindergarten through second grade. The Pierpoint Primary Learning Center, located at the former regional library, houses 60 students in grades K-2. The Rutland Intermediate School, located at the former Rutland High School site on Library Avenue, serves approximately 775 students grades 3-6. The Rutland Middle School located on Library Avenue, serves 400 students in grades 7 and 8. Enrollment continues to increase at the Rutland High School campus on Stratton Road, where we currently have 1,100 students. More than 260 students attend the full time program at the Stafford Technical Center, and over 900 adults take part in the Adult Education program. A new relationship with Vermont Technical College will enhance and expand educational and training opportunities for both the youth and adult populations of Rutland County.

The number of tuition students from Rutland Town, Mendon, Chittenden, Ira, Middletown Springs, Mt. Tabor, Pittsfield, Plymouth and Stockbridge continues to increase. In 1993-94, there were 153 tuition students at Rutland High School. There are now approximately 330, an increase of over 100%. New programs, including enhancements to our Advanced Placement and honors courses, an infusion of modern technology and additional offerings in the Arts, have contributed to the increasing attractiveness of Rutland High School as the most popular school of choice for parents and students in the tuition-paying towns.

The Alternative Education Program (AEP), located at the Howe Center, serves 50 high school students in an off-campus alternative education and service program designed to prevent students from dropping out of school. The SUCCESS School serves approximately 50 students in grades K through 12 who have had difficulties in adapting to a traditional classroom and school environment. This program combines academics, adventure-based learning, work and community service in a way that better meets the needs of these students, and also ensures that all of our schools maintain a safe, orderly, disciplined environment. Finally, the Early Essential Education Program serves 24 three and four-year-olds.

7.2b Community Use

The Department of Education will continue to work cooperatively with the municipal side of city government to pursue every possible cost saving and enhanced collaboration. The department continues to lease the former Dana School to the City Parks and Recreation Department as part of a five-year program, providing relief to that department and to city taxpayers. All of the schools are available for Recreation Department programs and activities throughout the school year, as well as in the summer.

The 21st Century Community Learning Center Grant funded the Tapestry Program which is also housed in the schools, providing after school and summer enrichment and remedial programs for city youth, as well as youth from Rutland Town, Proctor and West Rutland.

In addition, continued rent-free space is provided to the Boys and Girls Club to support increased recreational and cultural opportunities for area teens. The Club, with over 900 members, is located at the former Southeast School with late afternoon, early evening and Saturday hours in a very well supervised environment. The great success of the B&G Club has led to the search of a new and larger home, hopefully in the downtown area. We also provide rent-free space to house the United Way of Rutland County in the Longfellow Building as part of our commitment to community service.

7.2c Projected Public School Facilities

The Rutland City School Board is currently developing a comprehensive plan for the renovation and expansion of the two K-2 primary schools, Northeast and Northwest, in order to resolve some essential infrastructure issues as well as to accommodate the changes in the delivery of early education that have emerged in the last decade.

Northeast was built in 1952 (15,000 sq. ft.) with a 14,000 sq. ft. addition in 1966. Northwest was built in 1958 (23,000 sq. ft.) with a 4,000 sq. ft. addition in 1980. Both buildings are in need of HVAC renovations as well as roof replacement. Federal grant funds will be sought to support the renovation aspects of the projected building plan.

As important as the needed structural improvements, the nature of early education has changed considerably; thus, presenting the need for additional space for activities such as special education, early essential education, physical and occupational therapy, health and counseling services, to name a few. It is our hope to develop an Early Childhood Center concept in each of these two buildings. By bringing early essential education (EEE) back into the building (from rented space elsewhere), we will be able to provide education and services to families from age 3 to the transition into the Rutland Intermediate School in grade 3. The possibility of including the Head Start Program in the project also offers exciting options to both the school department and Head Start.

If the B&G Club is successful in its search for a new and larger home, the space the Club currently uses in the SUCCESS School (formerly the Southeast School) will allow the SUCCESS Program to expand into the much needed space.

