ST. GEORGE
TOWN PLAN

ADOPTED:

APRIL 7, 2026

Town of Saint George
Chartered 1763
Vermont's Smallest Town

Prepared by:

ST. GEORGE PLANNING COMMISSION

Connie Kendall, Chair

Abel Russ

Susan Duell

Justin Mason

With assistance from: CHITTENDEN COUNTY RPC Communities Planning Together

And technical assistance from Debbie Farr.

This plan is available online at https://stgeorgevt.com/documents/town_plan.php. A printed copy may be obtained at the St. George Town office, 21 Barber Road, St. George, VT 05495 or by calling 802.482.5272. There will be a charge for copying.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents iii

1 | INTRODUCTION 1

1.01 GENERAL DESCRIPTION 1

1.02 VISION STATEMENT 2

1.03 AUTHORITY AND PURPOSE 3

1.03-A Statutory Framework 3

1.03-B Purpose 3

1.04 TOWN HISTORY 4

2 | OUR PEOPLE 6

2.01 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE 6

2.02 HOUSING PROFILE 8

2.03 ECONOMIC PROFILE 10

3 | OUR COMMUNITY 11

3.01 HISTORIC AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES 11

3.02 TOWN FACILITIES, LANDS & FISCAL CONDITION 11

3.02-A Town Office 11

3.02-B Little Red Schoolhouse 12

3.02-C Town Center Park 12

3.02-D Town Center Property 13

3.02-E St. George Cemetery 14

3.02-F Fiscal Condition 15

3.03 ECONOMY 15

3.04 EDUCATION AND CHILDCARE 16

3.04-A Elementary and Secondary Education 16

3.04-B Vocational, Post-Secondary & Continuing Education 16

3.04-C Childcare 17

3.05 RECREATION 17

3.06 TRANSPORTATION 18

3.06-A State Highways 18

3.06-B Town Roads 19
3.06-C Private Roads 20
3.06-D Road Safety 21
3.06-E Road Design 21
3.06-F Municipal Roads General Permit 22
3.06-G Other Transportation Facilities 22
3.07 UTILITIES AND ENERGY 22
3.07-A Water and Wastewater 22
3.07-B Solid Waste 24
3.07-C Telecommunications 24
3.07-D Natural Gas 24
3.07-E Electricity 24
3.07-F Utility, Energy and Telecommunications Projects 25
3.07-G Energy 27
3.08 PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY 29
4 | OUR ENVIRONMENT 30
4.01 AIR 30
4.01-A Climate and Climate Change 30
4.01-B Air Quality 30
4.02 LAND 31
4.02-A Geology and Land Form 31
4.02-B Soils and Earth Resources 32
4.02-C Land Cover 35
4.02-D Natural Communities 35
4.02-E Wildlife Habitat and Corridors 36
4.03 WATER 37
4.03-A Groundwater 37
4.03-B Wetlands 38
4.03-C Surface Water 38
4.03-D Lake Iroquois 39
4.03-E Shelburne Pond 40

4.04 SPECIAL AREAS AND RESOURCES 40
4.04-A Town Center Property 40
4.04-B Hilltops and Ridgelines 41
4.04-C Natural Areas and Important Resources 42
4.05 RESILIENCE 42
4.05-A Town Actions 42
4.05-B Floodplains 43
4.05-C River Corridors 43
4.05-D Stormwater Runoff 43
5 | OUR TOWN'S FUTURE 45
5.01 NATURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES 45
5.01-A Goals 45
5.01-B Policies 45
5.02 AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY 46
5.02-A Goal 46
5.02-B Policies 46
5.03 EXTRACTION OF EARTH RESOURCES 47
5.03-A Goal 47
5.03-B Policies 47
5.04 RECREATION 47
5.04-A Goal 47
5.04-B Policies 48
5.05 TRANSPORTATION 48
5.05-A Goal 48
5.05-B Policies 48
5.06 PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES 49
5.06-A Goal 49
5.06-B Policies 50
5.07 ENERGY 51
5.07-A Goal 51
5.07-B Policies 51

5.08 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT 52
5.08-A Goal 52
5.08-B Policies 52
5.09 EDUCATION AND CHILDCARE 52
5.09-A Goals 52
5.09-B Policies 53
5.10 HOUSING 53
5.10-A Goal 53
5.10-B Policies 53
5.11 DISTRIBUTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS AND BURDENS 54
5.11-A Goal 54
5.11-B Policy 54
5.12 LAND USE PLAN 55
5.12-A St. George Village 58
5.12-B West Residential 59
5.12-C East Residential 60
5.12-D Rural 61
5.12-E Forested Uplands 61
5.12-F Goal 62
5.12-G Policies 62
5.13 IMPLEMENTATION 62
5.13-A The Past Eight Years 62
5.13-B Preparation for the Writing of this Town Plan 63
5.13-C The Next Eight Years 63
5.13-D Over the Long-Term 63
5.14 COMPATIBILITY 64
5.14-A With Our Neighbors 64
5.14-B With Our Region 65
5.14-C With State Law 66

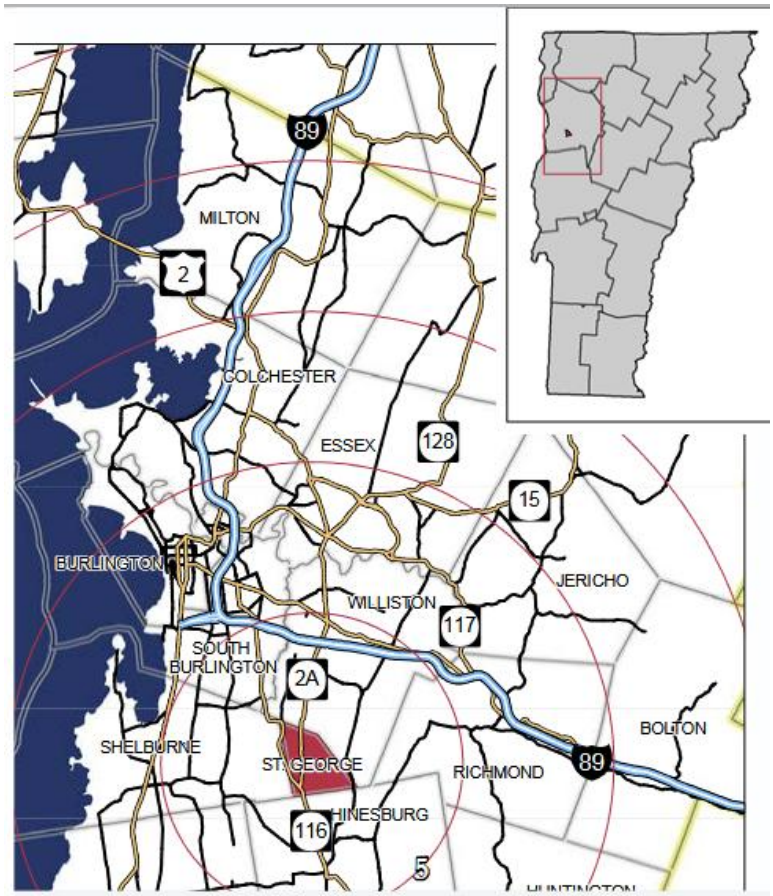
1 | INTRODUCTION

1.01 GENERAL DESCRIPTION

St. George is approximately 3.6 square miles in area and is Vermont's smallest town. Located in Chittenden County, St. George is surrounded by Williston, Shelburne and Hinesburg. The Champlain Valley to the west and the Green Mountains to the east come together in St. George where two north-south ridgelines divide the town.

The steeper terrain and small geographic area limits St. George from providing much of the development seen in adjoining towns. Currently the only public water and wastewater infrastructure is in the Town Center Property which is the hub of town activity. Most of the roads in St. George are private and two state highways, Routes 116 and 2A, provide access to the larger communities that adjoin the town.

While residential development has increased, mostly in areas off of Route 2A, St. George has not experienced the growth pressure of other towns in Chittenden County. The town maintains a small staff at our Town Hall, located at 21 Barber Road in our Town Center, and much of the municipal activity is run by a group of dedicated volunteers. This small town environment is highly prized by its residents who strive to maintain a strong sense of community and a close connection to the unique assets that are St. George.



1.02 VISION STATEMENT

We envision a future for St. George that balances opportunities for growth with the preservation of important natural areas and working agricultural land. We want the natural beauty of St. George to be enjoyed by future generations, so it is critical that development does not degrade our environment. This plan charts a direction for our town's future development.

The Town Center Property will continue to be the public hub of activity as it provides places where residents can meet and interact. In the visioning session that led to the writing of this statement, residents expressed interest in maintaining the Town Center Property for civic uses, recreation and conservation.

Surrounding the core of our Town Center, we envision the development of further residential neighborhoods that will provide a range of quality housing options that will support a diverse population. The town should seek innovative design and infrastructure solutions to the challenge of providing future housing development.

We also hope that ways will be found to improve the connectivity within our town, which is currently divided by highways and topography, with the goal of further strengthening the sense of community among residents. For the Town Center to flourish with public uses such as parks, recreation areas and civic uses, safety issues associated with Route 2A will need to be addressed. It is our vision that this section of road will function as a village street for St. George rather than a highway between Hinesburg and Williston.

Only through thoughtful and careful planning will the town be successful at minimizing the negative impacts of growth while supporting the positive improvements we feel will benefit our town. With residents' continued support we can maintain our town in a way that accommodates change in a manner that enhances the community as a whole while preserving the qualities that make St. George the beautiful and unique small town that it is.

1.03 AUTHORITY AND PURPOSE

Planning is the process by which the goals and needs of our community are discussed, directions are chosen, and policies set down. It is a process of identifying natural and human constraints, increasing awareness of our heritage and present condition, anticipating future needs and desired outcomes, and balancing individual, town, and regional interests. Our planning efforts are a continuation of the process first begun by residents in the 1960s and 1970s with the adoption of St. George's first comprehensive plan and land use regulations.

1.03-A Statutory Framework

The St. George Selectboard has the authority under the Vermont Planning and Development Act, Title 24 V.S.A. Chapter 117, to adopt a town plan. The first plan was adopted on September 13, 1971 and has been regularly updated. According to law, the town plan must be consistent with the 15 state planning goals and include the 12 required elements listed in statute.

This 2026 plan and previous plans have been established by the town as frameworks for future growth and are implemented through the adoption of land use regulations by a majority vote of the Selectboard following public hearings held by the Planning Commission and Selectboard. Land use regulations legally require the policy and data foundation of a town plan. So that town plans may accommodate changing conditions, state law requires that municipalities review, amend, and readopt their town plan at least every eight years. The St. George Planning Commission, with public input, has reviewed the town's conditions and facilities, and has stated St. George's public goals and objectives in the following 2026 Town Plan.

1.03-B Purpose

This Town Plan is the principal statement of policy for the Town of St. George. It presents our vision for the town's future, along with series of policies to move us closer to achieving that vision. This plan will guide the town's efforts in land use planning, the provision of public facilities and services, environmental protection, economic development and land conservation. It will be implemented through town ordinances and regulations, town participation in state and federal regulatory processes and the town's approach to raising and spending public funds. We have endeavored to state the town's aims in terms broad enough to allow application to a wide range of situations, yet with sufficient detail to serve as a strong foundation for land use regulations and other implementation tools.

Our town's unique sense of place and the quality of life we enjoy is created through the interaction of many elements. The plan provides a central theme that unites these elements, yet it also recognizes that efforts to enhance the various factors may come into conflict. The plan allows for flexibility and creativity in how we apply it in order to achieve an appropriate balance between competing objectives. We would not want St. George to become a static, lifeless place, so our plan recognizes the need to accommodate future change in a manner that protects those aspects of the town we value most.

Our plan is the result of a cooperative effort that, over the years, has relied on the dedication, knowledge and skills of many residents. It is based on collected information from various surveys and resident input working sessions as well as required state planning goals and required elements listed in statute. This plan, written for the 2026 required update, contains a vision that will not be fully achieved in the next 8 years, when the town will be required to update the plan once again. For this reason, when working on the plan, we considered at least a 20-year time horizon. It is also important to note that the plan can be amended at any time to reflect changing conditions and residents are encouraged to contribute to this process. Residents will always be notified, with an opportunity to participate, if any changes are made.

1.04 TOWN HISTORY

St. George has the smallest area of any town in Vermont. It was chartered by Governor Benning Wentworth of New Hampshire on August 18,1763. At that time the grantees were under the impression that they had a full-sized town of six miles square, but Williston and Burlington had been chartered earlier and their northern boundaries were undisputedly the Winooski River. This left Shelburne and St. George, both chartered the same day, with a piece of land six to seven miles wide at Lake Champlain but narrowing in a triangular fashion as it moved inland. St. George was left with only 2,200 acres, not the 23,040 originally called for.

The town was named after King George of England. The town's first settlers, Joshua Isham and family, arrived in 1784 from Colchester, Connecticut. The next year more settlers arrived in St. George including Elnathan Higbee and family. The town's first school, a simple log structure, was built shortly after their arrival. The town was organized and the first town meeting held on March 9, 1813.

From 1838 to 1901, St. George had its own post office. The Little Red Schoolhouse, built in 1852, had students in it until 1965. It has seen town dances, church services, and even the fabrication of mattresses for town residents by the Home Demonstration Group during World War II. The schoolhouse was also used for town meetings, public hearings, and as a polling place through the 1990s.

Historically, St. George was solely an agricultural town; there were no mills or industry of any significance. In 1890, a railroad was planned that would have passed through St. George along the east side of Route 116, but the Chittenden County Railroad Company never completed the line. A number of small businesses have operated in St. George over the years including:

- Sunrise Tavern – a stage coach tavern built in 1828, listed on the State Register of Historic Places as one of six significant structures in St. George;

- A grocery store operated by George Peet in the 1920s and 1930s at the corner of Route 116 and Route 2A.
- A lumber camp operated on Mt. Pritchard in the 1940s. Ruins of the buildings can still be seen;
- A lunch stand operated by Dorothy Thompson and her mother, Lucinda William, in the 1940s across from the Thompson home;
- A cedar mill that produced cedar oil, which operated by waterpower on the Anson Peet property, was operated by Donald and Elizabeth Ayer in the late 1940s;
- The Rocky Ridge Golf Course, which opened in 1963, on 150 acres of farmland once owned by Anson and Dorothy Peet.
- A certified organic vegetable, berry and Christmas tree farm, Goose Creek Farm, cultivated by Lisa and Greg Beliveau from the early 1980s to the late 2000s. The farm was located on the Abigail (Isham) and Russell Tilley property, the site of the original Goose Creek Farm in the 1880s.

Interest in developing portions of St. George didn't really start up until the mid-1960's. In 1966 the population grew quickly, from 108 to 477, when the mobile home park on Route 2A was developed. The town was working on its first zoning ordinance at the time which was approved in 1967.

Two milestones in the town's history happened in 2013.

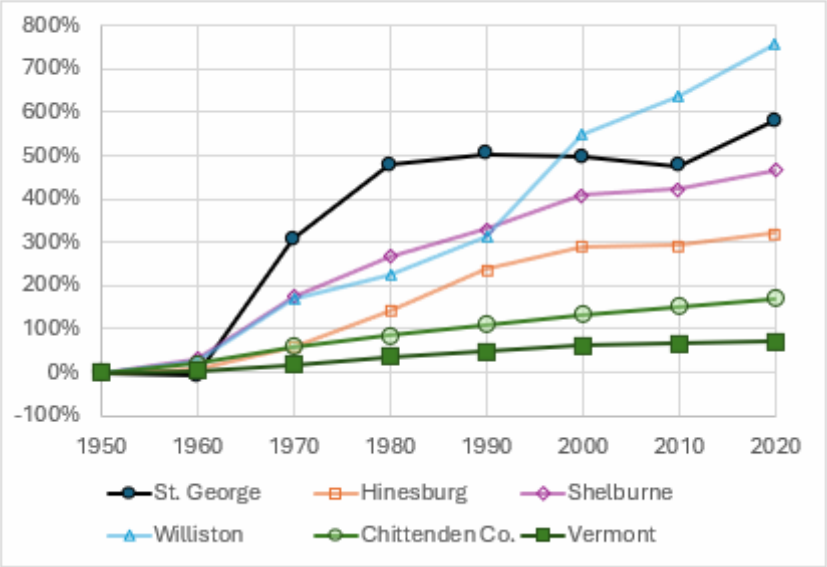
1. The town first celebrated its 200th anniversary of annual town meetings. The first annual meeting was in March, 1813.
2. The second was to celebrate the town's 250th anniversary. The town was chartered on August 18, 1763 and to commemorate the chartering of the town, St. George residents built the 250th Anniversary Pavilion which sits in the 2-acre Town Park. Residents gathered on August 18, 2013 to hear the reading of the charter – the next public reading of the charter will be on August 18, 2038.

2 | OUR PEOPLE

2.01 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

For most of its history, St. George's population dynamics followed a pattern typical of agrarian towns throughout New England. By 1830, the town's population had reached 135 people, a number that slowly declined over the next 100 years as families migrated from rural communities like St. George to the nation's expanding western frontier drawn by the promise of better land, or to booming industrial cities seeking factory jobs. In 1966, however, St. George began a new era when the town of around 30 homes added nearly 130 residences in the St. George Villa mobile home park, now called the St. George Community Cooperative, Inc. Other housing developments, St. George Estates and Rocky Ridge Estates, and then the smaller Forest subdivision, also went in which resulted in the town's population growing from 117 people in 1950 to 677 in 1980.

