

DRAFT Town of Eden Town Plan (2025- 2033)



Adopted by Eden Selectboard:

Regionally Confirmed: *Date*

Prepared by **Eden Planning Commission**

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

Chapter 1: Introduction

The Town of Eden maintains a municipal plan, hereafter referred to as the Town Plan. This plan is consistent with the statewide planning goals established in the *Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act* (24 VSA §4382 and VSA §4302). Among these goals are the following guiding principles:

- To encourage citizen participation at all levels of the planning process, and to assure that decisions shall be made at the most local level possible.
- To respect and strive to maintain the historic settlement pattern of compact village and urban centers separated by rural countryside; and,
- To provide a strong and diverse economy by providing satisfying and rewarding job opportunities while maintaining high environmental standards.

This is the fifth edition of the Town Plan for Eden. Previous Town Plans were completed in 2002, 2007, 2013, and 2017. The accelerated rate of social, economic, and technological innovations underscores the need to update and maintain a Town Plan. Growth and development related issues, from telecommunications to natural resource conservation, are central to the quality of life enjoyed by Eden residents.

How is a Town Plan Useful to Eden residents?

Although towns are not required to adopt municipal plans, a Town Plan can be beneficial in many ways including potential uses such as:

1. *A source of information:* The plan is a valuable source of information for local boards, commissions, residents, businesses (both current and prospective) and neighboring communities.
2. *A basis for community programs and policies:* The plan can serve as a guide for capital budgeting and other community initiatives, including farmland protection, recreation planning, housing policy and energy initiatives.
3. *A basis for future planning and development-related studies:* Few plans can address every community issue in sufficient detail. Town Plans not only record and analyze what is known about community residents and local resources, but also what is not yet known. Therefore, many plans will recommend further studies to develop a course of action for specific needs.
4. *A standard for review at the state and regional levels:* State land use regulations identify Town Plans as a standard in the review of Act 250, Section 248 and Act 174 applications. Town Plans are also important to the development of Regional Plans and inter-municipal programs. Finally, state proposals, including the purchase of state land for parks, conservation and recreation, are also required to comply with Town Plans.
5. *To fulfill an eligibility requirement for state and federal grants:* Most statewide low interest loan programs and grants require that municipalities adopt and maintain a Town Plan. Grants might help to procure funds for planning, infrastructure, community and recreational development and historic preservation projects. The adoption of a Town Plan generally strengthens the competitiveness of any grant application.

6. *A basis for regulatory implementation:* If desired, the Town Plan can also serve as the foundation for future development bylaws and other local ordinances.

What is required of a Town Plan?

Vermont municipalities are authorized to create development plans under 24 VSA §4381. Statute requires that plans address a minimum of twelve subject areas but does not mandate specific goals or policies beyond the previously cited statewide planning goals. The required components of a Town Plan include:

1. A statement of objectives, policies, and programs of the municipality to help guide the future growth and development of land, public services and facilities, and to protect the environment;
2. A land use plan and map;
3. A transportation plan and map;
4. A utilities and public facilities plan and map;
5. A statement of the municipality's policies for the preservation of rare and irreplaceable natural areas, and scenic and historic resources;
6. An educational facilities plan and map;
7. A statement of how the plan relates to adjacent municipalities' plans and the regional plan;
8. An energy plan, including policies and programs to implement those policies;
9. A housing element, including a recommended program for addressing low and moderate income persons' needs as identified in the Regional Plan;
10. An economic development element that describes present economic conditions and the location, type, and scale of desired economic development and identified policies, projects, and programs to foster economic growth.
11. A flood resilience plan and map that identifies flood hazard and fluvial erosion hazard areas and designates those areas to be protected. Also, recommendations for policies and strategies to protect these areas and mitigate risks to public safety, critical infrastructure, historic structures, and municipal investments.
12. A recommended program for implementing the plan's objectives.

How the Town Plan was developed

The 2002, 2007, 2013 and 2017 Eden Town Plans have served as the foundation for this update. Beginning in the Fall of 2023, the Eden Planning Commission began meeting regularly with Lamoille County Planning Commission (LCPC) staff to review and update each chapter. All meetings were open to the public and participation in the planning process is always encouraged. This update is focused on incorporating current information from the new American Community Survey and the 2020 Census, revisiting previous growth and housing projections as well as ensuring continued compliance with Vermont statutes. Finally, with input from the community and the Eden Selectboard, the Eden Planning Commission has identified goals, policies and recommendations to reflect the changing conditions within the community and throughout the region.