7.2d Implementation Guidelines

The Rutland City Public Schools Mission Statement:

The extended family, which comprises the Rutland City Schools, believes that:

- A positive and productive school experience should be created and maintained by the essential collaboration of our school community: students, parents, teachers, administrators, other school staff, school board members and the community at large; and
- The academic achievement and personal conduct of our students should rise to the highest level of our great expectations for their success; and

- All of the members of our school community should be lifelong learners who aspire to be informed and contributing citizens.

Therefore, the mission is to maximize the intellectual, creative, physical, emotional and social development of our students.

It is pledged to provide:

- Safe, orderly, disciplined, healthy environment most conducive to teaching and learning;
- School climate of mutual respect and dignity;
- Comprehensive academic and co-curricular program which meets the needs of our graduates as they prepare for the varied challenges of the 21st Century;
- Regular practice of open communication and involvement of school activities;
- Focus on Great Expectations for student achievement and personal conduct.

It is further pledged to treat all of the children in the Rutland City Public Schools as our own.

SECTION 8: HOUSING ELEMENT

8.1 STATISTICAL/HISTORICAL INFORMATION

8.1a Types and Quality

The housing stock in Rutland is generally in good condition and well maintained. The predominant type of housing is detached single-family, although as indicated previously, there have been numerous conversions to multi-family in the areas adjacent to Downtown. Some of the older areas have experienced deterioration, but as land values increase, rehabilitation of homes tends to increase.

While the term “affordable housing” is consistently used by housing agencies to mean low cost housing for lower income residents, the actual issue of housing affordability cuts across all housing categories. During the 1990’s some Vermont communities experienced a shortage in housing at all price points, which had a negative effect on the entire market. Buyers unable to find upper end housing are forced to stay in more modest housing, thus precluding access by those who actually seek the lower price range. Similarly, many workers are forced to rent lower end units because of a shortage of mid-range rental units, reducing the number of affordable units for those who need them most.

The shortage of housing at all levels has a profound effect on economic development, as the inability to house workers, managers and executives alike discourages business investment. It is important that the City monitor the housing market with periodic studies of supply and demand at all levels.

8.1b Cost and Affordability

The average (mean) selling price of a single-family home has increased 14% from \$94,300 in 1993 to \$109,227 in 2002. Meanwhile, during the period from 1997 to 2000, the percentage of the Rutland County population receiving government assistance (ANFC) increased from 8.5% to 10.3%. As shown below, there are an increasing number of families who cannot afford home ownership in Rutland. The City suspects this to be a result of overall housing availability, not just lack of low cost housing. Inability of homeowners to “step up” in the market due to lack of building stock limits availability of lower priced housing, raising the price and blocking access to those of marginal means. Under a grant secured in 2002, the Rutland County Community Land Trust will undertake a study of the general housing market to help the City better understand housing supply and demand.

8.1c Definition of Affordable Housing

For the purposes of State and Federal programs, housing is affordable when households with incomes below county median pay no more than 30% of their income on housing costs. Housing costs for renters are: rent and utilities (including heat, hot water, trash, and electric). Housing costs for homeowners are principal, interest, property taxes, and property insurance. Figures from the Department of Housing and Urban Development as of 1/31/02 for Rutland County are shown below:

Median Income (Family of 4)	\$43,400/yr
HUD Fair Market Rent (2 BR)	642/mo
Maximum Affordable Housing Costs* for family earning:	
@ 50% median income (\$21,700)	543/mo
@ 80% median income (\$34,720)	868/mo
@ 100% median income	1,085/mo

* Projections assume a maximum of 30% of income used for housing.

Briefly, these figures indicate that, for example, a family of four with income of \$21,700 should not be paying more than \$543 per month for rent, including utilities, or \$543 per month for a mortgage payment and property taxes and insurance. The figures below show that there is an economic gap between the cost of houses and incomes.