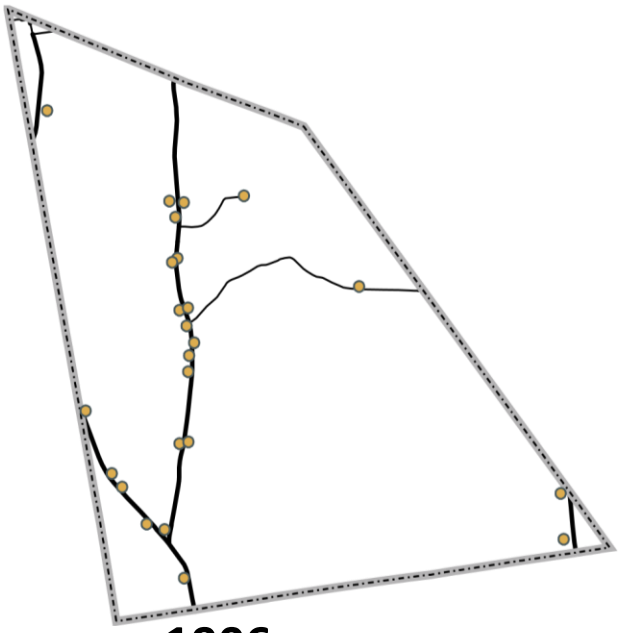
Cumulative population growth since 1950 (percent of 1950 population).



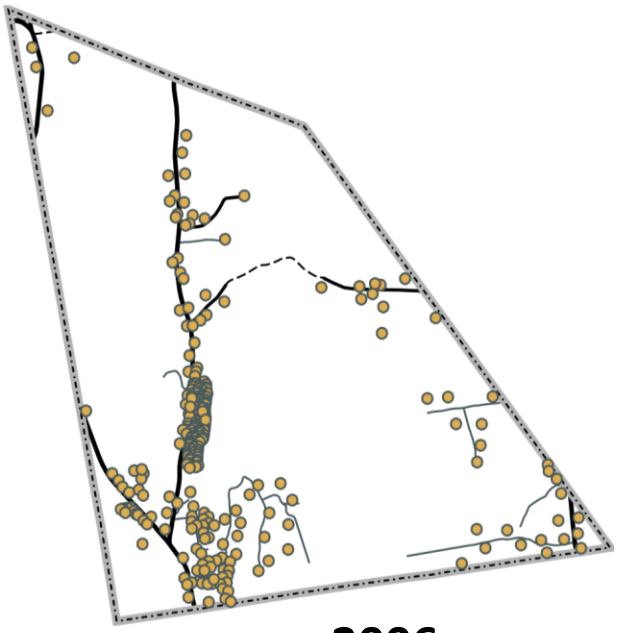
St. George experienced another wave of growth in 2010-2020. The Census Bureau estimated the town's population to be 794 in 2020. Most St. George residents live along the Route 2A corridor, with a smaller number of residents scattered across the eastern side of town.

Since 1950, cumulative population growth in St. George has been consistent with that in surrounding towns and faster than county and state growth.

SETTLEMENT PATTERNS – 1906, 2006, 2023

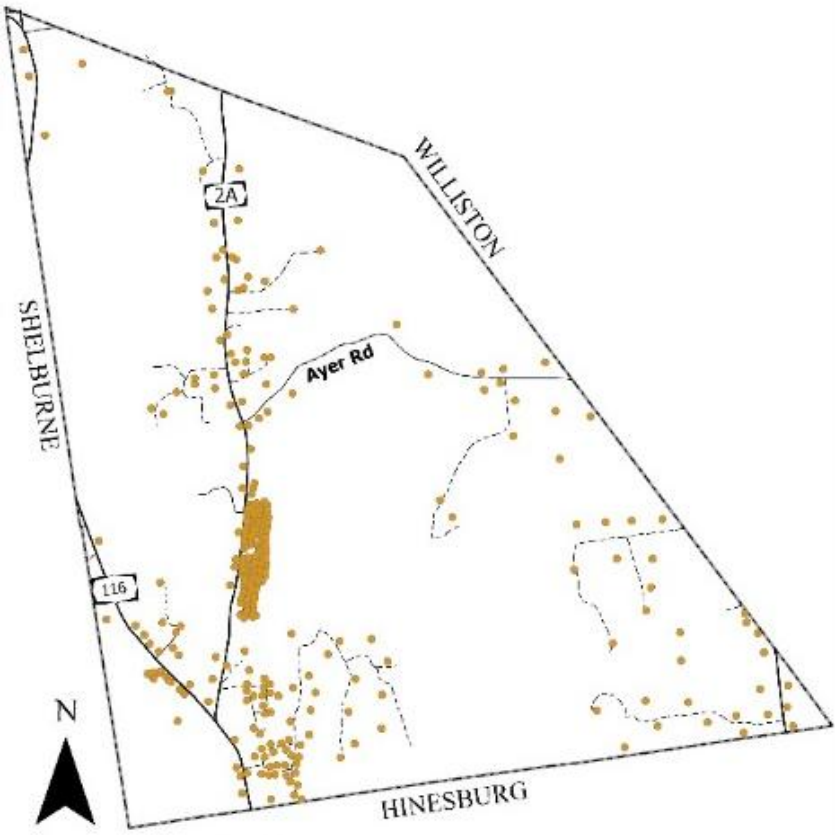


1906



2006

2023



2.02 HOUSING PROFILE

The first Census of housing units in 1940 counted 23 homes in St. George. That number increased more than ten-fold over the next 80 years and St. George had 308 occupied housing units in 2020.

According to the 2019-2023 American Community Surveys, over half of new St. George residents are moving from another town in Chittenden County and most of the rest are moving from out-of-state. St. George has a higher rate of home ownership (92.6%) than the rest of the county (66.3%). The most recent American Community Survey reports that 94% of St. George's 327 housing units are occupied year-round. Only four housing units in St. George (1.2% of the total) are "vacation homes" (according to the census language, "for seasonal, recreational or occasional use"). A small number of housing units (roughly 4-5 percent) are vacant at any given time as they are between renters or on the housing market.

St. George is unusual among Vermont towns in that it has a high percentage of mobile homes. There are two mobile home parks in St. George. Chambers Park is located off of Route 116 on Chambers Park Road, consisting of 8 lots owned by Spillane and Curley Properties, LLC. The other mobile home park is located across from the town center on Route 2A; it was originally developed in 1966 and owned by the developer Mort Kaufman. In 2017, the residents formed a co-op, the St. George Community Co-Op, to purchase the development. There are now 118 units in the St. George Community Co-Op and most are owned with only a few still being rented. All homes own equal shares of the land and the Co-Op is run by a board of volunteers responsible for daily operations and maintenance. Altogether, mobile homes represent approximately 33% of St. George's housing stock. This compares to a statewide average of roughly 6% and a countywide average of about 3%.

St. George Community Cooperative, Inc. is one of the largest mobile home parks in Chittenden County, making the town a key provider of affordable housing in the area. The average assessed value of a mobile home within the park, as of the 2025 grand list based on the 2009 town-wide re-appraisal, is approximately $35,000. The average home on a lot less than six acres in size is assessed at approximately $301,000 and those on larger properties are valued at approximately $493,000.

The town has a limited influence on the real estate market and housing prices. St. George, however, can enact regulations that allow for a variety of housing types – including multi-family homes, attached single-family homes and apartments – while ensuring new homes are in keeping with the character of their surroundings.

The State of Vermont defines affordable housing as housing that costs less than 30% of the gross income of a household earning 80% of the county's median family income. Housing costs for homeowners include mortgage, tax and insurance payments. For renters, costs include rent and utilities.

In Chittenden County, the 2023 median household income for a family of four was $99,578 and 80% of that is $79,622. According to the Vermont Housing Finance Agency, an affordable 3-bedroom home in Chittenden County for a family with a household income of $79,662 would have a purchase price of no more than $327,500. In 2023, 31.6% of homes in St. George were valued at $300,000 or less. This compares to 22% of the homes in Chittenden County. However, homes have been selling for prices much greater than their assessed value: the median assessed value of a primary residence in St. George in 2023 was around $379,500. The median sale price for a primary residence in St. George fluctuated between $388,000 and $675,000 in 2020-2024.

The 2023 American Community Survey estimated that roughly 26% of the St. George households paid more than 30% of their income towards housing costs. Although St. George has only limited influence on the real estate market and housing prices, this Town Plan and our land use regulations encourage a range of housing types including multi-family homes, attached single-family homes, and apartments that will help meet the need for affordable housing in St. George and Chittenden County.

The Vermont Housing Opportunities Made for Everyone (HOME) Act, Act 47, enacted on June 5, 2023, amended the Planning and Development Statute, Act 250, and other laws. Additional legislation, Act 181, was passed in June 2024 making further changes to the Planning and Development Statute, Act 250, regional planning processes, and the state planning designation program.

Act 47 requires the state to set regional housing targets, which are then disaggregated by the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission into municipal housing targets, which must be included in municipal plans along with policies that support meeting those targets. As of the October 16, 2025 draft ECOS Regional Plan, the housing targets for St. George are:

Existing housing units (2023)	New units by 2050			New units per year		
	low	middle	high	low	mid	high
314	34	67	101	1	3	4

If housing construction trends of the past decade continue, St. George will easily meet or exceed the mid-range targets. St. George's housing priorities for the next eight years are to ensure that new housing includes units that are affordable to working-class Vermonters, and that new housing is built in a compact fashion to facilitate efficient transportation and preserve St. George's remaining natural land cover.

2.03 ECONOMIC PROFILE

St. George has a labor force of around 526 people, 23% of whom work from home. About 50% of adult residents have a college degree as compared to county and state rates of 54% and 44% respectively.

The median household income in St. George was around $108,000 a year in 2023. This was about 33% higher than the state median and 9% higher than the county median.

Poverty in St. George has been declining over the past ten years. In 2014, 15% of St. George residents were living below the poverty line and 37% were living at less than 200% of the poverty line. By 2023, these figures had come down to 4% and 11% respectively.

3 | OUR COMMUNITY

3.01 HISTORIC AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

There are six structures in St. George listed on the State Register of Historic Places: the Higbee-Lawrence house, c. 1795; the Sunrise Tavern built in 1828; the Isham house, c. 1840; the Little Red Schoolhouse built in 1852; the Lockwood-Smith house, c. 1830; and the Lockwood-Peet house built in 1830. Given the limited number of historic buildings remaining in town, significant modifications of these buildings should be reviewed and their demolition should be discouraged.

There are no locations in St. George listed on the State Archaeological Inventory. Under various state and federal laws, many private and state development projects and all federally funded, assisted, licensed or permitted projects must consider archaeological sites during project planning. Project impacts to archaeological sites must be mitigated.

3.02 TOWN FACILITIES, LANDS & FISCAL CONDITION

St. George is a town with few community facilities; we have no post office, library, emergency services, school or large community meeting space of our own. In the past, the annual Town Meeting was held at either the Rocky Ridge Golf Club or the VermontWare building. More recently, the annual Town Meeting has been held at the Little Red Schoolhouse.

3.02-A Town Office

In 1995, the town bought a private home adjacent to the town center property and renovated it into a municipal office. This is St. George's first office, as previously the clerk worked from home and kept the town's records there as well. The small, one-story building provides office space for the town administrator, town clerk, zoning administrator, treasurer, and road commissioner, as well as a concrete vault for record storage. The town office also has a meeting room, which can accommodate around 20 people comfortably.

3.02-B Little Red Schoolhouse

The other structure owned by the town is the historic 'Little Red Schoolhouse' which was built in 1852. In its original location, on Route 2A, it was used as a one-room schoolhouse up until 1965. It then became a community center where all of the town's meetings were held. In 1995, the majority of the town meetings were moved to the new town office leaving the schoolhouse empty and unused. A dedicated group of residents formed the St. George Historic and Conservation Trust and in 2012 succeeded in securing the permits and funding necessary to not only renovate the building but also to move the building to its new location in our town center. The schoolhouse is now owned by the town and in 2024 the town voted to dedicate the remaining land of Lot 4 for further civic use. The Little Red Schoolhouse is situated perfectly next to our pavilion and town park and remains a cherished asset with special significance for our community.

3.02-C Town Center Park

In 2014 the town voted to designate two acres of the town center property for the development of a town park. Currently there are three civic uses in our town park; the 250th Anniversary Pavilion, the community garden, and a swing set. Further playground equipment could be located in this area or behind the Little Red Schoolhouse. A baseball field used to be located just outside of the southwest corner but, as of 2025, it is in such disrepair that it may be difficult to locate. The town may want to allocate more land for the town park depending on future interest. In the preparation process for this town plan update, numerous town surveys were conducted which revealed a strong interest in allocating town center land for recreational purposes.

3.02-D Town Center Property

St. George's most significant municipal asset is the 80-acre town center property, most of which was purchased in 1974 with the purpose of establishing a village. Soon after the purchase of the land, the town worked with Robert Burley, architect and planner, to develop what was called the "Burley Plan." This plan became the vision for the town center land and at that time consisted of mapped out areas for housing, a school site, town green, recreation fields along with other uses. The town received grant funding and with a private developer began implementing the plan with the construction of a water system and necessary service roads. St. George also obtained an Act 250 permit and State Subdivision Permit for a community septic system.

In 1984, the vision for this area began to change. Residents approved a scaled-down version of the Burley Plan and funding was once again sought to complete the infrastructure needed to support future development. Implementation of the revised plan stalled and the town center project lay dormant until the early 1990s.

In 1992, there was interest in the town center property as a site for a manufacturing facility. The town updated the property's Act 250 permits and a 10-lot subdivision, using 15 acres, began.

Beginning in 1993 and up to 2025, nine of the lots have either been sold or designated for civic or infrastructure use. These lots now contain the convenience store, a small apartment building, the historic Little Red Schoolhouse and lots owned by Dawson Partnership. One lot contains the community septic system and another is reserved for future septic system expansion.

Proceeds from the sale of the lots were used for town center projects including the construction of Barber Road, the purchase and renovation of the current town office and the installation of the community water and septic system that serves the 10 town center lots. Funds that were remaining have continued to be designated for town center use.

The town center property currently has a well that provides 80 gallons of water per minute and a community septic system which has approximately 1,000 gallons per day of remaining capacity out of its 5,000 gallons per day of total capacity. An association was formed to manage the water and septic system and is made up of the town and town center lot owners.

Outside of the 10-lot subdivision, the rest of the 80 acre town center land includes open fields, a large forested area, utility rights of way and a 2 acre park, consisting of the 250th Town Anniversary Pavilion, a small playground and a community garden. Residents have expressed a strong interest in designating the approximate 38 acre forested area as conservation land.

3.02-E St. George Cemetery

Report submitted by the Cemetery Commission for the 2026 update:

St. George owns the fenced 1.24-acre cemetery on Route 2A. In 2021, Lisa Beliveau preserved a 5 foot easement of vegetative buffer on the north and east sides of the cemetery (with the exception of areas crossing the septic easement shown on Site Plan S2) and granted the St. George Cemetery Commission access to the buffer and permission to add additional vegetation to the buffer. In 2020, the town received a generous donation from the Lisa Beliveau family of .5 acres of land between the cemetery and Route 2A to ensure the town has perpetual access to the St. George Town Cemetery. The Cemetery Commission has taken responsibility for tree and vegetation management of this land.

As of April 2025, the St. George Town Cemetery had available for purchase Certificates of Burial Rights for 39 single plots and Certificates of Burial Rights in 36 plots for cremated remains. Of note, there are also four headstones near the clubhouse of the Rocky Ridge Golf Course. These are maintained by the management of the golf course.

The Cemetery Commission's ongoing objectives are to:

- Provide clear communication to town residents regarding the purchase process for rights to burial in the St. George Town Cemetery and support in this process as needed. Cemetery Bylaws will be updated as needed and continue to be available on the St. George Town website and in hard copy at the town office.
- Maintain property including fences, trees and other growth.
- Restore broken headstones and clean all headstones as appropriate.
- Be open to ideas for expansion of burial options for town residents as warranted.
- Explore with the Planning Commission and Selectboard to define what parts of currently owned town land could be suitable for future expansion of the cemetery and/or to acquire other land by purchase, donation or otherwise.

3.02-F Fiscal Condition

Given that St. George provides limited services, town expenses are low. St. George's annual municipal budget in recent years has been approximately $375,000, roughly 80% of which has been raised through property taxes.

St. George has generally had one of the lowest municipal tax rates in Chittenden County, ranging from 30 to 33 cents per $100 of value. The town's Grand List Real Value is approximately $91 million; more than 80% of that total is the value of residential properties.

3.03 ECONOMY

Historically, St. George's economy was based almost entirely on agriculture. While open farmland remains an important component of the community's visual character, only a small fraction of the income generated in town is earned through agricultural activities. Dairy farming came to dominate Vermont's agrarian communities after the Civil War and milk, along with related products, remains the state's main agricultural commodity. In the 1950s, St. George had seven dairy farms and there were almost three times as many cows living in town than people. Five farms closed during the 1960s – largely due to the requirement to install bulk tanks, which were unaffordable for many small operations – and only one dairy farm, the Pillsbury Farm, remained in St. George by 1980. That farm sold off the last of its herd in 2006.

Other types of small-scale farming and agricultural activities continue in St. George. Today, there are two larger-scale farms in the St. George/Shelburne area, the LaPierre and Guillemette farms. A number of town residents plant gardens or keep livestock such as horses, chickens, or bees. The town has a community garden at the town center property. Additionally, some of the town's farmland is rented to or owned by farmers from neighboring towns.

Over the past several decades, St. George's economy has diversified. In 2023, there were approximately 498 employed adults in St. George, 120 of whom (24%) worked from home. Of these 498 workers, the majority (266) worked in "management, business, science and arts occupations," 90 worked in "sales and office" occupations, 50 worked in "production, transportation, and material moving," 47 worked in service jobs, and 45 worked in "natural resources, construction, and maintenance." Breaking employment down another way, 47 residents worked for the government, 30 were self-employed, and the remainder (421) worked in the private or nonprofit sectors.

The number of people working from home is increasing in St. George, likely due to a combination of remote work and self-employment. Home businesses offer their operators and the community as a whole many benefits including a positive impact on the environment, eliminating the need to commute, promoting a sense of community as residents do not leave town for work each day, providing alternatives for working parents, and increasing economic activity in town. However, home businesses can have an impact on their neighbors especially if

they are located in a compact residential area or involve activities that increase noise, traffic, etc. It is also important to recognize that a successful home business can outgrow its location in a residential setting over time. To ensure that businesses can be carried on in a manner that is compatible with the area in which they are located, St. George strives to support the ability of residents to work from home while protecting neighbors from potential adverse impacts.