After completing a preliminary draft, the Eden Planning Commission and Selectboard warned hearings to receive public comment before formally adopting the plan. The involvement of local residents is an integral part of the town's continuing planning process. According to Vermont statute, municipal

development plans must be re-adopted at least every eight years (an extension from the previous 5-year interval). This schedule provides an opportunity to re-visit the challenges and opportunities facing a community and to comply with any additional mandates from the State. The 2025 Town Plan update is intended to create an 8-year vision for Eden with the understanding that changing conditions may require the town to re-assess planning priorities in the interim and amend any chapter if needed. Any future changes to the already ratified plan would go through the same process of public hearings before any changes were adopted.

Statement of objectives

The Planning Commission identified five guiding principles to be used in the development of the Town Plan. These principles are:

1. All residents must have their property rights both respected and protected;
2. The growth of Eden should occur in such a way as to enable residents to continue to live in town without undue tax burdens;
3. The natural environment should be protected and conserved to ensure that the resources we have today will be available for future generations;
4. A safe and healthy living environment must be maintained; and,
5. Eden's scenic, rural, small-town atmosphere should be preserved.

The first guiding principle of the Eden Town Plan is to respect and protect private property rights. The Eden Town Plan is a visioning document and does not regulate in any way. The only regulatory parameters applied to the Town of Eden are in Act 250, and Public Service Board proceedings (Section 248 and Section 248a). The District Commissions and Public Service Board must give substantial deference to local and Regional Plans in their rulings. This provides Eden with a voice in projects of local and regional significance, without infringing on individual property rights.

Eden is fortunate to have a wealth of natural resources, including a lake, a reservoir, many ponds, forest lands, prime agricultural soils, gravel deposits, wildlife, and fisheries. These resources provide residents and visitors with a variety of recreational opportunities; supply valuable raw materials for construction; and support local jobs in agriculture, forestry, and tourism. The local natural resource base is a central part of Eden's past and present prosperity, and these resources should be preserved to afford the same opportunities for future generations.

To maintain a safe and healthy environment for town residents, the town must also take measures to ensure that future development does not endanger individual property owners or the public at-large. For example, development should be accessible to emergency service providers, roads should be safe for both automobiles and pedestrians, and air and water quality should be protected.

Finally, Eden residents also value the small-town atmosphere of the community, including its historical structures, agriculture and forest lands, and compact village centers surrounded by rural countryside. Maintaining this land use pattern is generally accomplished by encouraging and supporting orderly growth through integrated transportation, natural resource, energy, and economic policies.

The structure of this plan

The Eden Town Plan is divided into fourteen chapters that address both the required elements of the *Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act* and other areas of local concern. Each of the twelve required elements is discussed, including information on past trends, existing conditions, and future needs. Based on the analysis of that information, one or more of these goals and the policies to work towards implementation of these goals has been identified. *Goals* can be defined as desired future conditions— although some are highly ambitious and may not be attainable for several years. *Policies* describe the conditions or standards by which a development proposal can be evaluated for compliance with a goal. Finally, each chapter concludes with a discussion of the *recommendations* for the implementation of the goals and/or policies. Some involve continuing current actions, while others suggest new initiatives for the future. A strong implementation plan will describe what is needed, who shall take responsibility for the desired response, and when this can be accomplished. By following these guidelines, the course of action associated with implementation items should be clear.

Chapter 2: Community Profile

The Town of Eden lies in northeast Lamoille County and is comprised of 40,690 acres (63.58 square miles), making it the sixth largest town in Vermont by area. Bordering towns include Johnson, Belvidere, Montgomery, Lowell, Albany, Craftsbury and Hyde Park.

Historical Census Count

Since 1800, every 10 years, the U.S. Census Bureau has conducted a count of persons living in each municipality in the United States.