Average (mean) house cost	\$120,360
Less 10% down payment	12,036
Mortgage	108,324
Monthly payment (30 yrs @ 7.5%)	842.00
Property taxes (/mo approx.)	267.00
2.66/per 100 real estate only	
Insurance (/mo approx.)	<u>35.00</u>
TOTAL APPROX. MONTHLY PAYMENT	<u>\$1,144.00</u>
50% Median monthly payment (see above)	\$543

Clearly, there is a gap between the cost of housing and the amount that households can afford to pay. By comparing the figures in Table 3, it is clear that the households in the rest of Rutland County, and in the state overall, suffer from the same gap in incomes and housing affordability. However, it appears that the City of Rutland may have some additional burdens in the form of a greater percentage of people receiving ANFC (10.3% of the population compared to 9.7% statewide) and a higher property tax rate (\$2.66 compared to \$1.90 statewide).

8.1d Public and Publicly Assisted Housing

There are 494 units of subsidized housing available in Rutland, 354 for elderly, and 140 family units. Applicants must meet income eligibility guidelines, and, in some cases, other requirements set by the funding authority. There is a waiting list of approximately one year for the elderly housing. A detailed listing of subsidized housing is seen below.

SUBSIDIZED HOUSING

<u>Elderly</u>	<u>EFF.</u>	<u>1BR</u>	<u>2BR</u>	<u>TYPE</u>	<u>HA*</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Bardwell House	19	52		VSHA	4	75
Linden Terrace		18	2	VSHA		20
Maple Village	9	26		HUD		35
Parker House		40	3	HUD	3	46
Sheldon Towers	47	27		RHA	2	74
Templewood Court	14	46		RHA	3	60
The Maples		42	9			<u>51</u>
Subtotal	89	251	14		11	354

<u>Family</u>	<u>BR</u>	<u>2BR</u>	<u>3BR</u>	<u>4BR</u>	<u>TYPE</u>	<u>HA*</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Forest Park		23	35	17	RHA	4	75
Hospital Heights	4	10	6		HUD	2	20
Regency Manor	13	27	5		HUD		<u>45</u>
Subtotal	17	60	46	17		6	140

*HA = Handicapped accessible.

TOTALS

Efficiency	89
1 Bedroom	268
2 Bedroom	74
3 Bedroom	46
4 Bedroom	<u>17</u>
Total	494

Total HA units 17

The Rutland Housing Authority (RHA) manages Sheldon Towers, Templewood Court and Forest Park. Their director notes several key trends in their subsidized housing operations:

- 1) There has been a shift from a primarily elderly to a primarily young disabled resident population at Sheldon Towers.
- 2) There is more emphasis on service-enriched housing at both Sheldon Towers and Templewood Court. These services are designed to promote independence, health aging and a greater sense of community. Through a mix of State and Federal grant dollars these programs have been developed, in part, in response to Vermont’s regulatory emphasis on reducing nursing home bed utilization.
- 3) Enhanced lease enforcement and pre-screening measures have been implemented at all three RHA sites.
- 4) Site assessments have been or will be conducted at all three RFA sites to determine long term sustainability and marketability. Included in these assessments are facility considerations, unit size and configuration.

In addition to the Public Housing Program, RHA administers 70 Section Eight vouchers. These tenant-based subsidies follow the participants as they secure apartment rentals in the open market (Rutland City and a six-mile radius). The subsidy is paid directly to the landlord who agrees to maintain the unit to specific standards (i.e. Certificate of Occupancy compliant).

8.1e Housing Trends

The following chart tracks the number of building permits issued in the City from 1996 to 2000.

BUILDING PERMITS – 1996-2001

	6/30/97	6/30/98	6/30/99	6/30/00	6/30/01
New residential	5	12	14	18	16
Residential renovations	121	142	122	124	115
New commercial	9	6	4	7	6
Commercial renovation	44	47	45	38	32
Demolitions	<u>16</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>18</u>
TOTALS	195	225	200	201	187

Source: City of Rutland Zoning and Building Department files.