3.04 EDUCATION AND CHILDCARE

3.04-A Elementary and Secondary Education

Report submitted by Lindsay Colf, School Board Director for the 2026 update:

Since the closure of the one-room Little Red Schoolhouse in 1966, the students of St. George have traveled outside town to attend school. Until 2003, parents could choose from among schools in neighboring communities. In 2017 under Act 46, five towns consolidated voluntarily to form one supervisory school district, and St. George became part of the Champlain Valley School District (CVSD) with Hinesburg, Williston, Shelburne and Charlotte.

One 12-member school board governs six schools across the five towns. The mission of CVSD is to educate and empower all students with the knowledge, understanding, skills, and curiosity to contribute to and flourish in a complex world. CVSD utilizes a lens of Identity, Connection, Proficiency, and Direction (ICPD) to foster growth and belonging. In 2025, in response to the Act 73 Vermont School Redistricting Task Force, the CVSD school board stated: "CVSD is the only district in Vermont that meets the minimum size requirements in Act 73 . . . The supervisory district structure and size of our district allow our schools to operate at scale and enables our central office to work efficiently in providing the conditions for all students, in all schools, to advance toward our shared mission and vision . . . Consolidation has been beneficial for our community." (https://www.cvsdvt.org/default-board-post-page-clone/~board/champlain-valley-school-district-news/post/cvsd-school-board-recommendations-to-vermont-redistricting-task-force)

St. George students may attend any elementary school in the district, with transportation supplied to Williston Schools. Students in grade 9-12 are provided bus service to attend Champlain Valley Union High School (CVU) in Hinesburg. CVU enrollment as of 2024-2025 was 1,266, with 2% (29) of these students hailing from St. George.

Vermont has a universal school meals program that provides free breakfast and lunch to all public school students, regardless of family income. The Universal School Meals Act (Act 64) took effect on July 1, 2023.

3.04-B Vocational, Post-Secondary & Continuing Education

Report submitted by Lindsay Colf, School Board Director for the 2026 update:

Champlain Valley Union High School (CVU) students are provided opportunities for Technical Center enrollment in Burlington and Essex. Other opportunities include Dual Enrollment in college, Early College and virtual student enrollment via the Vermont Virtual Learning Cooperative (VTVLC).

Chittenden County provides a variety of vocational, post-secondary and continuing education opportunities conveniently located for St. George residents. Vermont State University has a location in Williston, and Burlington is home to the University of Vermont and Champlain College. Residents may also enroll in a wide variety of evening classes offered via CVU Access.

3.04-C Childcare

As of 2025, there is only one licensed or registered childcare provider located in town. There are a number of accredited childcare centers and registered childcare homes in neighboring communities but additional daycare facilities in St. George would be desirable. These additional facilities could potentially be incorporated into plans for the town center property.

3.05 RECREATION

The Town of St. George currently has an 18-hole golf course, the Rocky Ridge Golf Club, located in the southwest corner of town – as well as access to the recreational facilities at Lake Iroquois. A small playground is located in our Town Park and an old baseball field was located just outside of our Town Park but is in disrepair.

St. George is a member of the Lake Iroquois Recreation District. The town pays an annual assessment to the district and with the town's membership, St. George residents can use the swimming beach, playground equipment, picnic area, and walking trails. These facilities are located in Williston on the north shore of the lake and are accessed from Oak Hill Road.

St. George residents can get a reduced price for the beach pass that is required for access. Beach passes can be purchased at the kiosk at the Lake Iroquois main gate.

The Town of St. George has several areas for possible recreation expansion. The 2-acre Town Park, in our Town Center, currently has a pavilion, community garden, and a swing set and it is anticipated that additional recreational facilities will be added in the future. The land behind the Little Red Schoolhouse may be a good location for additional playground equipment. The town also has a forested area, in the western part of the town-owned property, which could be developed into hiking trails.

St. George endeavors to continue support for children's summer recreational programs.

3.06 TRANSPORTATION

3.06-A State Highways

Arterials *link communities and carry major traffic flows within urbanized areas, such as between the central business district and outlying areas or between suburban centers.*
Major collectors *take traffic from local streets and collectors and channels it to arterials or destinations that are not well served by the arterial system. They provide both land access and traffic circulation in residential, commercial, and industrial areas.*
Sufficiency ratings *are measurable standards for the adequacy of each highway section based on the structural condition, efficient movement of traffic, and safety.*
Access management *is the control of driveway and street connections to public roads.*

St. George's major transportation corridors are two state highways – Route 116, classified as a principal arterial road, and Route 2A (also, known as St. George Road), classified as a minor arterial road. These highways run north – south between the ridges of Mt. Pritchard and Brownell mountains. There are 3.693 miles of state highway within the town boundaries. Route 2A begins in St. George at the intersection with Route 116 and travels 1.98 miles to the Williston town line. Route 116 begins at the Hinesburg line and travels 1.08 miles in St. George, although it passes in and out of town at the Shelburne line.

Vermont Routes 116 and 2A carry commuter traffic to South Burlington, Williston, Burlington and Essex from the residential communities of northern Addison County, Hinesburg and Huntington. Additional commuters are traveling from their homes north of St. George to Hinesburg and other communities to the south. Increased commercial and industrial development to the north and south has also increased the amount of truck traffic on the highways.

The Vermont Agency of Transportation supplies Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) reports. Statistics for 2018 to 2024:

- Route 116 between Hinesburg and Route 2A: AADT of 10,000 (2024)
- Route 116 north of Route 2A: AADT of 4,500 (2021)
- Route 2A through St. George: AADT of 4,900 (2023)

According to the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans), Route 2A has a sufficiency rating of less than 45 out of 100 in St. George, while Route 116 scored closer to 65 out of 100.

Highway accidents in St. George appear to be on the rise although the numbers each year are small and highly variable. Access management techniques should be used to reduce congestion and maintain safety levels on heavily traveled roads as adjacent lands are developed. The Vermont Agency of Transportation controls access to state highways and requires permits for

new access points. St. George will support the state's access management efforts by promoting the use of shared driveways and by carefully reviewing the traffic patterns, access points and parking areas proposed for new development near the highways.

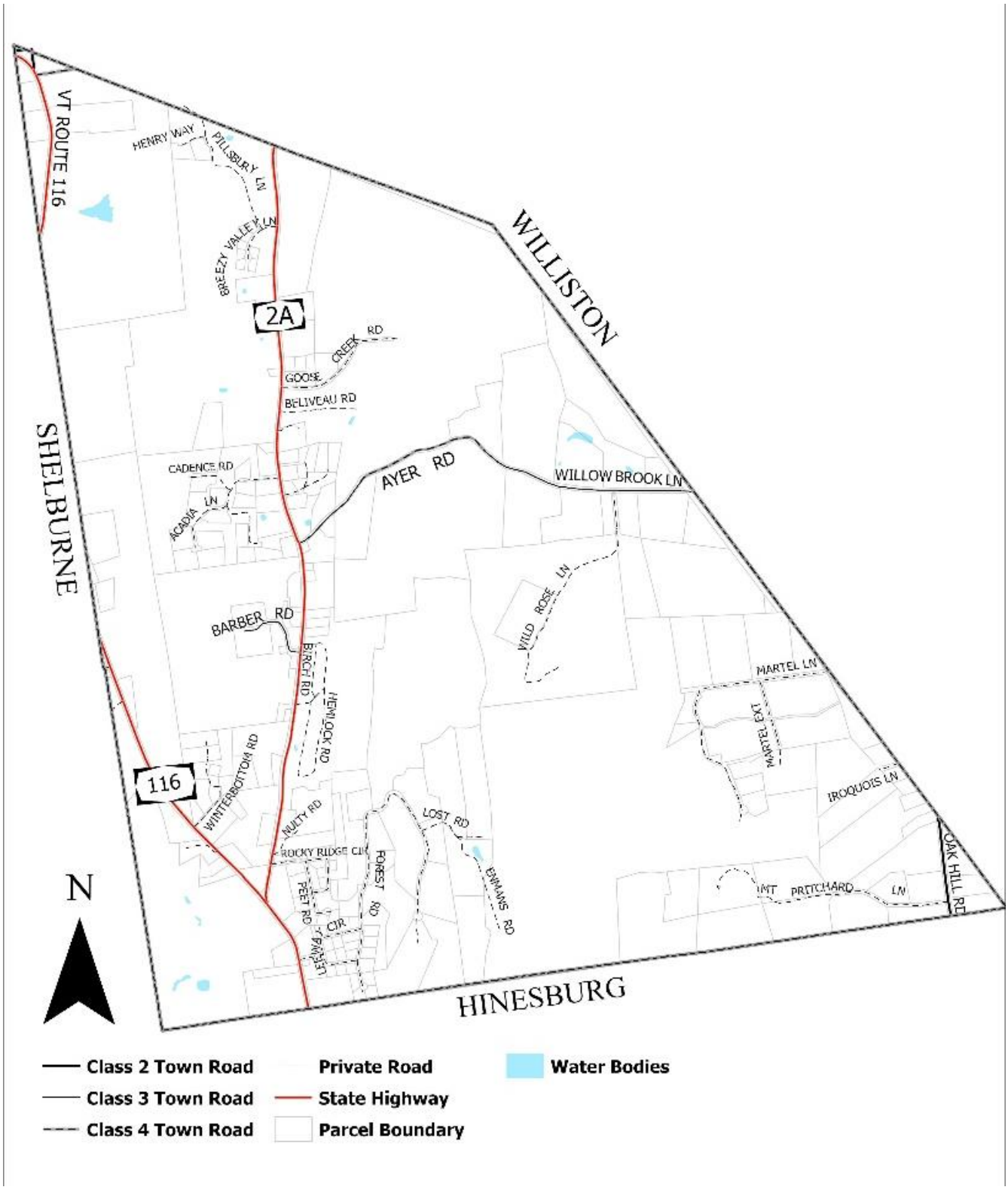
Route 2A also serves as a "village street" for St. George's town center property. The speed limit on the highway in this area is 35 miles per hour but traffic regularly moves at higher speeds. Busy highways are both a blessing and a curse for downtowns and village centers. The traffic may help to support a vital commercial area, but it can also bring unwanted noise, dirt and pollution, compromise pedestrian safety and comfort and discourage people from parking their cars and walking. In order for our vision for the town center property to become a reality, traffic calming will be needed on Route 2A. With the construction of the gas station and convenience store, as well as the development of additional recreational activities, both vehicular and pedestrian traffic near the town center property will increase. The town should continue to work with VTrans to assess how to calm traffic in order to create a safe, pedestrian friendly environment as our town center develops. Recently, there have been sidewalk segments and a crosswalk with rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFBs) installed at Hemlock Road and the gas station to provide a more visible, safer crossing for pedestrians.

3.06-B Town Roads

St. George contracts out its road maintenance, including snow plowing, and owns no road equipment.

St. George has 0.375 miles of Class 2 roads (small portions of Oak Hill, Pond and South Brownell roads), 0.87 miles of Class 3 roads (portions of Ayer Road/Willow Brook Lane and Barber Road), and 0.72 miles of Class 4 roads (unmaintained ancient road on westerly edge of Brownell Mountain and the middle section of Ayer Road, which is not maintained during winter). Ayer Road/Willow Brook Lane is the only connector between the east and west sides of Mt. Pritchard. When it is seasonally closed, many residents traveling between the east side and the town center drive through neighboring Hinesburg or Williston. The center section of Ayer Road/Willow Brook Lane is a Class 4 road. To promote safety and security, the quality of Ayer Road should be improved to provide a better surface and drainage and to make it safe for the walkers, bikers, and drivers who use it for necessity, convenience, and recreation.

3.06-C Private Roads



Over 95% of St. George's residences are accessed by private roads and it should be anticipated that new homes built in the future will be accessed by private roads as well. It is unlikely that the town will change its policy on accepting development roads, as long as doing so is a financial liability for the town. Whether new roads are public or private, it is critical that all roads are built to basic standards appropriate for our climate in order to protect public safety, infrastructure and the environment. Roads and drives should be designed to allow for reasonable emergency access in all seasons including consideration of slope, turnaround area, length, cleared width and need for pull-offs.

3.06-D Road Safety

Residents are concerned about the safety of St. George's roads for drivers, property owners along the highways, and those walking or biking. Safety concerns on Route 2A in the vicinity of the town center property and St. George Community Cooperative, Inc. are discussed elsewhere in this plan.

A study was done in 2010-2014, by the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans), and the intersection of Route 116 and Route 2A was identified as a high crash location. A follow-up road safety audit was done in 2016. In 2021 the Vermont Agency of Transportation held a public hearing to propose improvement strategies. Since this intersection was identified as a hazardous location by VTrans, a roundabout has been approved to replace the current intersection.

St. George should also consider non-motorized use of local roads to accommodate for walkers, runners and bicyclists. The feasibility of constructing shoulders, bike lanes or adjacent paths should be explored. Any plans to widen roads to accommodate non-motorized traffic should address the likely effects on vehicle speed.

3.06-E Road Design

The design of a road – its surface, width, grade, curvature, turning radius at intersections – greatly influences people’s driving behavior. Fast moving traffic is not appropriate in compact village centers and residential neighborhoods. It creates unsafe conditions for pedestrians, bicyclists and children, and discourages people from using non-vehicular modes of transportation and enjoying many types of outdoor recreation. As new residential streets and access roads are built in town, they should be constructed to standards based on design speeds of 35 miles per hour. Within the village center, road design should be based on a speed of 25 miles per hour. Future streets in the village center should also enforce slow movement of vehicles through their design and provide ample public space for sidewalks, landscaping, street lighting, etc. Outside the center, new roads should be narrow, gently winding country lanes that follow the contours of the land and may be without curbs and unpaved.

3.06-F Municipal Roads General Permit

To address federal requirements to reduce pollution in Lake Champlain, the state established the new Municipal Roads General Permit that will affect St George's municipal roads. Road erosion is a source of phosphorous and other contaminants, and all Vermont municipalities will be required to establish standards for road maintenance and upgrades that will reduce road erosion. The permit was issued on January 30, 2018. It requires inventories of road erosion on all sections of road that drain into bodies of water, and a schedule to bring non-complying segments up to standards over 20 years. The town is required to pay annual permit fees.

3.06-G Other Transportation Facilities

There are no public transportation facilities located in St. George, although there is public transit available in the greater Burlington area through the Chittenden County Transportation Authority (CCTA). CCTA's bus routes extend to Williston, but there is currently no transit connection between Williston and St George. CCTA does offer a carpooling service that helps match county residents interested in carpooling (information available at www.cctaride.org). As development proceeds, a transit stop in St. George may become desirable. Any future transit links between Williston and Hinesburg should provide service to St. George.

In addition to CCTA's programs, human service agencies serving St. George residents provide rides and vanpools for their clients. Private taxi service is also available in the area. St. George is conveniently located only nine miles from the Burlington International Airport. The nearest Amtrak is located in Essex Junction.

3.07 UTILITIES AND ENERGY

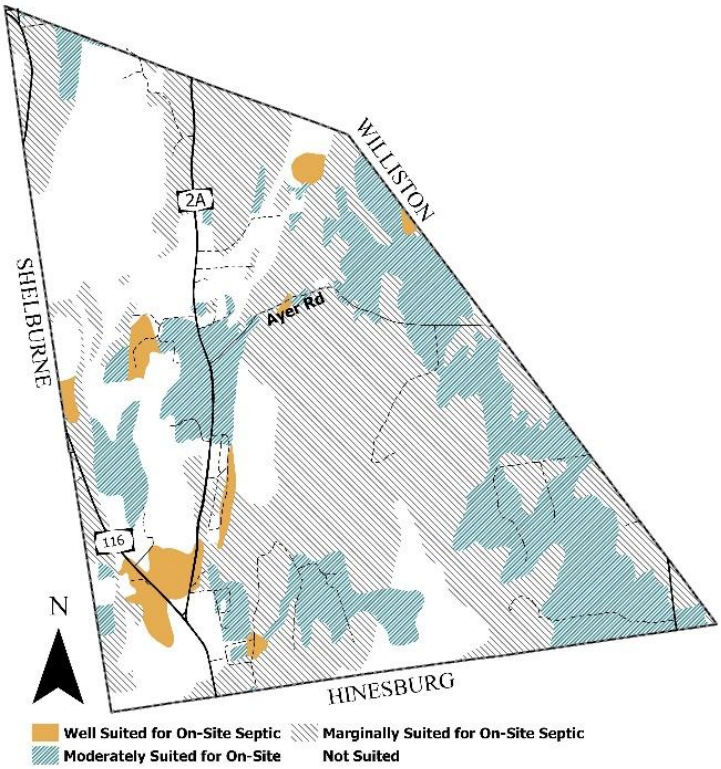
3.07-A Water and Wastewater

There is no municipal water or sewer service in St. George. However, community water and septic systems serve the town center. The water source is a drilled well located on the town center property.

There are four additional community water supplies, as defined by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, in St. George, which serve St. George Community Cooperative, Inc., St. George Estates, the Rocky Ridge Development and the Rocky Ridge Golf Club. St. George Community Cooperative, Inc.'s public water system, which serves approximately 120 homes, is supplied from two drilled wells. The St. George Fire District #1 and St. George Fire District #2 provide potable water to approximately 50 homes from two drilled wells, serving mainly homes in the St. George Estates and Rocky Ridge developments. The Rocky Ridge Golf Club also has an onsite well.

St. George Community Cooperative, Inc. and the town center property each have their own community septic systems with the rest of the town relying on onsite septic systems.

An **onsite septic system** is used to collect, treat, and discharge or reclaim wastewater from an individual dwelling without the use of community-wide sewers or a centralized treatment facility. A conventional onsite system includes a septic tank and a leach field. Other types of alternative onsite systems include at-grade systems, mound systems, media filters, small aerobic units and pressure distribution systems.
A **community (or cluster) septic system** is a wastewater collection and treatment system that serves multiple dwellings, but less than an entire community. Vermont's wastewater rules provide incentives for use of community septic systems.