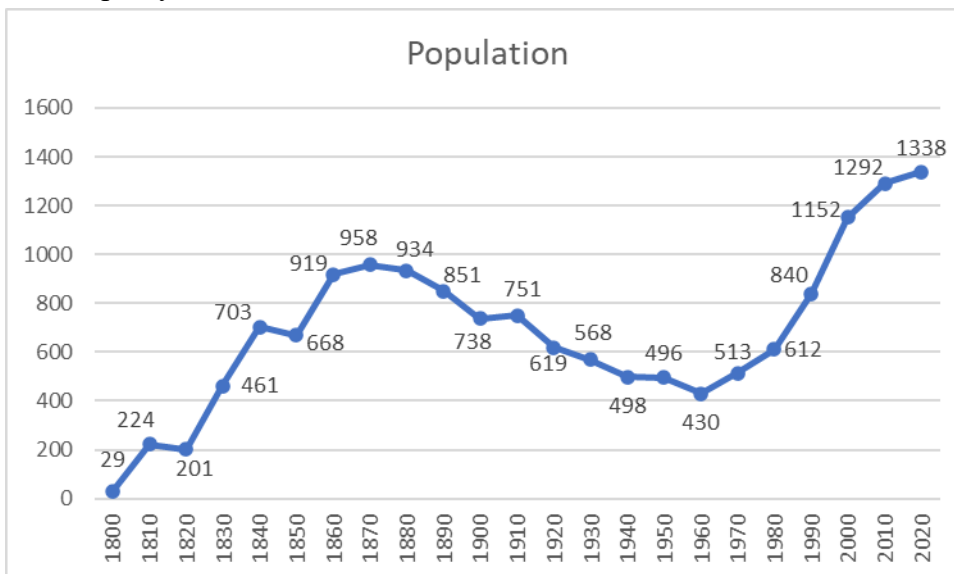


Figure 1: Population estimates from Census data for Eden from 1800 to 2020

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

According to the 2020 Census, Eden has a population of 1,338 residents. Following nearly a century of gradual population decline (1870- 1960), Eden has experienced sharp population growth over the last fifty years. This post- World War II growth roughly mirrors the Lamoille County population trend while outpacing the state of Vermont's growth during the same time period.

Components of Population Change

As cited in the previous section, Eden's population trend has increased significantly in recent decades. This trend, in actual numbers, is shown in **Table 1**. Population change is the result of two primary factors; natural increase (where more people are born than die over any given period of time) and net migration.

Table 1: Raw and percentage population change by decade in Eden, 1980-2020

Period	Change in Population	% Change
1981-1990	228	37.3%↑
1991-2000	312	37.1%↑
2001-2010	140	12.1%↑
2011-2020	46	3.6%↑

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Regional & Neighboring Populations

Eden is surrounded by rural communities, all of which are also growing. **Table 2** shows the population numbers for Eden, neighboring communities, the county and the state from 2000 to 2010. Overall, Lamoille and neighboring Franklin and Caledonia counties ranked third, second, and fourth respectively in rate of growth among the state's fourteen counties during the same time period. As a basis for comparison, Vermont's population is estimated to have grown by only 2.8% from 2000 to 2010- down from an 8.2% growth rate during the 1990s.

Table 2: Net and percentage population change in Eden, Lamoille County, the State of Vermont, and select neighboring Towns, 2000 to 2010

	2000	2010	2020	% Change
Eden	1,152	1,323	1,338	14.8%↑
Albany	840	941	976	12.0%↑
Craftsbury	1,136	1,206	1,343	6.2%↑
Hyde Park	2,847	2,954	3,020	3.8%↑
Johnson	3,274	3,446	3,491	5.3%↑
Lowell	738	879	887	19.1%↑
Montgomery	992	1,201	1,184	21.1%↑
Wolcott	1,456	1,676	1,670	15.1%↑
Lamoille County	23,233	24,475	25,945	5.3%↑
State of Vermont	608,827	625,741	643,077	2.8%↑
Source: U.S. Census Bureau				

Future Population Projections

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

The latest set of state predictions released in 2013 forecast Eden's population will be 1,482 people in 2020 and 1,585 people in 2030. This represents a nearly 20% population growth between 2010 and 2030. While all predictions are only estimates, the fact that Eden and Lamoille County have grown at a rate faster than the state for four decades is reasonable evidence to suggest the town will continue to grow into the future. Within roughly an hour drive of Burlington, Eden's proximity to Chittenden County – the state's fastest growing county and largest metropolitan and economic center – is at least partially responsible for past and projected growth trends. The Capital region of Montpelier, about an hour drive to the south, is also a job location destination. Recent development in the Jay Peak area to the north may also contribute to population growth in Eden. Over the next five years, as updated Census estimates are released and more information regarding the health of the economy becomes available, the town should have a clearer idea of where development trends are heading. In the meantime, monitoring new construction will be the most accurate predictor of population growth.