8.2 Issues and Opportunities

The principal constraint to expanding the City's housing stock is the dwindling supply of buildable land. Since more land cannot be manufactured, policies and programs should be instituted to encourage responsible and effective use of both undeveloped and developed land. Attention must be paid to ensuring maximum benefit in terms of housing availability, affordability and aesthetics.

Policies should encourage residential opportunities downtown and cluster development in environmentally sensitive areas, encourage building codes that accommodate preservation and effective reuse of older or historic structures, and discourage conversion of houses into offices, except in specified areas.

Special attention should be given to the problems of renovating the vacant upper floors of downtown buildings for residential or commercial use. Given the high cost of renovation, these buildings should be considered for market rate as well as affordable housing.

Housing policy should respond to the "human element", striving to retain a "neighborhood" feeling in every residential area. Attention should be paid to proximity of housing to neighborhood retail, services and schools. Streets, pedestrian ways and bike paths should be designed with these neighborhood connections in mind.

The demographics indicate that Rutland's population projections are relatively stable. The City can expect an increase in demand for services for the elderly and for child care for single parent or two income families. Both the elderly and young families will need affordable housing.

As Rutland's economy grows, spot increases in demand for services and affordable housing can be expected to grow. Trends indicate that as the population ages the ratio of workers to non-workers is declining, pointing to a future of fewer workers carrying the burden of increased social costs. This scenario underscores the importance of having a stable, diversified housing market that serves the needs of the community with the least public support. The relationship between housing and economic development can not be understated.

8.3 Implementation Guidelines

The City should take the following steps to define its housing policy.

8.3a Define the Housing Problem

As the City's economy grows and develops, demand for various types of housing will change. The City will monitor economic growth and the real estate market to determine which parts of the housing market may, from time to time, need public attention.

8.3b Utilize Regional Resources

Several effective, well managed non-profit housing agencies are active in the Rutland area. Rather than maintain a separate staff to deal with housing issues, the City prefers to have their health inspector and building inspector work with the independent agencies to coordinate building rehabilitation projects and handle social services. In many cases, the City serves as the catalyst for funding.

The City should work in collaboration with area housing agencies, such as Rutland West Neighborhood Housing Services, Rutland County Community Land Trust and Bennington-Rutland Opportunity Council, to identify and secure program funding to benefit affordable housing projects.

8.3c Protect Traditional Neighborhoods

Traditional neighborhoods are an important part of Rutland's quality of life. As economics and demographics shift from decade to decade, the stability of older neighborhoods is weakened. Stricter building codes make it difficult to maintain older, sometimes historic, structures for multi-family housing. Industries that supported individual neighborhoods have been lost.

The City is committed to exploring community development strategies that will stabilize traditional neighborhoods whenever possible and, when change is inevitable, help neighborhoods develop a character consistent with historic neighborhood values.

8.3d Target Housing Development Issues

Priority should be given to maintaining and preserving existing housing stock. Areas of prime concern include:

- * Downtown "buffer zones". These neighborhoods, which abut the central business district, are mostly comprised of older, multi-family housing. The City seeks to retain the affordable housing stock in these areas. The sprawl of the business district into these buffer zones will be discouraged.

- * Historic Districts. Rutland seeks to preserve its impressive stock of mid-late nineteenth and early twentieth century housing. To the greatest extent practical, the City will encourage reuse and historic preservation of existing historic structures, and encourage design elements for new construction that will be compatible with the old. Toward this end, design review districts may be established in historic districts.

* Traditional neighborhoods. Rutland's character and community tradition is based in large part on the nature of its traditional neighborhoods. Located in each quadrant of the city, these neighborhoods vary from single family to mixed residential/commercial zoning. Acknowledging that communities change over time as a natural part of demographic and life style shifts, the City nonetheless encourages this growth to happen as much as possible within the context of the traditional neighborhood structure that defines Rutland's character.

8.3e Review and Revise Residential Development Requirements

Single family detached units are expected to be the preferred housing form for consumers because they offer privacy and control over the immediate environment. The City's Planned Residential Development provision provides a vehicle for reduction in lot sizes, dimensions, setbacks and densities. This technique should allow greater housing diversity, and reduced land and construction costs.