Vermont's Wastewater System and Potable Water Supply Rules were revised in 2005, significantly changing how the state regulates the construction of new or upgrading of existing on-site or cluster septic systems. The 10-acre exemption was eliminated so new development and substantial modifications to existing buildings require state permits regardless of lot size.

Soil-based septic systems require specific soil conditions to adequately treat wastewater. The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources has rated soil types based on their suitability for such septic systems and on state rules resulting in four major classifications – well suited, moderately suited, marginally suited and unsuited/ unrated. The county soil maps prepared by the Natural Resources Conservation Service indicate that 45% of St. George's soils are marginally suited for onsite septic systems and another 29% are unsuited. Only three percent are well suited and the remaining 23% are moderately suited. While this soil information is not site specific, it does generally indicate the constraints to development dependent on onsite septic systems in St. George. (See 4.02-B for further discussion of the town's soils.)

An alternative option to either individual on-site treatment or a municipal wastewater treatment facility is decentralized treatment. Decentralized wastewater treatment systems employ a combination of onsite and/or community septic systems and are used to treat and dispose of wastewater from dwellings and businesses close to the source. Decentralized

wastewater systems allow for flexibility in wastewater management. Managed decentralized wastewater systems are viable, long-term alternatives to centralized wastewater treatment facilities, particularly in small and rural communities where they are often more cost-effective.

3.07-B Solid Waste

There are no solid waste management facilities in St. George and the town does not provide trash collection or disposal. These services are provided by private haulers and the Chittenden Solid Waste District (CSWD), of which the town is a member. CSWD is considering construction of a regional landfill at the site of the former Williston town landfill; currently, the district trucks its waste out of the county to sanitary landfills in Vermont or New York. Recycling is mandatory and the burning of household trash is illegal in St. George. There are drop-off centers in Williston and Hinesburg for those residents who do not contract with a private hauler for trash pick-up.

3.07-C Telecommunications

Telecommunication services in St. George include land-line phone service provided by Waitsfield – Champlain Valley Telecom, which also offers broadband internet access. Cellular phone service is provided by a number of national companies and service is very good due to the tower located on Mt. Pritchard, which hosts antennae for multiple carriers and provides coverage for the entire town.

3.07-D Natural Gas

In 2016 Vermont Gas Systems (VGS) completed installation of the St. George portion of its natural gas transmission line to Addison County. As part of the permitting process for that project, the Planning Commission demonstrated to VGS that the town meets the minimum threshold density required for VGS to provide local natural gas service. However, a gate station was not constructed in St. George to provide local distribution and it is unlikely that one will be added in the foreseeable future.

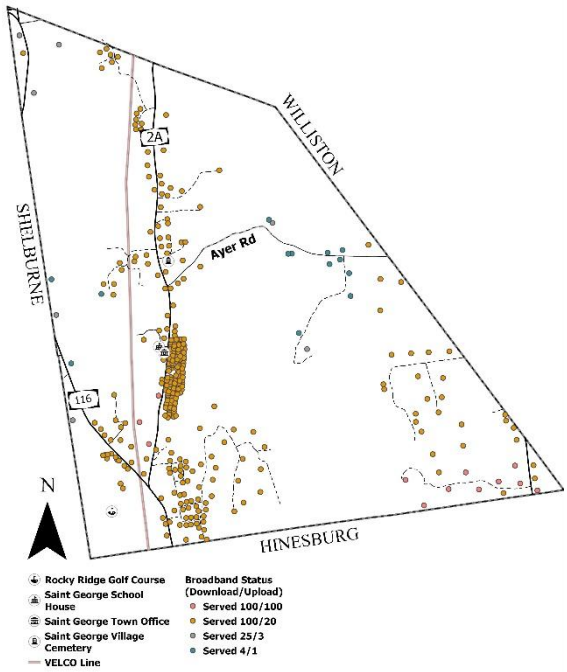
3.07-E Electricity

Vermont Electric Co-operative (VEC) supplies electricity in St. George. As new and/or replacement electric distribution and telecommunications lines are required in town, they should be installed underground. This will promote aesthetically pleasing development and increase the reliability of the infrastructure.

There are no electrical substations in St. George, but currently a 115-kV VELCO (Vermont Electric Power Company) transmission line passes through town running north-south between the New Haven and Williston substations. VELCO controls an approximately 250-foot right-of-way through St. George, which it currently maintains at a cleared width of around 100 feet. The existing line is supported by wooden 'H-frame' poles that are approximately 50 feet tall. The transmission line right-of-way bisects St. George's town center property and the likelihood of a future expansion project by VELCO would seriously affect the aesthetics and development

potential of the town center property. In the late 1990s, VELCO proposed replacing the existing 115-kV line with a 345-kV line – a project that the company dropped.

VELCO later proposed and constructed the Northwest Reliability Project (NRP), which ran a 345-kV line alongside the existing 115-kV line from West Rutland to New Haven and replaced a 46-kV line with a 115-kV line from New Haven to South Burlington. This, however, resulted in more power coming from the south into the New Haven substation than leaving to the north, a clear indication that the corridor through St. George to Williston will likely see a proposal from VELCO to either 1) replace its existing line with a larger one or 2) to run a second line alongside the existing line. Either proposal would require extensive clearing within the right-of-way, thus increasing the visual and ecological impact of the line. Additional or higher voltage lines also have the potential to increase the electric and magnetic fields associated with power transmission, which may be harmful to human health. Higher voltage lines would require taller towers that would be above the tree line.



3.07-F Utility, Energy and Telecommunications Projects

The Town of St. George finds large-scale utility, energy, or telecommunications infrastructure that is located in or impacts the view of identified special areas, or affects the ecological integrity of special areas to be out of character with its surroundings and to pose an undue adverse impact on the aesthetic qualities of these areas (see Section 4.04 for a list of special areas). Such infrastructure is generally industrial in character due to its height, materials and construction. Utility or telecommunications infrastructure that is taller than surrounding vegetation, sky-lined, or visible from public vantage points, does not fit into St. George's scenic character.

In St. George, the approximately 50-foot high VELCO electric transmission poles pass through open fields and wooded areas, divide the town center property, and are visible in the mid-ground of the public view from Route 2A throughout most of town. The line cannot be hidden from view when traversing open, agricultural lands. Where it is located in wooded areas, the required cleared width significantly disrupts the integrity of surrounding forests by reducing interior forest and increasing edge conditions. If the lines were to be placed on higher poles above the tree line or the cleared corridor width were to be increased, the visibility of line would increase significantly. The existing 135-foot high telecommunications tower on Mt.

Pritchard is highly visible from public vantage points in St. George and neighboring communities.

The town worked with Vermont Gas Systems (VGS) to map four future roads crossing their pipeline within the village center. At these points, the line was buried at a lower level using appropriate materials for road crossings. The map showing the location of future roads can be found in the town office records.

The above ground electric transmission lines and below ground natural gas pipeline pose major constraints to future developments of our town center. Large-scale utility infrastructure is not in keeping with the vision set forth by St. George residents which includes recreation and open space in a natural condition. Such infrastructure poses an undue adverse impact on the aesthetics of the area. New or upgraded electric distribution and telecommunications lines should be installed underground.

This plan also recognizes the important scenic character of the town's hillsides and ridgelines, which are visible from many public vantage points within the town and beyond its borders. Large-scale utility or telecommunications infrastructure, located atop our hills and ridgelines, also causes an undue adverse impact on the aesthetics of those special areas. Towers of a height that would require air navigation warning lights would detract from the aesthetic character of the town and residents' view of the night sky, which is relatively free from light pollution and other manmade impacts at the present time. The town has enacted land use regulations that would restrict development on the town's hillsides and ridgelines, both to prevent environmental degradation and to preserve the scenic qualities of the town's rugged terrain.

St. George actively participated in the Act 248 process related to the extension of the natural gas transmission line through the village center. The town recognizes the need to prepare for a future application from VELCO to upgrade its line through town or for other large-scale utility, energy, or telecommunications projects that may also be subject to state regulation.

To ensure the town's interests and land use policies are considered, the town requires a local permit for these facilities to regulate appearance, placement, and construction to protect local character, views, and property values. It is the stated policy of the Town of St. George that:

Any development in the village center that requires access across the VELCO / VGS right-of-way must adhere to the negotiated road crossing locations (shown on a map dated July 22, 2014) and VELCO and VGS must maintain these potential crossings in a manner that would allow for future road construction at those locations.

Any upgrade, substantial change or reconstruction to VELCO's transmission infrastructure in town must:

> Result in the lines being run underground across the village center as identified in the Land Use Plan.

Not add additional lines on separate poles within the existing VELCO corridor (in areas not expressly required to be underground) in order to reduce the undue adverse environmental and aesthetic impact from multiple lines and the potential need for additional transmission corridors.

Provide extensive mitigation for transmission lines above ground that includes at a minimum planting and maintenance by the applicant of street trees along all roadsides on the approaches to screen the transmission lines, with similar plantings to effectively screen the lines and pole towers from adjacent residential properties.

The existing telecommunications tower on Mount Pritchard must:

Not increase the physical, aesthetic, and environmental impact in any way and should be reduced over time by way of new technology.

Remove abandoned facilities and equipment when they cease operation.

Not increase in height or visual impact and shall not include site lighting.

The town will continue to develop a long-range plan, to the extent practical without disrupting telecommunications and broadcast service, for the elimination of the tower on Mount Pritchard.

Utility, energy or telecommunications infrastructure on the town's hillsides and ridgelines that is taller than the surrounding vegetation, requires access roads, power lines and accessory structures, necessitates tree clearing, and/or that may require lighting is not in keeping with the town's scenic character.

Utility, energy or telecommunications projects, subject to state approval, must conform to any landscaping and screening requirements for commercial or industrial development in a similar location as established in the town's land use regulations.

3.07-G Energy

Energy consumption is an essential component of our modern way of life; it has affected and will continue to influence land use and development patterns. In the 1970s as St. George residents were first planning for a village center, energy costs were on the rise and so development of a compact center that was designed to be walkable was highly desirable. The lower energy prices of the 1980s and 1990s made energy conservation a less important criterion for people choosing where to live and how to get around. Now, with increased public awareness of the impact of energy use on our society and the environment, energy conservation has again become a factor in many personal and community decisions.

The energy and climate goals as set by the State of Vermont are:

- To obtain 90% of all energy across all sectors (transportation, heating and electricity) from renewable sources by 2050, with the interim goals of 25% renewable by 2025 and 45% renewable by 2035.
- In the transportation sector, 10% of energy needs will be from renewable energy by 2025, and 45% by 2040.
- In the thermal sector, 30% of energy needs from renewable energy by 2025, and 70% by 2042.
- In the electric sector, 100% of energy needs will be from carbon-free resources by 2032, with at least 75% from renewable energy.
- Reductions in greenhouse gas emissions: 26% reduction from 2005 levels by 2025; 40% reduction from 1990 levels by 2030, and 80% reduction from 1990 levels by 2050.

Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) provided the Town of St. George with a Municipal Energy Data Guide that provided the town with interesting and valuable information on the town's current and projected energy use, along with information on our possible constraints due to agricultural soils, flood hazard areas, high priority forest blocks and water areas to name a few. The Energy Data Guide also maps out preferred site areas for renewable energy generation and solar energy resources.

The full Municipal Energy Data Guide can be found at https://www.ccrpcvt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/StGeorge_NewEnergyDataGuide_20250501.pdf.

St. George is not within walking or even biking distance of most places of employment, stores, medical providers, etc., and so most St. George residents drive regularly. This uses a significant amount of energy. Residents are gradually shifting to electric, plug-in, or hybrid cars and although St. George does not yet have any electric charging stations, the town should take steps to plan for these.

The other major form of residential energy consumption is heating and cooling; around two-thirds of the energy used in our homes is for space heating/cooling and making hot water. Currently, many St. George residents continue to heat their homes with fuel oil or propane, though a growing number of homes are using heat pumps. Efficiency Vermont has programs and resources to help customers reduce their monthly electric bills, including information about rebates and tax incentives available for energy-saving purchases. Income-eligible households in St. George can participate in the Weatherization Assistance Program, as well as the Fuel Assistance Program, offered by the Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity.

In both transportation and home heating/cooling, the less energy-intensive options require more electricity (for electric vehicles and for heat pumps). In order to meet this increased need for residential electricity, many homes are adding solar panels to their properties, either on roofs or on ground-mounted arrays.

Vermont has a Residential Building Energy Code that sets a minimum standard of efficiency for new homes and residential additions over 500 square feet. Additionally, simple site planning

such as locating buildings to maximize southern exposures and providing windbreaks can reduce the amount of energy required to heat and cool structures. St. George should encourage and promote energy efficiency, residential renewable energy generation, and green construction, while also exploring opportunities to use town land for solar panels, electric car charging stations, and other low-impact renewable energy infrastructure.

3.08 PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

St. George does not provide its own fire, ambulance, or police services. For fire protection, the town contracts with Hinesburg. The Dawson Partnership building, located in the Town Center, has a 50,000 gallon underground storage tank and dry hydrant that firefighters can access if needed to fight a fire in town.

Both the Hinesburg Fire Department and Richmond Rescue supply emergency medical services. Richmond Rescue, as of 2025, supplies ambulance service. The Vermont State Police Department provides police protection from their Williston barracks.

Further support comes from a number of human service organizations that assist St. George residents. Some of these organizations receive financial support from the town as appropriated at our annual town meeting.

The town office is equipped with both a generator and an Automated External Defibrillator (AED). The town office serves as an emergency shelter and a source for potable water.

Our town website has further up-to-date information on public health and safety resources. Please refer to the contact list for points of contact for our emergency officers, fire warden, health officer, and animal control officer.

4 | OUR ENVIRONMENT

4.01 AIR

4.01-A Climate and Climate Change

Vermont's climate is best described as variable; temperatures range greatly throughout the year and can change considerably in a given day. There can be significant differences in the weather during the same seasons in different years, and considerable diversity from place to place. The local climate in St. George is shaped by the town's location on the eastern edge of the Champlain Valley as it meets the western foothills of the northern Green Mountains.

The Champlain Valley is relatively warm and dry as compared to other regions in Vermont with an average growing season of 130 to 150 days. Average annual temperatures range between 20°F in January and 70°F in July, although periods of significantly lower winter and higher summer temperatures regularly occur. Average annual precipitation ranges from 30 to 40 inches. Given St. George's location at the eastern edge of the valley and its elevation, the town's temperatures are somewhat cooler and precipitation amounts greater than places closer to the lake. Elevation has a significant impact on summer temperatures and the length of the growing season. Summer temperatures on the peaks of the Green Mountains are commonly 20°F cooler than in the Champlain Valley. The mountains also have a strong effect on precipitation, as the prevailing winds from the west are forced upward, cooling the air and causing an abundance of rain, snow, clouds and fog at higher elevations. The average annual rainfall atop Mt. Mansfield (Vermont's highest peak) is over 80 inches, which is twice the amount that falls in most of the Champlain Valley.

Temperatures in St. George, like temperatures everywhere, have been increasing due to climate change. As of 2025, annual average temperatures at the nearest long-term weather station in Burlington are roughly 5° F warmer than they were in the 20th Century. St. George now experiences more hot days in the summer and fewer very cold nights in the winter. Total annual precipitation is increasing, but precipitation is also becoming more episodic, with increases in both heavy rainfall and periods of drought. These changes are increasing the need for cooling in the summer, exacerbating the threats from invasive plants, insects, and diseases to our forests, and increasing damage to roads and other infrastructure. St. George should strive to reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases while also building more resilient ecosystems and infrastructure.

4.01-B Air Quality

The air quality in St. George is generally very good, though it is located on the fringe of the greater Burlington metropolitan area and is impacted by motor vehicle emissions. The federal Environmental Protection Agency requires each state to monitor the levels of six "criteria"

pollutants: carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, ozone, airborne lead particles, and total atmospheric particles.

All of Vermont's air quality monitors show compliance with the national ambient air quality standards for these criteria pollutants. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, St. George has higher levels of ozone and diesel particulate matter than most of Vermont, likely due to its proximity to the Burlington metro area, but lower levels of these pollutants than 80% of the United States.

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the total cancer risk from air toxins in St. George is 20 in one million. Most of this can be attributed to natural sources, long-range atmospheric transport, and secondary formation of chemicals in the air, but about 20% of the cancer risk can be attributed to local residential wood-burning. In terms of toxic releases to air, St. George fares better than the rest of Vermont and ranks among the top 5% (fewest emissions) nationally.

Unlike more industrialized places, motor vehicles are the largest source of air pollution in Vermont; vehicles emit ozone, particulate matter, and chemical compounds. While technology and emission controls have greatly reduced the amount of pollution vehicles produce, the number of vehicle miles driven in Vermont has doubled since 1972. The 2023 American Community Survey reported there were about 730 vehicles in St. George, or roughly 2 vehicles per household.

4.02 LAND

4.02-A Geology and Land Form

St. George sits on the dividing line between the Champlain Valley and the Green Mountain regions of Vermont. The north-south Hinesburg Thrust fault line, which runs through St. George, differentiates the lowlands from the foothills; this feature resulted from a significant geological event that occurred some 350 million years ago as a disturbance in the earth's crust cracked a great layer of bedrock east of Route 2A and forced it over the bedrock west of the highway.

The bedrock of the Champlain Valley originated some 500 million years ago during Ordovician times and is largely comprised of limestones, dolomites, and shales. These are some of the oldest rocks in the northeast and many contain fossil evidence of their marine origin. The Taconic Orogeny, about 450 million years ago, was a period of great geologic activity as ancient rocks were transformed to create the northern Green Mountains of today, which are comprised primarily of metamorphic rocks such as schists, phyllites, gneisses and quartzites. Over the millions of years since their formation, the mountains have eroded to a fraction of their original height.