Goals, policies, & recommendations

Goal: For Eden to experience slow to moderate population growth, without placing a burden on existing community facilities and public services. Growth should ultimately not exceed the town's ability to provide services to support the population.

Policies:

- Eden encourages development that provides economic opportunities and employment for Eden residents.
- The clustering and/or siting of any new development is encouraged to replicate the established traditional patterns within the town, protect rural and scenic character, and to maintain contiguous tracts of resources and open land.
- All development within the town must follow state wastewater regulations.
- Further fragmentation of productive agricultural and forestland should be avoided. Continued access to productive forest and farmland will be encouraged.
- Earth resource operations (sand and gravel pits and stone/mineral quarries) shall comply with Act 250 regulations.
- Development in the floodplain is discouraged.

Recommendations:

- The Planning Commission should periodically review Eden's population and housing growth patterns, and population projections.
- The Planning Commission should review all Act 250 applications for their impact on the town. Where the application is determined to not conform to this Plan, the Planning Commission or

Selectboard should participate in the Act 250 process in order to ensure the concerns of the town are addressed.

- Encourage forest landowners to continue collaboration with the County Forester.
- Encourage participation in Agricultural Extension Service programs.
- Eden should work with LCPC and other organizations to educate landowners about ways to minimize risks for development in Flood Hazard Areas.

Chapter 3: Historic, Scenic, & Archeological Resources

Historic resources

Chartered in 1781, Eden has a long and varied history, which is the basis for many of the values and traditions held by residents today. The book *'A Walk through the Garden of Eden'*, published by the Eden Historical Society in 1996, presents a comprehensive record of Eden's unique history. The Eden Historical Society has been recognized by the community for their efforts in recording the town's history, and in the preservation of local historic resources. The old Town Clerk's office building was donated to the Eden Historical Society by Fred and Patricia Lentz. The building was re-located to a plot of land next to the Eden Central School. This plot of land was deeded to the Eden Historical Society from the Town of Eden. The building is under restoration with a goal to function as an educational center, showcase artifacts and to provide information on the history of Eden.

Although Eden does not have any structures listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the town does have a considerable number of buildings of local and statewide historic significance. Many of these historic structures have been identified in the Vermont Division of Historic Preservation *Historic Sites and Structures Survey* completed in 1983. This survey identified 48 historic structures in Eden, which are highlighted in the Historic Scenic and Archaeological Resources Map. In addition to the inventory of historic structures and districts, there are numerous other historical locations within town, including former mill and schoolhouse sites, cellar holes, cemeteries, and historic roads. With a land grant by the Vermont Assembly following the Revolutionary War, Eden began with 36 square miles awarded to Seth Warner and his regiment as partial payment for wartime service. While many of these sites are not formally recognized, they contribute to the community's historical fabric and connection to its past.

Scenic resources

The Town of Eden has an abundance of scenic resources for the enjoyment of residents and visitors alike. A drive on almost any road, a walk on the Long Trail, or an afternoon canoeing on any of the town's bodies of water provide a multitude of scenic vistas. While the town has an abundance of scenic resources worthy for consideration or protection, the Planning Commission has identified a set of notable sites for special consideration. The highest priority scenic resources (also identified on the Historic, Scenic, & Archeological Resources map) include:

- Vermont Routes 100 and 118: Vermont Route 100 serves as the region's primary north-south arterial and is the most heavily traveled highway through Eden. Vermont Route 118– which originates in Eden and runs north through Montgomery and Berkshire to the Canadian border– is also a very important travel corridor. These highways provide travelers with a panoramic window into the town. Working to maintain an attractive highway landscape will promote Eden as a desirable place to live, work, and play. The Historic, Scenic, & Archeological Resources Map shows some stretches of highway that are of particularly scenic value.