8.3f Pursue Public Funds for Affordable Housing

The State of Vermont makes a significant commitment to funding affordable housing through tax credits and grants. Programs provided by Vermont Community Development Program (block grant funds) and Vermont Housing Finance Authority (tax credits) are often used in tandem to piece together financing packages flexible enough to serve complex renovation projects and new construction. Some of these programs are accessed by non-profit agencies, while others require the direct involvement – or at least the concurrence – of the City. It is incumbent on the City to use these programs effectively and frequently, attracting the greatest resources possible for local affordable housing.

8.3g Replacement of Obsolete or Displaced Housing

The City should encourage equitable replacement of housing losses in response to tracked demand for various types of housing. Efforts should be made to evaluate the potential for conversion to housing of unused commercial or municipal buildings.

8.3h Support Public Transit Efforts

Critical to the success of affordable housing efforts is the availability of a comprehensive, affordable public transportation system that can provide easy access to work, school and shopping services. The Transportation Plan of this Master Plan encourages expanded development of public transportation and other alternative modes.

SECTION 9: ENERGY PLAN{PRIVATE }**9.1 Existing Conditions and Needs**

At present, the single largest source of energy is petroleum and the largest user of petroleum energy is transportation. The second largest source of energy is electricity. While some electrical generation is petroleum based, Vermont also uses hydro and nuclear power for generation. Obviously all of the petroleum consumed in Vermont is shipped in from out of state, and much of it is imported.

If the market opens to more consumer choice, as is being discussed, co-generation alternatives could play a larger role. Small scale electric generating facilities can be powered by water, wind, recycled refuse, and bio-mass conversion of various types. To be effective, however, it is important that the problems associated with hooking such facilities to the electric power distribution grid be minimized. We should encourage the Public Service Board to work to minimize administrative barriers to the use of small scale generating facilities.

Historically petroleum fuels were transported to our Region by water, and local storage capacity was available to hold substantial reserves. In recent years, many oil companies have withdrawn from Vermont and those remaining rely on rail and truck transport. Storage capacity has diminished since land based transport was perceived as being able to respond quickly to shortages. Finally, there is currently no provision for transporting petroleum fuels via pipelines, although that has been done successfully elsewhere. It is important that the Region strive to maintain as many options for fuel transport as possible. The ready availability of petroleum fuels, particularly gasoline, can have an important impact on the tourism sector of the Region's economy.

The Vermont Public Service Department has prepared a basic approach to evaluating various options for energy conservation, based on the premise that operating costs must be considered as well as initial or construction costs. This procedure can be very valuable in assessing both new construction and renovation opportunities.

In addition to encouraging conservation in the use of electricity and petroleum based energy, it is also important to encourage the development of other energy sources such as wood and other bio-mass, solar, hydro, and wind. The expanded use of natural gas can also help to take the pressure off of existing supplies of electrical power and fuel oil.

There exists a substantial demand for natural gas in the Rutland area marketplace. The City of Rutland has gone on record supporting the extension of natural gas to this region and has joined with neighboring towns to pursue this and to pursue the location of a co-generation facility in the area. Natural gas is safe, clean and efficient burning and is a reasonably priced alternative fuel. The availability of natural gas in the Rutland area would provide a much needed advantage to industrial and commercial development and eventually to residents for use in home furnaces, hot water heaters, gas ranges, clothes dryers, and other home appliances.

Natural gas powered vehicles are now being used in other parts of the United States. Natural gas is considerably less expensive than gasoline, and less harmful to the environment.

As mentioned above, our automobile based transportation system is the single largest user of petroleum based energy. Over the past decade, the rate of growth in consumption by this sector has been reduced, primarily through the development of more efficient vehicles. We must encourage continued conservation through the more efficient use of automobiles. We must also ensure the provision of more energy efficient alternatives to automobiles such as mass transit and car or van pooling where possible. Only conscious action will create alternatives which will enable people to continue to enjoy high levels of mobility without reliance on automobiles.