In more recent geologic time, glaciers transformed the town's landscape. The glacial ice advanced and retreated reshaping the surface by scouring some areas and depositing material (boulders to fine clay particles) in other locations. Approximately 13,000 years ago and up to approximately 650 feet in elevation, the Champlain Valley was filled with the south-flowing Glacial Lake Vermont. After the glaciers receded, between 12,500 and 10,000 years ago, the Atlantic Ocean flowed south into the depression caused by the weight of the ice. Seawater filled the Champlain valley up to an elevation of approximately 300 feet and became the Champlain Sea.

Fine-grained clay and silt were deposited on the bottom of Lake Vermont. These clays and silts have low permeability and water runs rapidly off of them. Sand deposits were created where streams of glacial melt-water flowed into the lake. Sands have higher permeability and infiltration rates, but unlike clay deposits, they are not cohesive and are easily eroded. This geologic history means that the surficial deposits throughout much of St. George are primarily unconsolidated deposits with relatively low infiltration and high runoff potential that are prone to erosion. On the slopes of Mt. Pritchard above the shoreline of Glacial Lake Vermont, the bedrock is blanketed with glacial till, a conglomerate of many different sizes of rock that was laid over the bedrock at the base of the glacier.

Elevation in St. George ranges from approximately 350 feet above sea level in the northwestern corner of town to 1,168 feet atop Mt. Pritchard. The western slopes of Mt. Pritchard are fairly steep, while the mountain falls off somewhat more gently on the east side. An unnamed hill in the northwest corner of town also rises sharply, to a height of approximately 700 feet above sea level. Slope is a significant constraint to development in town; it contributes to the limited capacity of many of the town's soils for treating wastewater, as well the potential for unwanted erosion and stormwater run-off. Most of the town's steepest lands are currently forested, which prevents soil loss (tree leaves slow and disperse rainwater, while root systems hold soil in place). Retaining woody vegetation and limiting the amount of impervious surface on the town's steep slopes will reduce the potential for erosion and associated water pollution.

4.02-B Soils and Earth Resources

As described above, St. George's soils originate from three sources:

1. Materials deposited when the Champlain Valley was under water,
2. Glacial till deposits, and
3. Materials deposited by glacial melt-water streams.

The soils are grouped into associations of major and minor soils with similar characteristics. An understanding of the town's soils – their potential for and constraints on agriculture, development and other activities – is an essential component of land use planning. St. George has a limited amount of land with soils that are well suited to treating wastewater with conventional, soil-based septic systems. In order for development in St. George to proceed as envisioned in this plan, the constraints posed by the town's soils will need to be addressed.

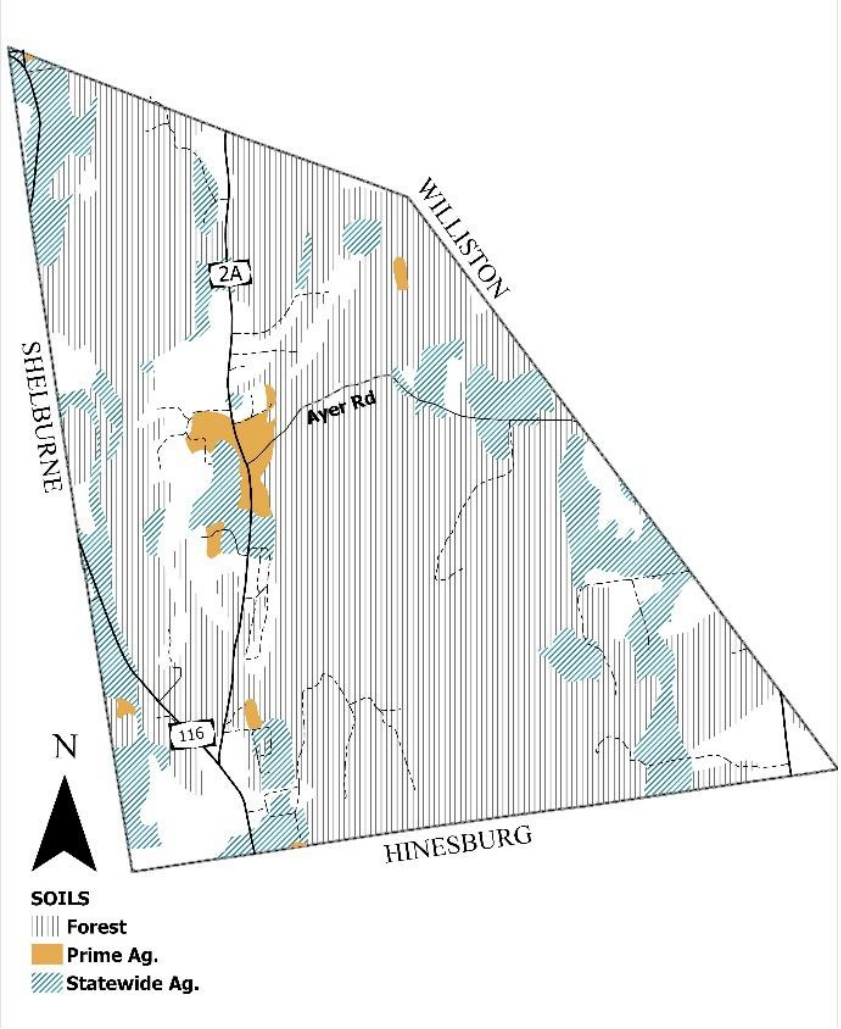
The Natural Resource Conservation Service has assessed St. George's soils based on their potential for agricultural productivity. There are approximately 35 acres of prime farmland in town, most of which is located in the vicinity of the Ayer Road – Route 2A intersection. There are another 725 acres of land in town with soils of statewide importance. Soils that are generally better suited for onsite septic disposal are often high quality farmland, which has led to the loss of agricultural soils in St. George and around Vermont. Through Act 250's Criteria 9B, the state has a policy to preserve primary agricultural soils.

Prime farmland has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to economically produce sustained yields of crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods. The classification of prime soils in Vermont was based on a national definition. Prime farmland is included in the state's definition of primary agricultural soils.

Statewide soils are defined by their importance for production of food, feed, fiber, forage and oilseed crops in Vermont and are considered primary agricultural soils by the state.

Primary agricultural soils are defined in Act 250 Section 601(15) as soils which have a potential for growing food and forage crops, are sufficiently well-drained to allow sowing and harvesting with mechanized equipment, are well supplied with plant nutrients or highly responsive to the use of fertilizer, and have few limitations for crop production or limitation which may be easily overcome. In order to qualify as primary agricultural soils, the average slope of the land containing such soils does not exceed 15%, and such land is of a size capable of supporting or contributing to an economic agricultural operation. If a tract of land includes other than primary agricultural soils, only the primary agricultural soils shall be affected by criteria relating specifically to such soils.

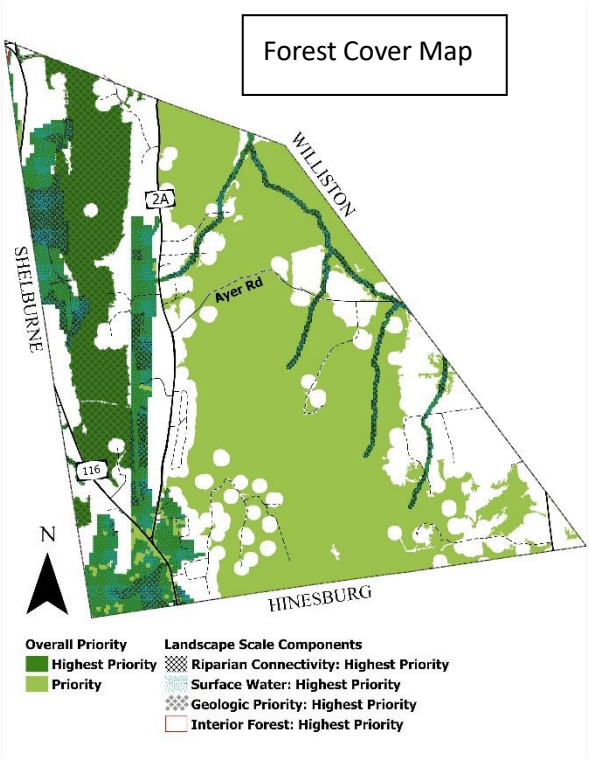
Forest and secondary agricultural soils are defined in Act 250 Section 601(15) as soils which are not primary agricultural soils but which have reasonable potential for commercial forestry or commercial agriculture, and which have not yet been developed. In order to qualify as forest or secondary agricultural soils, the land containing such soils shall be characterized by location, natural conditions and ownership patterns capable of supporting or contributing to present or potential commercial forestry or commercial agriculture. If a tract of land includes other than forest or secondary agricultural soils, only the forest or secondary agricultural soils shall be affected by criteria relating specifically to such soils.



The Natural Resource Conservation Service has also analyzed St. George's soils to determine their forest productivity. Through Act 250's Criteria 9C, the state has a policy to preserve important forest soils. There are approximately 890 acres of soils assessed as having the potential to support commercial forestry in St. George.

There is no commercial resource extraction currently occurring in St. George. There are no mapped areas with significant rock, gravel or mineral resources in town, but there are two small areas with deposits of sand. It is unlikely that the earth resources in St. George would be considered for extraction other than for onsite, agricultural or local use. Still, the town should strengthen its standards governing resource extraction – a recommendation from earlier town plans that has not been implemented – to ensure that any extraction that does occur in the future does not unduly impact environmental quality or the character of the community.

4.02-C Land Cover



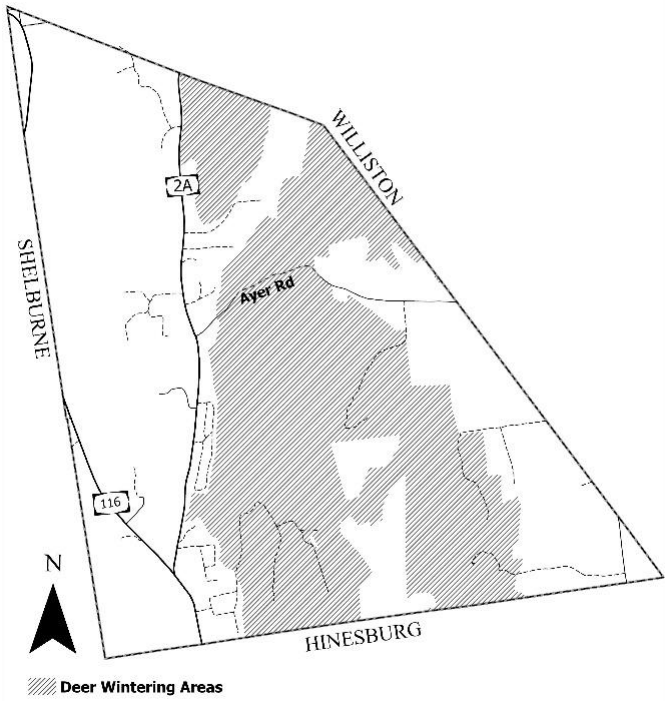
St. George is largely forested with a mix of deciduous and coniferous trees on most of the town's higher elevation land. The remaining land is largely open farmland or golf course, or residential property. There are approximately 1,500 acres of wooded land in town, including a roughly 800-acre block of unfragmented forest around Mt. Pritchard.

4.02-D Natural Communities

The most dominant natural community type in St. George is Northern Hardwood Forest formation, which is common to the lower elevations of the Green Mountains. This formation is part of a broad forest region that ranges from the upper-Midwest states east to Maine and north into southeastern Canada. Beech, sugar maple and yellow birch are the prominent tree species, but hemlock, red oak, red maple and white pine are common as well. The mix of trees varies with climate and soils conditions leading to more evergreens like spruce and fir at higher (cooler) elevations. Brilliant fall color and an abundance of spring wildflowers are some of the distinctive characteristics of the Northern Hardwood Forest.

Over the past 50 years, the amount of woodland in St. George (and throughout much of Vermont) has been increasing as land once cleared for agriculture is no longer maintained and is transitioning back to its natural state. Therefore, some of the town's woodlands are still young and in an early state of succession and do not necessarily reflect the mix of vegetation typical of the Northern Hardwood Forest formation.

4.02-E Wildlife Habitat and Corridors



Ecologists have shown that the most diverse environments are the transition areas between adjacent ecological communities – an area known as an ecotone. In many ways, the entire Town of St. George could be seen as an ecotone due to its location where the Champlain Valley and Green Mountains meet.

The Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife has identified approximately 950 acres (40% of the town's land area) of deer wintering areas in St. George. Most of this deer habitat is located along the central Mt. Pritchard ridgeline, with a smaller area along the town's northern boundary. White-tailed deer are found statewide in the mountains, river valleys, agricultural lands, and even in suburban backyards. Known as a species that prefers the forest edge, deer are found in highest numbers in habitats that feature a blend of large woodlots and agricultural openings. Deer wintering areas or deer yards are a critically important habitat type for deer to survive through the cold winter and therefore are deemed a sensitive natural feature. Less than eight percent of Vermont's forests include deer wintering areas. An important part of a deer yard is the evergreen trees that catch snow in their branches, thus reducing snow depth beneath them. The evergreens also provide thermal cover that gives the deer protection from the wind. Within identified deer yards, core areas comprised largely of evergreen forest should be given the highest priority for conservation. Deer may move 10 to 15 miles in search of a deer yard and stay in the protection of that area all winter. St. George encourages the conservation of the town's deer wintering areas, especially the critical core areas.

Bear habitat has also been identified on the eastern slopes of Mt. Pritchard. There are no mapped Natural Heritage sites in St. George; these are known locations of a rare or endangered plant or animal species. Still, it is likely that some such species could be found in town if a more thorough natural resource inventory were undertaken.

Lake Iroquois and Shelburne Pond were discussed in this plan because they are significant regional resources to which St. George's natural environment is intrinsically linked – natural systems do not recognize political boundaries. Many species rely on multiple habitat types and

move between nearby water-wetland environments and St. George's forested uplands throughout the year or at various points during their lifecycle. Continuing to provide connecting areas of natural land cover between the valley and the mountains will allow the movement of plants and animals vital to maintaining a diverse, healthy ecosystem.

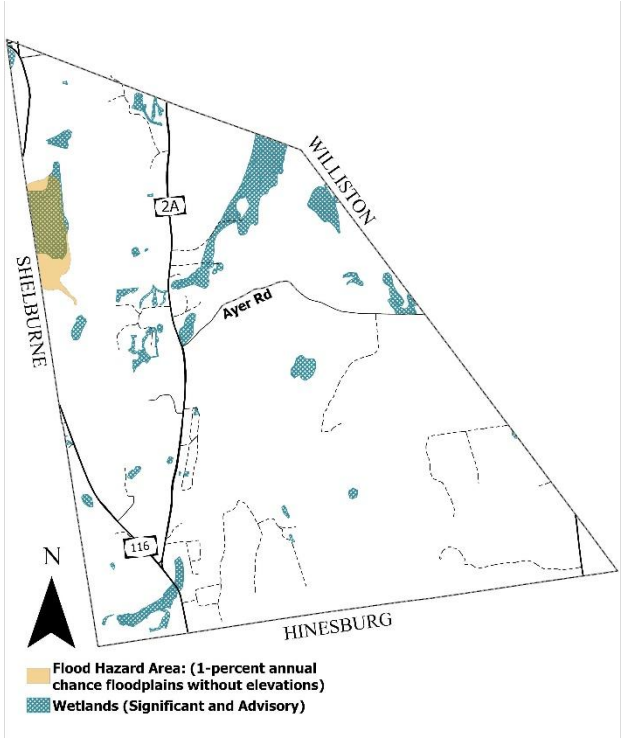
4.03 WATER

4.03-A Groundwater

The town's five community water supplies have state-mandated Source Protection Areas. The state began regulation of potable water supplies in the 1970s. Beginning in 1982, Wellhead Protection Areas were delineated for public water supplies. A decade later, that program has evolved resulting in the delineation of Public Water Source Protection Areas (SPAs) and development of Source Protection Plans for community water supplies. Source Protection Plans identify potential sources of contamination within delineated SPAs, assess the risk of contamination, and describe how risks and emergencies will be managed.

All of St. George's community water systems have intermittently experienced coliform bacteria levels above legal limits, resulting in boil water orders. Some of the systems have also had to address problems with nitrate, tetrachloroethylene, lead, copper or radium. These violations of drinking water quality standards were discovered during the routine testing regimen required under state and federal law. When tests indicate a violation, users are notified and the system operator takes corrective action to resolve the problem. In order to limit the potential for contamination within the town's SPAs, St. George should provide additional review of land uses within the SPAs and restrict development that could contaminate the water supplies.

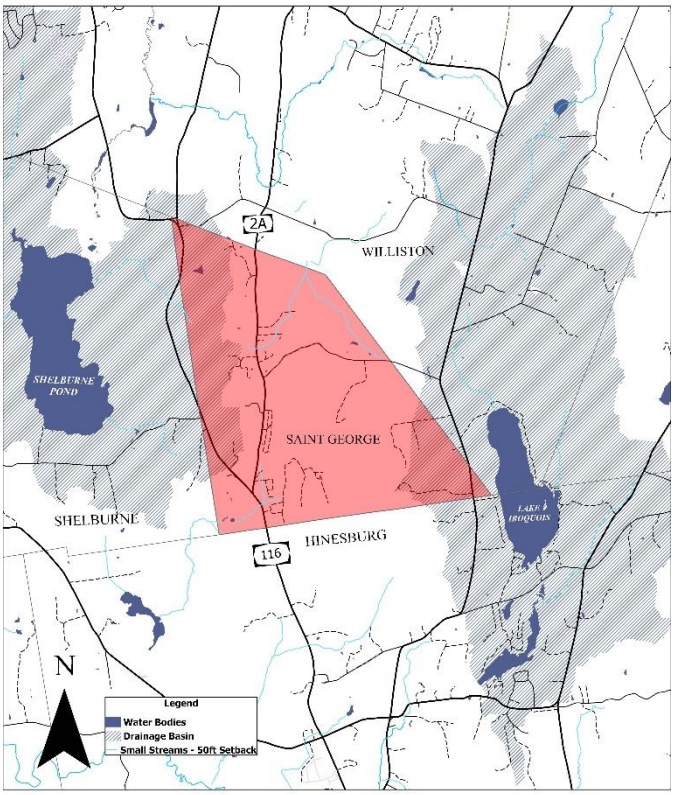
Many of the town's homes receive their potable water from private wells. Property owners with onsite wells typically do not regularly test their drinking water to ensure its quality. The same issues with contamination that affect community supplies, can also endanger individual wells. There has not been an assessment of the St. George's groundwater supply, despite the fact that the entire town relies upon this resource for potable water. More detailed information about the location and quantity of groundwater, as well as groundwater recharge areas, would be beneficial when planning for appropriate growth and development in the town.