Lake Eden, Belvidere Pond (also called Long Pond), and South Pond: Eden's three major bodies of water provide immeasurable scenic and recreational value. From the wild undeveloped shores of Belvidere Pond (Long Pond) to the rustic camps and year-round homes around Lake Eden and South Pond, the town's bodies of water offer picturesque views from the shoreline or on the water.

- The Green River Reservoir: Located in Eden and Hyde Park, the Green River Reservoir is the largest non-motorized body of water in Vermont. Its wilderness-like character is considered a local treasure, to such an extent that the Town of Hyde Park has adopted a view shed overlay district covering private lands within view of the water. The project won state recognition for its creativity and the public involvement in its development. This exceptional view shed extends into the Town of Eden's southern border region. Eden has not adopted bylaws similar to Hyde Park partially due to the fact that the land surrounding Green River Reservoir in Eden is owned by the State.

While Eden's scenic resources remain largely preserved within the rural, small-town character of the town, numerous potential threats exist. Telecommunications towers, industrial wind towers, salvage yards and disproportionately scaled development could all negatively impact Eden's scenic landscape. In recent years, the construction of industrial wind farms, such as the 21 towers of the Kingdom Community Wind project in the adjacent Town of Lowell, have significantly challenged small, rural communities across the state. In response, several municipalities have adopted ridgeline development bylaws to protect local scenic values.

Ultimately, despite their inherent value to the community, Eden's scenic resources are difficult to regulate. Although the community values the town's beautiful vistas, forested hills, and open fields, it would be unfair to deny the right to develop lands based on the visual appearance of private property from a public highway. The Selectboard, Planning Commission, and town residents may establish policies that strike an appropriate balance between the private property rights and the economic, environmental, and aesthetic value of Eden's scenic resources. On a local scale, blighted properties may be regulated through ordinances. However, larger development impacts associated with industrial wind and telecommunications towers require an ongoing public dialogue on how or if the town should review development on the basis of scenic values.

Archeological resources

Archeological sites contain a fragile, complex, and irreplaceable record of past human activities. Such sites differ from historic resources in that the pertinent information is buried. For 10,000 years, Native Americans focused their activities within river valleys and lake basins. Evidence of prehistoric activities and occupations may be contained within soil deposits of a cornfield, a woodlot, or could be buried in a floodplain. Any prehistoric archeological sites constitute an essential link to our past. These sites are often the only source of information for the longest part of human history in Eden.

A National Park Service study of archaeologically significant riparian areas was done as part of the Vermont Rivers Study in 1986. The Park Service findings concluded that the entire length of the Gihon River, from Lake Eden and points south, has an expected moderate-to-high archeological sensitivity (see

Historic, Scenic, & Archeological Resources Map). This rating does not necessarily indicate that any archaeologically significant resources have been located in the area; it only denotes that the topography, sun exposure, availability of food and other important natural resources exist in the right combination along the Gihon River to expect that the area could be archaeologically significant. Unlike the large sites found in Highgate and Swanton, any sites, if they exist, will likely be small.

Goals, policies, & recommendations

Goal: To preserve Eden's heritage for future generations.

Policies:

- Eden supports efforts that record local history, preserve historic structures, conserve scenic resources and preserve Eden's archaeological record. Through these efforts the town's heritage will be recorded, protected and made available for residents and visitors to learn what events have made Eden the place it is today.
- Eden encourages the restoration and reuse of historic buildings. Any future development is encouraged to be in character with surrounding architecture.
- Development around the natural scenic resources identified should be sited and constructed in such a manner as to retain the natural scenic beauty of the area. Removal of the natural vegetation on a development site should be minimized and structures should be screened or hidden from view as best as possible.
- Development should avoid ridgelines, especially those visible from roadways and high density developed areas such as the Lake Eden shoreline. Any ridgeline development should be set back from the edge of the hill and have a forested buffer to protect the view from the valley.
- Storage of abandoned vehicles and junk must comply with local and state limitations on such materials.
- Encourage the State of Vermont to include neighboring towns in the decision-making process regarding the siting of industrial power generation installations.
- Projects occurring in archeologically sensitive areas should consider the potential impact of the project on these sites during the early stages of development. This will offer the best opportunity to mitigate potential impacts. If at any point in the development of a parcel, an archeological site is discovered, the state archeologist should be given a reasonable opportunity to investigate and suggest a means to mitigate the impact.