This region should attempt to make the best use of the energy resources, which are available and minimize dependence on out-of-state sources while encouraging the development of non-traditional and renewable sources of energy.

The City of Rutland will conform to Federal Environmental Protection Agency air quality guidelines in effect January 1, 1991, and as amended from time to time thereafter, and encourage development that is conforming as well.

9.2 Implementation Guidelines

9.2a Residential Sector Conservation

1. Encourage residents to adjust energy use patterns to reduce residential energy consumption.
2. Encourage retrofitting of the existing housing stock to reduce energy use for space and water heating.
3. Encourage the use of energy thrifty techniques in new construction.

9.2b Commercial/Industrial Sector Conservation

1. Encourage business and industry operators to adjust operations to consume energy efficiently.
2. Encourage retrofitting of existing establishments to reduce energy needs.
3. Encourage the use of energy thrifty techniques in new construction.

9.2c Public and Institutional Sector Conservation

1. Encourage the preparation and implementation of municipal energy plan.

9.2d Transportation Sector Conservation

1. Promote more efficient use of the existing fleet of vehicles through carpooling and ridesharing.
2. Promote development patterns that concentrate growth in central areas and locate residential development near work and shopping areas, thus reducing travel needs.

3. Encourage the use of energy efficient public transportation systems.
 4. Encourage walking and bicycling, particularly in densely developed areas.
- 9.2e Financing for Energy Conservation
1. Encourage financing assistance for investment in energy conservation technologies, particularly in the residential sector.
 2. Encourage financial institutions to recognize the value of alternatives to electric space heating in residential structures.
- 9.2f Electrical Energy Use and Development
1. Encourage the conservation of electrical use as a high quality form of energy.
 2. Encourage the use of electric rates that reflect the cost of production, encourage conservation, and which do not place a severe burden on low and moderate income households.
 3. Encourage utilities to invest in peak load leveling efforts.
 4. Discourage the use of electricity for space and water heating, particularly in residential structures.
 5. Work to enhance public information and awareness regarding electric energy conservation.
- 9.2g Wood Energy Use and Development
1. Encourage sound forest management as an integral part of the use of this resource.
 2. Ensure that the use of wood for fuel does not infringe on the use of high quality wood for lumber and other wood products.
 3. Encourage the use of small scale wood fired industrial co-generation installations.
 4. Encourage the development of a coordinated distribution system for all types and qualities of wood.
 5. Encourage stack emission controls for new wood stoves.
- 9.2h Solar Energy Use and Development
1. Encourage the use of solar energy technologies in new residential construction and as retrofit on existing structures.
 2. Encourage financial institutions to support the use of solar energy technologies.
- 9.2i Wind Energy Use and Development
1. Encourage the establishment of wind machines only where they will not detract from wilderness, recreation, aesthetic or ecological qualities of the area.

9.2j Hydro Energy Use and Development

1. Encourage hydro energy facilities which operate on a "run of the river" basis.
2. Ensure the development of hydro energy facilities does not diminish the existing uses of streams, including their waste assimilative capacity.

9.2k Solid Waste Energy Use and Development

1. Encourage an energy efficient comprehensive approach to the disposal of solid waste, including the conversion of this material to energy where feasible and appropriate.

9.2l Emergency Energy Plan

1. Encourage the State to update its Emergency Energy Plan.
2. Encourage petroleum storage capacity by addressing the issues of inventory taxes and site costs.

SECTION 10: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Rutland City will work to implement several specific programs in order to achieve the goals and objectives outlined in this Plan. These programs will include, zoning regulations, a capital budget, implementing upgrades to major highways and rail lines, continued stabilization of the housing market, and continued involvement in regional education planning. In addition to the implementation guidelines outlined in the previous pages of this document, the following recommendations are made:

10.1 Adoption of the Master Plan

The first step is adoption of this Master Plan by the City Board of Aldermen. With the Plan adopted, the City has a blueprint for future growth for the next five years and beyond.