4.03-B Wetlands

The 2006 Vermont Significant Wetlands Inventory identified more than 70 acres of Class 2 wetlands in St. George. Wetlands serve a number of important ecological functions, but for many years their value was not recognized. As a result, wetlands have been drained and filled for development or agricultural use. Currently, both federal (Army Corps of Engineers) and state governments regulate wetlands in order to prevent further loss of these critical environmental areas. St. George should support efforts to protect wetlands by ensuring that adjacent land uses do not impair the important habitat, filtration and flood control functions of the town's wetlands.

4.03-C Surface Water



No major streams are located in St. George, but there are a number of smaller creeks and tributaries that originate in the town's higher elevations. The southern section of town is within the LaPlatte River Basin and the northern section is within the Winooski River Basin.

In the southwestern corner of town, an unnamed stream runs to the east of Route 2A and crosses beneath Route 116, eventually emptying into the LaPlatte River in Hinesburg. There is an intermittent stream that is part of a larger wetland area on the town's western boundary that flows into Shelburne Pond. Several tributaries of Sucker Brook have their headwaters on the eastern side of Mt. Pritchard. These small,

intermittent creeks tumble down the slope in a series of pools and waterfalls.

Sucker Brook flows into Muddy Brook, whose waters empty into the Winooski River. The Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation has classified part of Muddy Brook as impaired due to non-point source pollution – largely caused by stormwater fun-off from developed land. As described above, St. George's soils are prone to erosion and similar impacts to the town's (or neighboring town's) surface waters could occur if construction site erosion and post-construction stormwater and roadway run-off are not properly managed when land is being developed. The Municipal Roads General Permit, as discussed in the Water Quality section, will require the town to reduce run-off from roads.

There are a number of ponds in town, the largest of which is approximately two acres in area. Some of these are likely former farm ponds, while others occur in conjunction with streams and wetland areas.

There is a small amount of land identified as floodplains by the Federal Emergency Management Administration. The area is comprised of approximately 20 acres on the western side of town, coincident with and adjacent to the wetland around the unnamed creek that flows into Shelburne Pond.

4.03-D Lake Iroquois

While not located in town, Lake Iroquois is a significant natural and recreational resource for St. George residents, especially those living on the east side of town. The lake straddles the boundary of Richmond, Williston and Hinesburg. A dam impounds its waters to create a surface area of 244 acres. Lands in St. George are part of the lake's drainage basin.

Lake Iroquois supports a range of wildlife and is an excellent place to fish. Up until the early 1940s, Lake Iroquois was abundant with fish such as northern pike, walleyes, large and small mouth bass, rock bass, yellow perch, brown bullhead, white sucker and golden shiner. Since then, the population of northern pike and walleyes has decreased, leading to an increase in the perch population. There is a state fishing and boat access near the beach at the northern end of the lake.

The beach has been closed on occasion because of water pollution largely due to inadequate septic systems of some lakeshore homes; water quality problems from erosion and runoff have also been experienced. In recent years, efforts have been focused on educating watershed property owners about sources of pollution and how to limit their impact on the lake. Tests conducted by the Vermont Department of Water Resources have found that the lake's water is becoming increasingly eutrophic (high nutrient levels). If this process continues, the bottom layers of water will be deprived of dissolved oxygen and will not be able to support aquatic life. The opposite occurs near the surface, where dissolved oxygen levels are higher and biological productivity is increasing.

Another source of concern for the long-term health of the lake is the presence of Eurasian water milfoil, which is a highly invasive aquatic plant that could severely impair recreational use if it continues to spread. (For more information on water quality in Lake Iroquois contact the Lakes and Ponds Section of the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation.)

4.03-E Shelburne Pond

Shelburne Pond, also outside of town, is the largest undeveloped body of water in the Champlain Valley. It is a significant component of the larger natural environment in which St. George is located. Today, the University of Vermont (UVM) and the Nature Conservancy own and co-manage this important educational resource. The pond is located 1½ miles from St. George's Town Center with easy access and ample parking located off of Shelburne Pond Road in Shelburne, Vt. The area is open to the public year round.

The pond area has over 450 acres of recreational area great for fishing, canoeing, kayaking, ice skating, bird watching, and hiking through the H. Lawrence Achilles Natural Area. It has a maximum depth of 25 feet with approximately 6.33 miles of shoreline. It sits in a limestone basin, which results in its waters being highly alkaline, and is surrounded by large wetlands. It is a protected natural area noted for its scenic qualities, unique plant communities, wildlife habitat, and fishery. The pond is known to have yellow perch, large mouth bass, northern pike, crappy, and sunfish along with water snakes, snapping turtles, and beavers. Canadian geese, mallards, eagles, osprey, blue heron, and cormorants have also been known to visit the pond. Through the partnership between UVM and the Nature Conservancy, over 1,000 acres around the pond have been conserved.

4.04 SPECIAL AREAS AND RESOURCES

The lands, features and structures described below have been identified by residents as special areas or resources and, as such, require increased attention to their use and the potential impact proposed development may have up on them

4.04-A Town Center Property

St. George's municipally-owned town center property is one of our most valuable assets. Over fifty years ago residents had the foresight to acquire this land. Today this land includes commercial and civic uses but also includes natural space connected to roughly 500 acres of contiguous forest that the town has come to value for its aesthetic, ecological, and recreational value.

4.04-B Hilltops and Ridgelines

St. George's landscape is characterized by the Mt. Pritchard and Brownell Mountain ridgelines. In addition to Mt. Pritchard, several other prominent hilltops are highly visible from many points in town. The hill in the northwestern corner of the town center property can be seen from numerous points along the public roads. As a distinguishing natural feature on the property, its high visibility should be considered as planning for the village center proceeds.

Throughout the town, hilltops and ridgelines are special resources due to a combination of their visibility, elevation, scenic beauty, steep slopes and critical habitat. This plan recognizes the uniqueness of these resources with the establishment of a Forested Uplands Planning Area, which encompasses all of the hilltops and ridgelines identified as special resources with the exception of the hill on the town center property. (See section 5.11 for further discussion.)

Ridgeline and hilltop development that would lead to tree clearing would significantly change the visual character of the town. Without woody vegetation to stabilize slopes and disperse rainwater, such development would also increase erosion; this is especially the case during and immediately following construction when soils would be exposed and before groundcover has been established. With such development would come increased amounts of impervious surface – such as roofs, driveways and roads – that would further exacerbate stormwater run-off and erosion problems.

Currently, the town's hilltops and ridgelines are generally forested and recognized for their value as wildlife habitat. Construction in these special areas would result in largely intact blocks of

habitat being fragmented, thus reducing the ability of the remaining woodland to support a diversity of native species.

Within this identified special area, development will be reviewed to ensure that it does not adversely impact the environmental quality and aesthetic character of the town's hilltops and ridgelines. Development that requires significant clearing or fragments the existing large blocks of forest habitat within the town will be discouraged.

Large-scale utility or telecommunications infrastructure also has the potential to adversely impact the town's hilltops and ridgelines. Recognizing that the town's policies and regulations may be superseded by state or federal law, this plan encourages all regulatory bodies to duly consider the impacts of any proposed projects on this special resource.

4.04-C Natural Areas and Important Resources

St. George is rich in natural beauty. To list every scenic view or environmentally sensitive site would be difficult but there are a number of important resources that must be specifically recognized and considered for special protection:

- The marshy valley in the north central part of town,
- The wetland extending into St. George from Shelburne Pond,
- The large contiguous forests (a) between Route 116 and Route2A and (b) on Mt. Pritchard
- The streams that flow down Mt. Pritchard, forming small pools and waterfalls,
- Views of Lake Champlain and Lake Iroquois as visible from public property and travel corridors,
- Core deer wintering areas, and
- Structures listed on the State Register of Historic Places.

All of these natural or cultural assets should be protected and preserved. Additionally, the town should establish buffers to prevent development from encroaching on wetlands and streams throughout town.

4.05 RESILIENCE

4.05-A Town Actions

Over the past two years, the governing boards of St. George have made increasing resilience a priority. St. George has taken steps to prevent development in its floodplains, protect its river corridors, and decrease stormwater runoff that erodes roads and other infrastructure. Additionally, the town has adopted the Town of St. George, Vermont All-Hazards Mitigation Plan, which evaluates the hazards facing the town and identifies projects to mitigate against damage from them. Through these actions, St. George is making residents safer, preventing

damage to buildings and infrastructure and qualifying the town for increased funding from the State of Vermont's Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund in the case of a disaster.

4.05-B Floodplains

Approximately 20 acres of land in St. George's northwest corner are in the FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area, more commonly known as the floodplain. These floodplains surround a Class II wetlands area and an unnamed stream, both of which connect to Shelburne Pond. In these floodplains, there is a 1% annual chance of flooding.

St. George is fortunate: there is currently no development in the floodplain. Most of the floodplain is part of a wetland, and long-standing provisions in the Town's zoning bylaws preventing development in and around this wetland have also indirectly prevented development in most of the floodplain. As discussed in Section 4.03 of this plan, wetlands play an important role in collecting rainwater and regulating water levels.

Since the last revision of the Town Plan, St. George has adopted a Flood Hazard and River Corridor Overlay and related amendments to the Land Use Regulations to prohibit new development and restrict certain activities in the floodplain and joined the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

4.05-C River Corridors

When flooding occurs in the floodplain, water rises, submerges the area, and dissipates. However, most of the flood damage in Vermont is caused by fluvial erosion. Fluvial erosion occurs when streams and rivers erode sediment from segments of their banks and deposit it elsewhere. While this is a natural process that occurs in all rivers, it becomes a hazard when the erosion undermines banks, threatens buildings and washes away infrastructure. Even St. George's small creeks and tributaries can cause fluvial erosion.

Because of this, St. George has adopted a Flood Hazard and River Corridor Overlay and related amendments to the Land Use Regulations. The regulations will prevent new development within 50 feet from the top of slope for streams and the delineated boundary of a wetland. While some development, such as bridges and culverts, will always be necessary within river corridors, this buffer ensures that the amount of development that is vulnerable to fluvial erosion is minimized.

4.05-D Stormwater Runoff

Because of its steep topography, St. George often experiences erosion of roads, driveways and hillsides during rain storms. It is difficult to predict where these events will occur, but the town has taken several steps to minimize this threat. The town's Land Use Regulations take steps to control stormwater runoff by prohibiting almost all development in areas of very steep slopes and enabling the DRB to require stormwater management plans. The regulations also encourage low impact development for stormwater management. However, even with these measures, the town must continue to prepare for the damage caused by stormwater runoff.

Road erosion inventory work conducted by the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission in 2016 identified roads, bridges and culverts that are in danger of erosion and plans for projects to reduce that risk. Based on this inventory, the town planned to apply to the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation for a Municipal Roads General Permit in 2018. St. George also planned to submit a Roads Stormwater Management Plan in 2019, identifying the erosion mitigation projects it intends to undertake from 2020-2024 to comply with its permit. Completing the projects identified in this plan, as well as continuing to limit development on steep slopes, will reduce the risks posed by stormwater runoff.

5 | OUR TOWN'S FUTURE

5.01 NATURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

5.01-A Goals

- To identify, protect, and preserve important natural and historic features of the St. George landscape, including:
  - Significant natural and fragile areas;
  - Outstanding water resources, including lakes, rivers, aquifers, shorelands, and wetlands;
  - Significant scenic roads, waterways, and views;
  - Important historic structures, sites, or districts, archaeological sites and archaeologically sensitive areas.
- To maintain and improve the quality of air, water, wildlife, and land resources.

  St. George's air, water, wildlife, mineral, and land resources should be planned for use and development according to the principles set forth in 10 V.S.A § 6086(a).

5.01-B Policies

1. Recognize the impacts of home heating systems on air quality and encourage use of cleaner, more efficient technologies.
2. To prevent air, water, and land pollution from reducing environmental quality and adversely impacting human health, consider performance standards, such as the LEED rating system, for industrial, commercial, and large-scale residential development.
3. Incorporate provisions, such as Act 250 criteria, into the town's regulations to protect important natural and cultural features.
4. Protect the town's special areas and enforce regulations to protect them.
5. Identify the public viewsheds valued by residents and explore options to protect their aesthetic character.
6. Maintain minimum buffers between development and water bodies or wetlands.
7. Use development envelopes to locate development in order to limit impacts on sensitive natural features and preserve open space.
8. Work cooperatively with Hinesburg, Richmond, and Williston to protect and enhance the environmental quality of Lake Iroquois.
9. Increase resilience by enforcing the Flood Hazard and River Corridor Overlay related portions of the Land use Regulations.
10. Review the Town of St. George All-Hazards Mitigation Plan on a regular basis and complete the plan's identified actions.
11. Work to decrease erosion by completing the projects identified in the Roads Stormwater Management Plan required by the Vermont Municipal Roads General Permit.

12. Maintain lot coverage and impervious surface standards for new development to prevent increases in the quantity and rate of stormwater runoff.
13. Require stormwater management plans for industrial, commercial, and large-scale residential development.
14. Require the implementation of erosion control techniques on construction sites.
15. Reduce the density of development on steep slopes.
16. Continue to protect St. George's water quality in a manner consistent with the State of Vermont's Tactical Basin Plans for the Winooski and LaPlatte River Basins.
17. Retain woody vegetation and limit the amount of impervious surface on the town's steep slopes in order to reduce the potential for erosion and associated water pollution.
18. Limit development that fragments existing large blocks of forest habitat.
19. Encourage master planning and use of the town's PUD provisions to cluster development for large-scale projects and major subdivisions.
20. Prohibit development that would disrupt the ecological functions of critical wildlife habitat, such as deer wintering areas and bear mast stands.
21. Promote the conservation of critical wildlife habitat.
22. Recognize the value of the town's historic structures and encourage property owners to maintain older buildings in a manner that retains their historic character.
23. Continue to explore opportunities to adaptively reuse the historic Little Red Schoolhouse.

5.02 AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

5.02-A Goal

- To encourage and strengthen agricultural and forest industries
  - Strategies to protect long-term viability of agricultural and forest lands should be encouraged and should include maintaining low overall density.
  - Sound forest and agricultural management practices should be encouraged.
  - Public investment should be planned so as to minimize development pressure on agricultural, conservation, and forest land.

5.02-B Policies

24. Seek opportunities, including partnerships with neighboring communities, conservation organizations and private entities, to conserve farm or forestry land through permanent easement or transfer of development rights.
25. Allow agriculture as a by-right use and provide flexibility for farm-based businesses within the town's regulations.
26. Support small-scale, organic and other alternative agricultural activities to make productive use of the town's farmland.

27. Discourage the fragmentation of larger parcels of land appropriately sized for productive farm or forestry use through the use of PUD (Planned Unit Development) provisions.
28. Discourage new agricultural enterprises from negatively impacting the quality of life of pre-existing, non-farm neighbors.
29. Allow for creative approaches to development that would conserve open land while ensuring current owners of large parcels of a return on their investment.
30. Consider the impact of any proposals for the provision of public water or wastewater infrastructure on productive farm or forest lands.

5.03 EXTRACTION OF EARTH RESOURCES

5.03-A Goal

- To provide for the wise and efficient use of St. George's natural resources and to facilitate the appropriate extraction of earth resources and the proper restoration and preservation of the aesthetic qualities of the area.

5.03-B Policies

31. Regulate the extraction of earth resources to ensure that it does not pose undue adverse impacts on the town.
32. Allow for the on-site or agricultural use of sand or gravel resources.
33. Require a detailed closing plan, phasing of extraction and performance bonds to ensure that depleted areas are properly restored to a safe and aesthetically pleasing condition.
34. Establish buffers between incompatible uses and performance standards to reduce conflicts between an extraction operation and neighboring uses.
35. Ensure that any transport related to the extraction of earth resources does not create a financial liability to the town due to wear and tear on local roads and does not create unsafe road conditions for other travelers.
36. Regulate the hours of operation of any heavy equipment that creates noise pollution on neighboring properties.

5.04 RECREATION

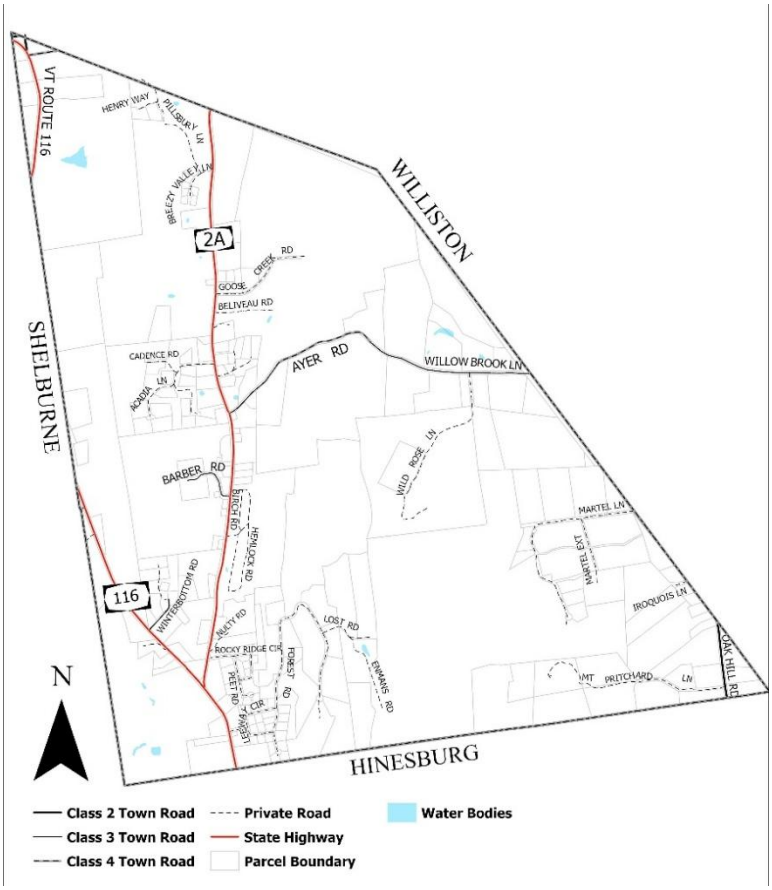
5.04-A Goal

- To maintain and enhance recreational opportunities for St. George residents and visitors.