Recommendations:

- Support the Eden Historical Society in their efforts to rehabilitate the old clerk's office as an education center and museum; pursue grant funding to collect oral histories of our residents.
- The Selectboard may follow up with violations of the state abandoned vehicles and junk regulations.

Chapter 4: Housing

Eden is predominantly a residential and agricultural community without a traditional village center or commercial core. As such, most development throughout the town continues to be low-density, single-family residential homes. The one notable exception is the land surrounding Lake Eden, where both seasonal and year-round homes are clustered along the shoreline. Because there are no public water or

sewer systems within the town, there exist limited opportunities for higher density residential and commercial development in Eden.

Residential growth

According to the 2020 Census, there were 731 housing units in Eden, an increase of 2.7 percent over the 2010 Census estimate. In Eden and in several other towns within Lamoille County, the rate of growth in housing units during the 1990s and 2000s was greater than the rate of population growth. This trend is attributable to several factors, including a decrease in average household size throughout the United States, an increase in seasonal home construction within the region, and a generally strong housing market through much of the 1990s and early-2000s. A snapshot of housing indicators in Eden, Lamoille County, and the State of Vermont between 2010 and 2020 are shown in **Table 3**:

Table 3: A comparison of the growth in number of housing units within the Town of Eden, Lamoille County, and the State of Vermont, 2010-2023.

Geography	# of Housing Units 2010	# of Housing Units 2023	% Increase
Eden	712	731	2.7%↑
Lamoille County	12,969	13,878	7%↑
Vermont	322,539	334,318	3.7%↑

Source: American Community Survey and Census

As demonstrated in **Table 3** (above), the growth in housing units in Eden is below the county average and the state as a whole over the decade. During this period, the character of residential development in Eden and throughout Lamoille County has largely been rural and large-lot single family home construction. Since the town has vast amounts of undeveloped land and no zoning or subdivision regulations, Eden has an expansive “build-out” potential. In other words, if left unregulated and under favorable market conditions, the town could conceivably support hundreds more housing units built on two to five acre lots. While there are strategic advantages to subdividing land into large lots– including the preservation of open space– it is very expensive to extend and maintain services for a development of this scale. Ultimately, the Eden Planning Commission and Selectboard should closely monitor development trends to ensure that growth does not place an undue burden on the existing tax base or jeopardize Eden’s scenic, rural character or natural resources.

Housing Needs Assessment

The Department of Housing and Community Development published a study in 2025 containing targeted goals for housing in each region in Vermont. LCPC allocated these goals among each town in the region using the Decennial Census data. Housing targets were presented for two periods: 2025-2030 and 2025-2050. For each of the two study periods, high-growth scenarios (Upper) and low-growth scenarios (Lower) were presented based on annual average household growth rates from previous time periods. Table 4 (below) depicts the Upper and Lower housing targets for Eden for the 2025-2030 and 2025-2050 time periods. These goals are aspirational and there is no provision in statute to punish a town for not reaching the attributed goals, but they are required in Town Plans.

Table 4: The housing targets determined for the Town of Eden for the Upper and Lower scenarios and 2022-2030 and 2025-2050 time periods.

	2030 Lower Total Number of Dwelling Units	2030 Higher Total Number of Dwelling Units	2050 Lower Total Number of Dwelling Units	2050 Higher Total Number of Dwelling Units
Number of units needed per year to reach goal	9	13	6	12
Total number units if goal is met	768	797	869	1037

Household characteristics

The composition of Eden’s housing stock has been largely shaped by net-migration, with younger and middle-aged residents fueling new single-family housing starts. The Census reports that in 2020, Eden had 731 housing units. A variety of social and demographic trends indicate that communities across the country will experience demand for more diverse housing options in the coming decades. These trends include: families having fewer children; the break-up of extended family households; an increase in the number of single parent households; a larger number of elderly residents who are choosing to remain in their own homes; and the growing popularity of more compact site designs. A comparison of basic household characteristics within Eden and Lamoille County is contained in **Table 4** (below):