10.2 Continued Planning

The City Planning Commission, the Board of Aldermen, the Redevelopment Authority, the Zoning Board, and City staff should use this document in the ongoing planning process, which does not end with the adoption of this Plan.

The Planning Commission is responsible for updating the Plan as is needed during the next five years, and for its revision or readoption in five years. As the City changes, amendments may be needed to keep the Plan current.

10.3 Land Use Regulations: Zoning

The existing Zoning Ordinance, which has not been significantly amended since its creation in 1948, should be amended to conform to the Land Use Districts outlined in this Plan. A new zoning document has been prepared by the Planning Commission and presentation to the Board of Aldermen. Upon approval by the Board of Aldermen it will be put before the voters.

It is important that this task be completed immediately. The obsolescence of the old zoning, combined with the growing number of variances needed to offset its shortcomings, makes it difficult to consistently manage land use and development.

10.4 Capital Budget

The City should adopt a Capital Budget that clearly prioritizes capital expenditures for education, public safety, infrastructure, transportation and recreation. The plan will cover a window of five years and be updated annually to reflect changing conditions.

Lack of a capital budget forces city departments to include capital needs in the annual operating budget. Further, priorities tend to be decided by competing bond referendums rather than through studied planning. This problem must be corrected.

10.5 Historic Districts/ Design Review

Architectural Review was initiated in Downtown under the Rutland Downtown Redevelopment Plan. To preserve the integrity of the Main Street Historic District, the City intends to extend design review to that area as well. The Planning Commission will prepare a report describing issues involved in the district, and forward the recommendation to the Board of Aldermen. Both districts will be reviewed by The Development Review Board.

Design review is also indicated for gateway areas. Once review for the Main Street Historic District is in place, the Planning Commission will study requirements for the gateway area and make a recommendation to the Aldermen.

10.6 Site Plan Approval

The site plan approval process provides the Development Review Board an opportunity to make informed decisions concerning development within the City. Site Plan approval should be exercised over all development within the City that is not single or two-family home development.

10.7 Regional Cooperation

As the Rutland region gain economic strength in the coming years, regional collaboration will become increasingly important.

The City supports the efforts of the Regional Planning Commission, the Regional Transportation Council, Rutland Economic Development Corporation, the Rutland Region Chamber of Commerce, and interested parties in the private sector to coordinate regional plans for transportation and economic development. Further, the City recognizes the importance of collaboration between select boards of neighboring municipalities, fostering constructive dialogue on intermunicipal issues.

Implementation of housing programs will be done in conjunction with regional housing agencies such as Rutland West NHS, the Rutland County Community Land Trust, and BROCC. The Rutland Housing Authority will play a principal role in addressing affordable housing needs and ensuring that public housing within the City contributes to neighborhood stability.

Regional education cooperation will continue to be pursued through the Rutland Region Education Alliance, which the City fully endorses. Closely related is the work of the Rutland Region Workforce Investment Board and the Stafford Technical Center, both dedicated to improving ties between educational resources and needs of the business community.

Rutland City is a member of the Marble Valley Regional Transit District as well as the Rutland County Solid Waste District.

10.8 Transportation

The City recognizes the close relationship between transportation infrastructure and land use objectives such as downtown redevelopment, industrial development and neighborhood stabilization. The City believes these problems are best addressed through careful planning of neighborhood projects, improved collaboration with surrounding municipalities, and improved collaboration with VTrans. While the symptoms of these problems are most evident in the City, they often reflect regional problems. A prime example of the type of planning to be encouraged is the work of the intermunicipal committees formed by the City's board of aldermen with the Rutland Town and Woodstock select boards. The City's agreement with VTrans for local management of the railyard relocation project is another example.

Relocation of the rail switching yard, construction of a new access road running parallel to South Main Street, and improvements to the existing Route 4 and Route 7 corridors, as outlined in the January 2002 VTrans scoping report, are crucial elements of the City's economic development strategy. The City will work in close collaboration with the Rutland Town Select Board and other regional agencies to ensure the successful completion of these projects.