  Growth should not significantly diminish the value and availability of outdoor recreational activities.

5.04-B Policies

37. Explore options to expand recreational opportunities in the town park and the property surrounding the Little Red Schoolhouse.
38. Promote the creation of bicycle paths and sidewalks to connect developments with each other and with recreational and town resources.
39. Explore the accessibility and safety of Town and State roads for bicyclists and pedestrians.
40. Communicate and work cooperatively with recreation programs in the area to publicize and enhance the town's recreation resources.
41. Include funding and sites for recreation facilities when preparing a capital budget and program or official map.
42. Maintain the town's membership in the Lake Iroquois Recreation District.
43. Coordinate recreation and open space planning with adjoining communities.
44. Continue to support a summer recreation program for the children of St. George.



5.05 TRANSPORTATION

5.05-A Goal

- To provide for safe, convenient, economic, and energy-efficient transportation systems that respect the integrity of the natural environment, including public transit options and paths for pedestrians and bicyclists.

5.05-B Policies

45. Monitor demand for a transit stop in St. George and seek opportunities to provide services when the demand would make such service feasible.
46. Ensure that service is provided in St. George should any future transit links between Williston and Hinesburg be established.
47. Promote carpooling and reductions in the number of commuter trips on the town's roads.

48. Build new roads to basic standards appropriate for our climate in order to protect public safety, infrastructure, and the environment.
49. Work with Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission to determine the necessary actions to comply with the Municipal Roads General Permit.
50. Limit the grade of private roads and driveways to allow for safe access by emergency vehicles and to prevent erosion and runoff.
51. Establish design standards for all new roads and drives that will allow for safe access by emergency vehicles while not promoting unnecessarily wide streets or large turning radii.
52. Establish design standards for new roads outside the village center based on standards typical of narrow, gently winding country lanes that follow the contours of the land and may be without curbs and unpaved.
53. Work with VTrans to calm traffic in order to create a safe, pedestrian-friendly environment, especially in our village center.
54. Support the state's access management efforts by promoting use of shared drives and carefully reviewing the traffic patterns, access points and parking areas proposed for new development near the highways.
55. Use access management techniques to reduce congestion and maintain safety levels on heavily traveled roads as adjacent lands are developed.
56. Continue to participate in the transportation planning efforts of the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission by participating in the CCRPC Transportation Advisory Committee.
57. Communicate and cooperate with adjoining towns regarding the ongoing maintenance of and planned improvements to local roads that cross town boundaries.
58. To promote safety and security, the quality of Ayer Road should be improved to provide a better surface and drainage and to make it safe for the walkers, bikers, and drivers who use it for necessity, convenience, and recreation.

5.06 PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

5.06-A Goal

- To plan for, finance, and provide an efficient system of public facilities and services to meet future needs.
  - Public facilities and services should include fire and police protection, emergency medical services, schools, water supply, and sewage and solid waste disposal.
  - The rate of growth should not exceed the ability of the community and the area to provide facilities and services.

5.06-B Policies

59. Enhance St. George's livability by providing or supporting high quality facilities and services and establishing appropriate service levels consistent with the town's population.
60. Prepare and implement a capital budget and program, and consider provisions to phase or levy impact fees on new development as needed, to maintain a rate of growth that does not exceed the ability of the town to provide necessary facilities and services.
61. Explore opportunities to share public facilities and services with neighboring communities or the private sector.
62. Set aside land on the town center property for civic facilities to ensure the town's needs are met.
63. Continue to collaborate with neighboring communities to provide public library access to town residents.
64. Enact regulations within a groundwater protection overlay district for the town's Source Protection Areas (SPAs) to provide additional review of land uses and restrict development within the SPAs that could contaminate the water supplies.
65. Require any future water supply infrastructure within the village center to be constructed to standards adequate for providing fire protection, and require fire ponds, storage tanks and/or dry hydrants within development not served by public water supplies.
66. Explore options to provide adequate, safe wastewater treatment within existing and future neighborhoods including on-site, clustered, decentralized or alternative systems, as well as connections to the municipal wastewater treatment systems of neighboring communities.
67. Continue to participate in the Chittenden County Solid Waste Management District.
68. Explore alternatives for providing space for burials in town as St. George Cemetery is nearing its current capacity.
69. Participate as a party in any Act 248/250 proceedings related to large-scale utility or telecommunications projects that are proposed within the town.
70. Take an active position in opposition to largescale utility and telecommunications projects that would adversely impact the special areas and resources defined in this plan.
71. Prohibit large-scale utility and telecommunications facilities in the conservation, rural, and forested upland land use planning areas.
72. Enact regulations to retain local control over the construction of telecommunications structures to the greatest extent allowed under federal and state law.
73. Require applicants for telecommunication towers to prove that no existing structure within a reasonable distance from the proposed site can be used to provide adequate service.

74. Include provisions within the town's regulations that will allow the town to hire an independent consultant to assist with the review of telecommunications projects to be paid for by the applicant.
75. Prohibit any increase to the height of the existing telecommunications tower on Mt. Pritchard as well as the construction of additional towers at the site.
76. Require applicants to provide a bond or other security to cover the costs of decommissioning and removing large-scale utility or telecommunications infrastructure if it is abandoned or taken out of service for a reasonable period of time.
77. Require that any upgrade to VELCO's transmission infrastructure results in the lines being run underground across the village center planning area as identified in the Land Use Plan.
78. Locate new or expanded public utilities and infrastructure within existing highway or utility rights-of-way, whenever feasible, unless doing so would adversely impact special areas and resources identified in this plan.
79. Require new or upgraded electric distribution and telecommunications lines to be installed underground in the village center planning area; require the same elsewhere in town.

5.07 ENERGY

5.07-A Goal

- To encourage the efficient use of energy and the development of renewable energy resources.

5.07-B Policies

80. Consider performance standards, such as the LEED rating system, to promote cluster development, alternative energy generation, use of renewable resource, energy-efficient construction and green construction.
81. Educate zoning permit applicants about the requirements of the Vermont Residential Energy Code and encourage use of energy-efficient construction methods, materials, and appliances.
82. Allow for the installation of residential-scale wind, solar, geothermal, biomass, or other alternative energy generating systems
83. Due to the town's emphasis on preserving scenic views, consider updating the land use regulations to require screening of solar installations
84. Establish a land use pattern that concentrates development into mixed-use growth centers in order to reduce the number of vehicle miles that must be traveled to meet a household's basic needs.
85. Evaluate options for installing electric vehicle charging stations and solar panels on town-owned land.

5.08 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

5.08-A Goal

- To provide a strong and diverse economy that provides satisfying and rewarding job opportunities that maintain high environmental standards.

5.08-B Policies

86. Participate in regional economic development efforts and cooperate with regional economic development organizations.
87. Support the ability of residents to work from home while protecting neighbors from potential adverse impacts.
88. Allow for home occupations as strictly defined in state statute as a by-right use while reviewing and establishing standards for home businesses that will have a larger impact on the character of the area in which they are located.
89. Promote small-scale or locally-owned businesses over large-scale businesses. Encourage locally-owned businesses to participate in town gatherings.
90. Allow agricultural-support businesses and encourage business development that relies on locally grown or harvested farm or forest products.
91. Provide flexibility within the town's regulations for the adaptive reuse of existing agricultural structures for commercial or industrial use.
92. Guide the majority of the town's nonresidential development to the village center.
93. Limit the total amount of retail square footage allowed in town based on what would be needed to serve the population of the town.
94. By updating the Land Use Regulations, establish a maximum square footage for retail stores to ensure that commercial activities are of scale appropriate to a small town.
95. Require buffers between large-scale commercial or industrial and residential uses if the business activity is likely to negatively impact the quality of life of nearby residents.

5.09 EDUCATION AND CHILDCARE

5.09-A Goals

- To broaden access to educational and vocational training opportunities sufficient to ensure the full realization of the abilities of all St. George residents.
- To ensure the availability of safe and affordable childcare and to integrate childcare issues into the planning process, including childcare financing, infrastructure, business assistance for childcare providers, and childcare work force development.

5.09-B Policies

96. Continue the town's active participation on district school boards in order to promote the interests of St. George's students, parents, and taxpayers.
97. Continue to allow for childcare homes as a by-right use of residential property throughout the town.
98. Explore demand and options for providing a childcare facility on the town center property.

5.10 HOUSING

5.10-A Goal

- To ensure equitable access to safe, affordable, and energy-efficient housing.
  - New and existing housing should meet the needs of St. George's diverse citizenry, including low- and moderate-income residents.
  - New and rehabilitated housing should be safe, sanitary, and located conveniently to major roads.
  - Sites for multi-family and manufactured housing should be readily available in locations similar to those generally used for single-family conventional dwellings.
  - Accessory apartments within or attached to single family residences which provide affordable housing in close proximity to cost-effective care and supervision for relatives or disabled or elderly persons should be encouraged.
  - By 2050, add 34-101 new housing units in a pattern that maximizes equitable access to major roads and preserves St. George's natural ecosystems and land cover.

5.10-B Policies

99. Support the rights of residents for a safe, adequate place to live through enforcement of local regulations and ordinances, state public health and safety regulations, and state and federal fair housing laws.
100. Seek opportunities and support private and/or non-profit efforts to rehabilitate or upgrade the town's housing stock.
101. Support the efforts of agencies and organizations that provide or assist residents who need affordable, elderly, or special needs housing.
102. Encourage a diversity of housing types within the town, including mobile and manufactured homes, duplexes and other multi-family buildings and accessory dwelling units.
103. Encourage the provision of a range of housing types that will allow residents to remain living in town as their housing needs change.
104. For new housing outside of the village center, promote "cluster development" through Planned Unit Developments to concentrate housing and preserve natural resources.

105. Explore options to ensure that any housing developments constructed in the town be diverse both in their architectural character and price point.

5.11 DISTRIBUTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS AND BURDENS

5.11-A Goal

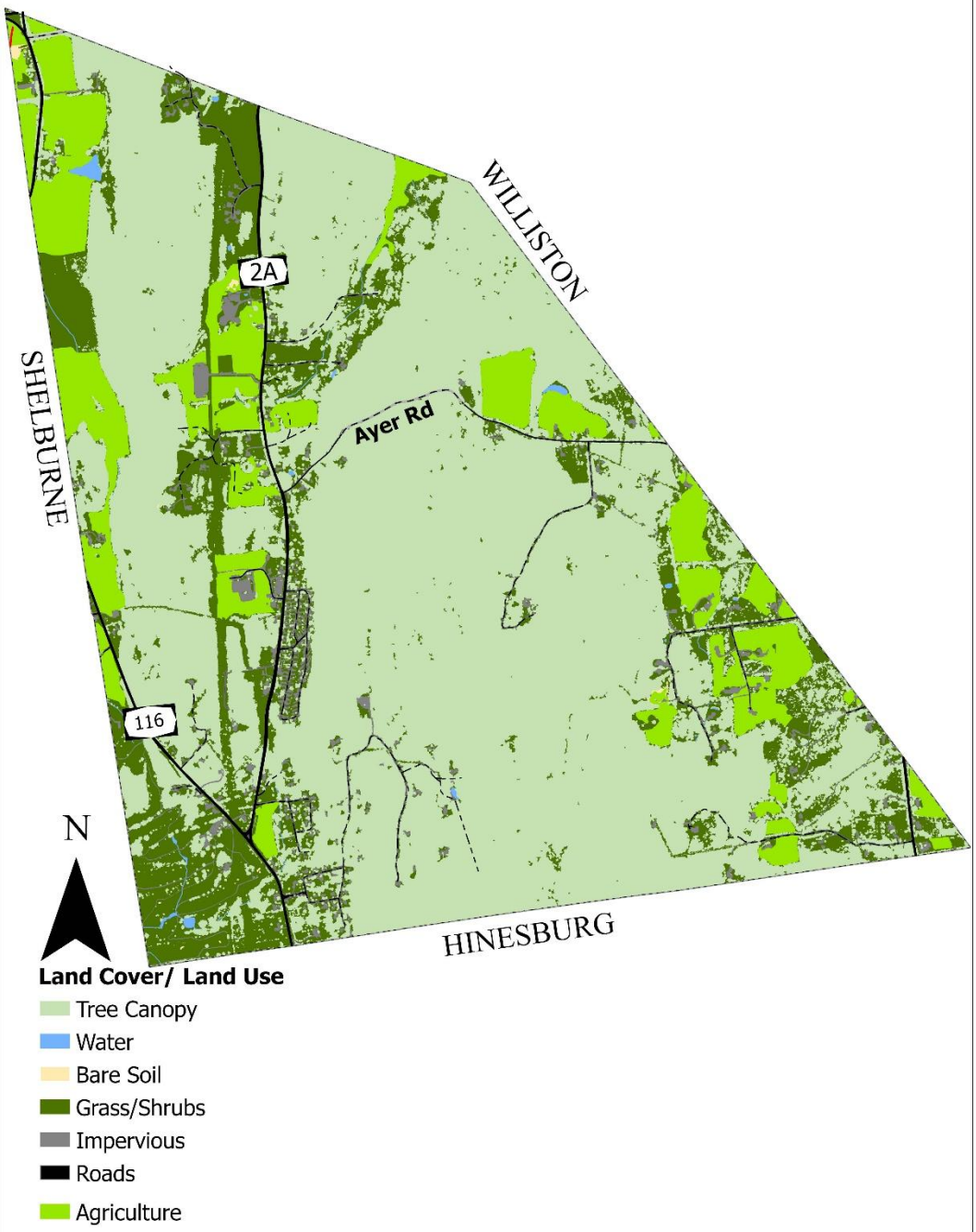
- to equitably distribute environmental benefits and burdens.

5.11-B Policy

106. When considering development in the town, all residents should be encouraged to participate in discussions and decisions as the town strives to maintain a balance of any advantages or disadvantages the development may incur. Consideration must be given to ensure equitable distribution of any environmental benefits and burdens.

5.12 LAND USE PLAN

EXISTING LAND USE MAP



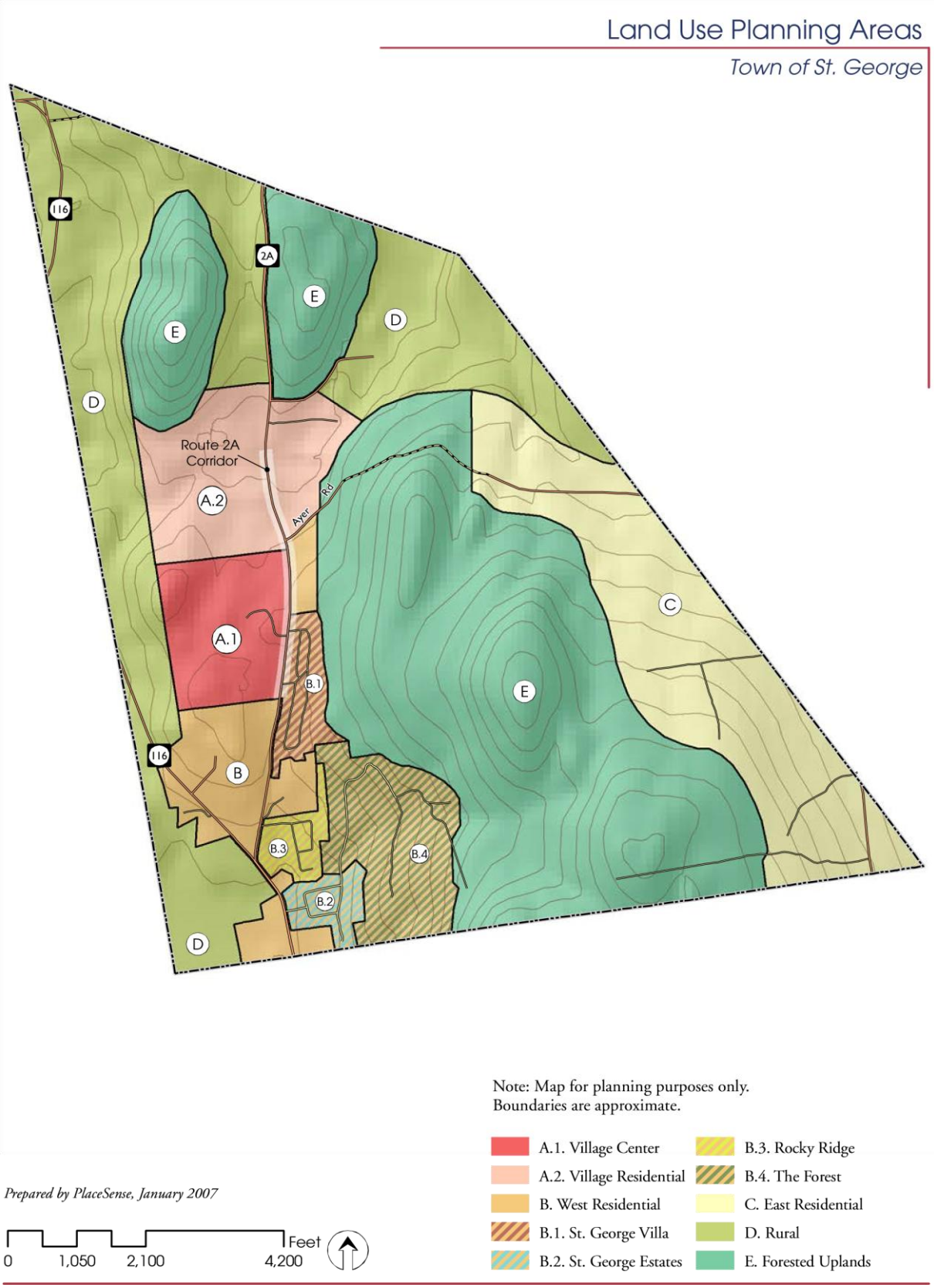
Uncontrolled or poorly planned development in St. George would have undesirable consequences. Our town would lose its rural character as sprawling development replaced open space, forested habitat and agricultural lands. The demand for and cost of providing services would increase rapidly. The opportunity to create a unique identity and sense of place would be lost.