Table 4: A comparison of basic household characteristics in the Town of Eden and Lamoille County		
Housing Units	Town of Eden	Lamoille County
% Owner occupied housing units	84.8%	70.6%
% Renter occupied housing units	15.2 %	29.4%
Vacancy rate	27.8%	20.8%
Median household income	\$ 49,010	\$ 64,179

The 2020 Census

As indicated in the data above, the share of owner-occupied housing units in town is higher than the county average. The reported vacancy rates for both Eden and Lamoille County should be viewed with consideration that the region supports a large number of seasonal homes that may be vacant several months during the year. Eden’s median household income (15-percent lower than the county average) has numerous implications for local housing, most notably the need for affordable housing units in town (as discussed in the next section).

Affordable housing

The Vermont Department of Economic, Housing, and Community Development (DEHCD) defines housing as affordable when the costs (such as rent and utilities, or mortgage payments and taxes) are no more than 30-percent of the income for a household earning 80-percent of the county’s

median. The data shown in **Table 4** estimates the median household income in Lamoille County to be \$50,447. At eighty percent of this median income (\$40,358), an affordable monthly housing payment for Lamoille County households is approximately \$1,000 per month. Assuming a traditional mortgage, a household with an income of approximately \$40,000 could afford a home valued at ~\$136,000 or less. By comparison, **Table 5** shows the average 2025 selling price of residential properties in Eden. In 2025, the average selling price of a residential property on fewer than six acres (\$226,742) is greater than Eden’s affordability threshold.

Table 5: Residential Sales in Eden, 2024 and 2025	
Property Size	Average Selling Price
Residential <6 acres	\$226,742
Residential >6 acres	\$324,486
Source: VT Department of Taxes	

Possible avenues to expand affordable housing

One avenue to help provide affordable housing is for the town to support projects that create new affordable units. Lamoille Housing Partnership (LHP) in Morrisville is a regional, non-profit organization serving residents of Lamoille County in funding, managing, and developing attractive and affordable housing opportunities. LHP develops projects in Lamoille County that are financially feasible, meet social needs, and serve community interests. LHP is available to work with municipal governments, businesses, and individuals to discuss developing other affordable housing opportunities.

Long-term planning considerations

The Eden Planning Commission recognizes that deer camps and seasonal homes that have not already been converted into year-round residences could be an area for possible future additional housing inventory. Many such properties are accessed by private roads. There are currently 45 private roads or drives in the town of Eden totaling 13.645 miles of roadway divided into 314 parcels as of 2024. The town of Eden does not maintain any private roads or drives. It is the responsibility of the landowners on private roads to establish, build, and maintain their access to all Parcels during all 4 seasons. Maintaining safe accessibility by the landowner is critical for daily access as well as any emergency response.

In addition to the increased costs associated with maintaining private roadways, there are also environmental considerations related to the conversion of seasonal homes to year-round residences, especially surrounding Lake Eden and South Pond. When converted to year-round occupancy, structures are often renovated, creating larger areas of impervious surfaces and thereby potentially increasing storm water runoff. This runoff may carry pollutants into local water sources, while increasing the potential for flooding and downstream erosion. Year-round occupancy also increases the amount of sewage processed by on-site septic systems that can potentially leach into surrounding bodies of water if they are not properly maintained. Ultimately, these considerations represent an area of interest for future planning and housing studies in Eden.

Goals, policies, & recommendations

Goal: Provide options for residential development to accommodate a diversity of ages, income levels, and housing preferences. New residential development should respect the character of existing neighborhoods and provide for orderly growth compatible with the physical capabilities of the land, and existing facilities and services – all without sacrificing water quality, land conservation, or creating strip development.

Policies:

- Eden encourages land use patterns that are inherently more affordable by nature in cost efficiencies associated with construction, including shorter access roads, clustered units, and proximity to utilities and public services.
- Efforts of regional and non-profit organizations to provide increased opportunities for affordable housing ownership should be supported, provided they are consistent with other elements of this plan.
- Sites for manufactured and mobile homes are allowed in locations similar to those generally used for traditional single-family housing.
- Accessory apartments, self-contained additional living units which are built into or attached to an existing single-family dwelling, are permitted per state statute.