A desire to prevent unplanned development from overtaking this small town is what led residents to plan for a new town center some 30 years ago. This plan returns to that original vision for development of a village center in St. George. This plan proposes to guide development into the village center area where public facilities are planned, while reducing development pressures on outlying lands where public facilities cannot be provided as efficiently. Rather than controlling the amount or rate of growth, this plan channels demand into a harmonious, efficient pattern consistent with the traditional settlement pattern found in communities throughout Vermont.

This section sets forth a future land use plan for the Town of St. George. The town has been divided into five planning areas (see Land Use Planning Areas Map):

- St. George Village
- West Residential
- East Residential
- Rural
- Forested Uplands

The character, planning issues, development constraints and desired development patterns of each area are discussed below. The planning areas do not represent future zoning districts and their boundaries are approximate. They are a generalized planning tool that will be refined as zoning revisions are considered pursuant to the recommendations and policies of this plan. In regulatory proceedings, this land use plan should be considered concurrently with the specific standards established through the town's land use regulations.


Land Use Planning Areas
Town of St. George
116
2A
E
E
D
D
Route 2A
Corridor
A.2
Ayer
Rd
A.1
B.1
C
E
116
B
B.3
B.4
B.2
D
Note: Map for planning purposes only.
Boundaries are approximate.
A.1. Village Center
A.2. Village Residential
B. West Residential
B.1. St. George Villa
B.2. St. George Estates
B.3. Rocky Ridge
B.4. The Forest
C. East Residential
D. Rural
E. Forested Uplands
Prepared by PlaceSense, January 2007
0
1,050
2,100
4,200
Feet

5.12-A St. George Village

This planning area is comprised of the town center property and adjacent undeveloped lands. This area has been divided into two sub-areas for planning purposes: Village Center and Village Residential. A Route 2A Corridor overlay runs along the state highway through this area as well.

Village Center

The Village Center planning sub-area is approximately 95 acres in area, roughly 10 acres of which is currently developed with homes, businesses and the town office. The remaining acreage is undeveloped, town-owned property, including forested land that is contiguous with a much larger forest block. As described throughout this plan, residents envision the undeveloped town center property as being preserved as open space for conservation, recreation, and other low-impact civic uses.

Village Residential

To the north of the town center property are largely undeveloped, agricultural lands most of which are no longer being actively farmed. These lands form the approximately 150-acre Village Residential planning sub-area. There are about 10 developed residential lots, which comprise about 20 acres; the remaining acreage is part of three large parcels. This plan envisions that over time these lands will be developed into predominately residential neighborhoods extending from the town center property in a manner compatible with the character of a traditional New England village. This planning sub-area should accommodate a wide range of building types, including attached and multi-family housing, at village-scale densities. Interconnected streets, sidewalks, narrow frontages and small- to medium-sized blocks should characterize future development.

Route 2A Corridor

As described on page 18 of this plan, Route 2A is a heavily traveled state highway. As development proceeds within St. George's growth center, it will need to function as a village street with neighborhoods (existing and envisioned) on either side. While most of the planned development will occur off the highway with access from a network of secondary and neighborhood streets, over time this section of highway should be redesigned with crosswalks, sidewalks, street trees and other traffic calming measures.

While it is not the intent of this plan to direct most of the town's commercial uses to property with highway frontage, St. George understands that such locations are favored for certain commercial uses, especially those that are automobile-related. The Route 2A Corridor overlay planning area recognizes the unique function of and specific issues related to the frontage property along the highway in the vicinity of the town center property.

Street Network

This plan envisions a village center developing over time in St. George with an interconnected network of streets. The town should plan for at least one loop road that would parallel Route 2A to the west from the town-owned property north to the Ayer Road intersection (or potentially further). St. George could consider adopting a master plan with an official map that would designate the desired alignment of this parallel road. As property is developed over time, the town's regulations could require that road stubs or rights-of-way be created that will allow for connecting roads between developments which over time will result in the envisioned interconnected street network.

5.12-B West Residential

This planning area consists of existing residential neighborhoods on the west side of town – including St. George Community Cooperative, Inc., St. George Estates, Rocky Ridge and the Forest – along with largely developed residential properties along Routes 2A and 116. There is limited acreage available for additional infill development and few changes to the current pattern and density of land use is envisioned within this planning area. Two neighborhoods within this planning area, however, have specific development issues as addressed below.

St. George Community Cooperative, Inc.

Recognizing that St. George Community Cooperative, Inc. is a significant provider of affordable housing and the importance of maintaining the existing supply of affordable housing in Chittenden County, the town is willing to continue meeting its obligation to the larger region by providing a fair share of affordable housing. St. George also understands that the desired changes to the property as described below can only occur over the long-term and with the cooperation of the landowner.

This plan encourages diversification of the town's existing stock of affordable housing and improved integration of affordable units into the community over the long-term. Currently, the main type of affordable dwelling in town is a mobile home within the St. George Community Cooperative, Inc. and Chamber Park. As development proceeds, especially in the village center, St. George would encourage creation of diverse neighborhoods with a variety of housing types at a range of price points.

The 118-unit St. George Community Cooperative, Inc. is located on an approximately 50-acre parcel of land. The developed portion of the mobile home park consumes about half the property, while the back portion is forested hillside. The park property is located across Route 2A from the town center property and as such is a suitable location for high-density housing. Currently, the property has a density of approximately 2.5 dwelling units per acre. With a greater diversity in housing types, the property might be able to support a higher density of housing while maintaining (or potentially increasing) the supply of affordable housing in town, along with improving the quality of the units. Increased density of development on the

property would require increasing the capacity of the water and wastewater systems that currently serve St. George Community Cooperative, Inc..

An additional planning concern related to St. George Community Cooperative, Inc. is how the property's frontage on Route 2A – which is nearly ½ mile in length – functions as part of the Route 2A Corridor described above. Most homes along the frontage of the park are oriented east-west, so their narrow ends face the highway. While a network of development roads serves the homes in the park's interior, those that front on Route 2A have shared driveways connecting directly to the highway. This has resulted in multiple curb cuts, very close together along this stretch of the road, thus increasing the potential for congestion or collisions as vehicles enter or exit these driveways onto the busy highway. Traffic calming measures that would slow traffic on Route 2A in this part of St. George would help alleviate the potential hazard for vehicles entering or exiting the highway.

One of the goals of this plan is to promote the integration of St. George Community Cooperative, Inc. into the planned village center as an adjoining residential neighborhood. The configuration and character of the park's frontage – especially the northern portion, which is directly across the highway from the town center property – is a critical component of ensuring that St. George Community Cooperative, Inc. will, over time, function as a residential neighborhood of the village center envisioned in this plan. If the St. George Community Cooperative, Inc. property was to be redesigned or redeveloped at a future time, the number of curb cuts from the property onto Route 2A should be reduced and development, especially along the frontage, should support desired village development patterns as described in this plan.

The Forest

The Forest subdivision is another neighborhood within this area with specific planning considerations. This is the most recent of the developments built on the west side of town. Most of its homes are located on lots 10 acres in size or larger. The lots are wooded and are located on the western slope of Mt. Pritchard. To some extent, the subdivision did respect its location by limiting the amount of clearing on most lots. Still, this subdivision represents a development pattern that the town does not want to promote in the future. Had these homes been clustered onto one- or two-acre lots, more land could have been set aside as open space that would have provided an unfragmented block of forest habitat. The town should not allow additional forest fragmentation by permitting further subdivision of the existing lots in the Forest development and landowners should be encouraged to limit additional clearing.

5.12-C East Residential

This planning area is comprised of lands on the eastern side of Mt. Pritchard overlooking Lake Iroquois. There are approximately 30 to 40 homes located in this area, mainly on large lots (10 acres or more); most have been built on former agricultural lands within the past 20 years. Like The Forest development on the west side of the mountain, these subdivisions represent a

pattern that the town does not want to promote in the future. Had these homes been clustered onto one- or two-acre lots, more land could have been set aside as open space that would have provided forest habitat and/or productive agricultural land.

The developed lots comprise approximately 65% of this planning area, leaving around 150 acres of undeveloped land in several large parcels. Much of the undeveloped land is wooded or abandoned agricultural land that is transitioning back to its natural forested state.

While this plan envisions overall density remaining low on the east side of town, cluster development would be more desirable than a continuation of the current pattern of large-lot development. The town encourages developments in this planning area to locate on open lands over forested lands to the greatest extent feasible. If development will be occurring in forested areas, the amount of clearing should be limited and efforts made to minimize fragmentation of forest habitat.

5.12-D Rural

This planning area contains around 550 acres of St. George's agricultural lands and the 75-acre Rocky Ridge golf course property. While there are a few non-farm residences within this area, most of the land is in large parcels.

With the closure of the Pillsbury farm in 2006, St. George lost its last active dairy. The town's location in Chittenden County on the urbanizing fringe of the greater Burlington area will make finding a way to keep these lands in productive farm use difficult given the demand for and value of the property for residential development. The town, however, desires to maintain the rural character of these lands created through two centuries of productive use. St. George should be creative and consider innovative techniques to maintain this character for future generations, while respecting the rights of current property owners for a reasonable return on their investment and financial security after years of work as stewards of the land.

5.12-E Forested Uplands

This planning area contains around 900 acres of St. George's forested uplands. There are a limited number of existing homes in this area and most of the land is in large tracts.

Steep slopes and poor soils constrain development on these lands. These woodlands are recognized for their habitat value and are identified as a special resource in Section 4.04 of this plan.

In order to protect environmental quality and preserve the scenic quality of the town's hills and ridgelines, development within this planning area should be allowed only at extremely low densities with careful review to condition any development and limit adverse impacts. Any development allowed within this area should be undertaken in a manner that minimizes the fragmentation of forest habitat, limits the amount of clearing, and is not highly visible from public property or rights-of-way. The scale, height, building materials, color and reflectivity of

proposed development should be reviewed to reduce the impacts of hillside or ridgeline development on the aesthetic character of its surroundings and the scenic qualities of the town.

5.12-F Goal

- To plan development so as to maintain the historic settlement pattern of compact village and urban centers separated by rural countryside.
  - Intensive residential development should be encouraged primarily in areas related to community centers, and strip development along highways should be discouraged.
  - Economic growth should be encouraged in locally designated growth areas, or employed to revitalize existing village and urban centers, or both.
  - Public investments, including the construction or expansion of infrastructure, should reinforce the general character and planned growth patterns of the area.

5.12-G Policies

107. Enact regulations that will establish a clear delineation between the proposed village center and outlying rural lands in terms of density, development patterns and allowed uses.
108. Direct the majority of the town's growth to the village planning area.
109. Target the village planning area as a location for new or expanded public facilities and civic uses.
110. Prevent strip development along the state highways.
111. Promote the preservation of open space, forested habitat and agricultural land in the rural areas of town.
112. Limit further fragmentation of the town's significant blocks of forest land.
113. Explore new and innovative measures to achieve the traditional settlement pattern of a compact village center surrounded by rural countryside.
114. Revise the town's land use regulations in conformance with the visions, goals and policies of this plan.
115. Continue to inform and educate residents about the town's land use planning efforts and regulatory process.
116. Continue to seek participation and input from all residents and property owners in the town's planning, development review, policy-setting and decision-making processes.

5.13 IMPLEMENTATION

5.13-A The Past Eight Years

During the past eight years, a time in which we saw migration related to the COVID pandemic and other factors, St. George grew in size and added roughly a dozen new homes, mainly along the Route 2A corridor north of the village center. Town officials and residents have undertaken

a number of successful efforts to enhance our community and quality of life including the following:

- St. George Connect community outreach process,
- Formation of a Conservation Commission,
- Formation of a Conservation Fund,
- Established an annual town-wide celebration, and
- Updated the School House for community gatherings.

5.13-B Preparation for the Writing of this Town Plan

The town conducted door-to-door interviews and online surveys to gather information about residents' ideas for the future direction of the town.

The Planning Commission engaged residents attending the town-wide celebration in charting priorities for the use of the town center property. Residents were asked to rate various public uses.

Residents were encouraged to attend Planning Commission meetings with special emphasis on several meetings through online notifications and newspaper articles.

5.13-C The Next Eight Years

The St. George Planning Commission has identified the actions below as being of the highest priority as the town continues to work towards achieving the purposes of this plan.

<u>Land Use Regulations</u>

In 2026, St. George should update our Land use Regulations to comply with this Town Plan, Act 47, and Act 181.

<u>Village Center</u>

This plan implements residents' vision for the preservation of open space in St. George's village center. We will be updating the School House to make it ADA compliant (Americans With Disabilities Act).

<u>Conservation Commission</u>

Our town should appoint members to the Conservation Commission with a mission to increase knowledge of the town's natural environment and historic resources, promote the wise use, conservation, and/or preservation of the town's important resources and special features, and review projects and make recommendations regarding the protection of natural and cultural resources as requested to assist in local development review processes.

5.13-D Over the Long-Term

This plan identifies many additional actions that should be taken in the future. The vision set out on page 2 of this plan can only be achieved through sustained action by the town, its

officials and residents over the long-term. This implementation section should continue to be revised and updated as projects are completed, conditions change, opportunities arise or priorities shift.

5.14 COMPATIBILITY

It is important to consider how our plans for St. George's future fit with the plans of our neighboring towns, the larger region and even with the state. Not all of our goals can be achieved by St. George alone and our plans may impact or be impacted by situations in other towns.

State law requires towns to review whether their plan is compatible with those of their neighbors and the region. Additionally, the town's plan must be in conformance with state planning goals. The St. George Planning Commission has completed that review and has found this plan to be compatible as described below.

5.14-A With Our Neighbors

Hinesburg

The 2026 St. George Town Plan continues to place the land at the St. George-Hinesburg town line into four planning areas from west to east:

- Rural (Rocky Ridge Golf Course, which straddles the town line)
- West Side Residential (existing residential development)
- Forested Uplands (Mt. Pritchard), and
- East Side Residential (eastern slope of Mt. Pritchard overlooking Lake Iroquois).

Hinesburg's 2021 Town Plan describes three planning areas along the town line:

- Agricultural (west of Route 116),
- Rural Residential (east of Route 116), and
- Shoreline (adjacent to Lake Iroquois).

Each town is planning for low- to medium-density residential uses along the shared border in respect of adjacent forests and natural resource areas.

Shelburne

The 2026 St. George Town Plan continues to place the land at the St. George-Shelburne town line into one planning area:

- Rural

Shelburne's 2019 Town Plan places the land along the town line into two planning areas:

- Rural
- Conservation

Each town is planning for low- to medium-density residential uses along the shared border; their land use plans are compatible.

Williston

The 2026 St. George Town Plan continues to place the land at the St. George-Williston town line into three planning areas:

- Rural,
- Forested Uplands, and
- East Side Residential.

Williston's 2025 Town Plan places the land along the town line into one planning area:

- Agricultural/Rural

Williston adopted the Lake Iroquois Shoreland Protection Area overlay district in 2014 which abuts St. George at the southernmost point on Oak Hill Road.

Each town is planning for low-density development along the shared border. Both towns are working to preserve the rural character by protecting open space through the use of cluster development policy. The land use plans are compatible.

5.14-B With Our Region

The 2018 Chittenden County Regional Plan recognizes St. George's village center by designating its lands as a Village planning area. The regional plan describes Village planning areas and establishes policies for such areas as follows:

- Village Planning Area is a compact area of mixed-use activities that maintains the character of a Vermont village. This type of Planning Area is intended to serve its local surroundings as a municipal center where people can live, work, shop, and recreate.
- Provide for the commercial, cultural, educational, employment, industrial (when compatible), institutional, and recreational needs of local residents and employers.
- Have a high priority for public sewer and water infrastructure and for transportation investments (including nonmotorized modes) to support future development.
- Be developed in accordance with local plans and bylaws to allow for higher-density, mixed uses, employing design standards that incorporate alternatives to automotive transportation, ensure the compatibility of nearby land uses and minimize adverse impacts on natural resources and ecosystem health.

The remainder of town is part of the Rural planning area, which is described and for which policies have been developed as follows:

- The Rural Planning Area provides for places that are primarily working lands and natural areas so that these places may retain the character of Vermont's traditional rural landscape.

- Promote the use of land for recreation, conservation, agriculture, silviculture, and other resource extraction industries through private activities, public land management, and the designation of natural areas.
- Be developed in accordance with local plans and bylaws and cooperative efforts among government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and landowners to retain the character of Vermont's traditional rural landscape and ensure ecosystem health.
- Encourage residential development to be small-scale and to cluster on small lots so as to aggregate areas of open space.
- Not provide the same level of services as the other Planning Areas, instead providing most local services for Rural Planning Area residents and agricultural businesses in nearby Village Planning Areas, while other needs will be met by uses in the Metropolitan Planning Areas or Enterprise Planning Areas.
- Have a lower priority for public sewer and water infrastructure investments and programs.

This plan's land use planning areas are compatible with the general planning areas described in the regional plan and further the goals of the regional plan.

5.14-C With State Law

To encourage the appropriate development in St. George, this plan strives to attain consistency with the state's planning goals. This revision to the plan ensures that the town's decisions will be guided by a coordinated, comprehensive planning process and policy framework. Citizen participation has been and will continue to be encouraged at all levels of the planning process. As evidenced throughout this plan, consideration has been and will continue to be given to the use of our resources and the consequences of growth.