Recommendations:

- The Planning Commission encourages a variety of housing types and densities in Eden. If a project is subject to Act 250 Review, the District Commission should not find a development out of conformance with the Town Plan simply because it contains housing types or densities that differ from surrounding neighborhoods. The District Commission should not impose conditions to meet other Act 250 review criteria that result in increased housing costs.
- The town may work with the Lamoille Housing Partnership and others to investigate the development of affordable and/or senior housing in Eden.
- Private Roads and driveways should be designed to ensure suitable access for emergency service vehicles and conform to all Town policies.

Chapter 5: Energy and Utilities

Introduction

The use of clean, renewable energy is a topic discussed in local, state, national, and global conferences. The state of Vermont encourages the reduction of fossil fuels and has asked municipal planning commissions to investigate a shift to additional renewable sources. For many years, Eden residents have relied on a mix of renewable and nonrenewable energy for electricity and for home heating while transportation fuel has been almost exclusively non-renewable. Many residents do not have the option to change their sources of energy; however, they can conserve energy use and save money by implementing conservation practices.

The predicted continuous slow growth of the town, combined with technological and communication advances, will create an increasing demand for dependable electrical energy. Affordable electric rates coupled with available multi-phased power and adequate electrical capacity will be critical to planning for future housing, transportation, and economic development in Eden.

Eden is a small town and does not, at this time, require or encourage a large energy facility with extensive complex infrastructure to meet its energy needs. For projects beyond the scale of private generation, relevant aspects of Act 250 would have to be addressed including preservation of high priority interior forest blocks and wildlife corridors. Above all, development of energy generation should be balanced with maintaining the scenic beauty of Eden. For further information about local, regional, and state energy generation see the LCPC website.

Statement of objectives

As stated in the introduction in Chapter 1, the Eden Planning Commission is looking to follow these five guiding principles in the writing of this Town Plan. They are repeated again here to stress their importance in the writing of this new energy chapter. These principles are:

1. All residents must have their property rights both respected and protected;
2. The growth of Eden should occur in such a way as to enable residents to continue to live in town without undue tax burdens;
3. The natural environment should be protected and conserved to ensure that the resources we have today will be available for future generations;
4. A safe and healthy living environment must be maintained; and,
5. Eden's scenic, rural, small-town atmosphere should be preserved.

Vermont's Energy Goals

With the reality that climate change is here, the Vermont Legislature took action in 2005. With temperature changes scientifically linked to the climbing levels of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases in our atmosphere, the state set some ambitious goals for greenhouse gas reduction with the Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan Goals:

- Reduce total energy consumption by 40% by 2025, and by 50% by 2035.

- Meet 35% of the remaining energy need from renewable sources by 2025, and 45% by 2035.
- 40% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions below 1990 levels by 2030.

With an emphasis on locally produced renewable energy, these goals would reduce our dependence on imported fossil fuels, provide energy security and be potentially beneficial economically. These changes are a significant shift in energy policy, fuel supply, technology and infrastructure. To reach these goals, there needs to be a plan and so the Public Service Department completed Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan in 2022. This plan was a multi-phased process that identified the most promising policies and technology pathways to pursue in order to reach Vermont's energy and greenhouse gas reduction goals.

Where does our electrical energy come from?

Vermont has three types of electric utilities: investor owned utilities, municipal electric departments, and member-owned rural electric cooperatives. The seventeen electric distribution companies in VT range in size from small municipal electric departments with a few hundred customers to one large investor owned utility (Green Mountain Power) with more than 255,647 customers. Eden is served by the member owned Vermont Electric Cooperative with their main office in Johnson.

Energy and Transportation

The rural character of the town makes it necessary to have an automobile or truck for transportation. There are two local fuel stations in the town. With the majority of the Eden workforce commuting out of town for work and one many traveling outside the county, personal transportation is essential. There is no public transportation in Eden, but the creation of services like Micro-transit by RCT makes public transit a possibility for Eden in the future. Local residents can also take advantage of Park & Ride facilities in neighboring towns for carpool or ridesharing purposes and reduce the amount of fossil fuel used. Currently there is one formal Park & Ride lot near Eden, at the Hyde Park town offices just off of Route 15. An informal park and ride location could be explored within Eden should the need arise. In addition a charging station could be explored if there is a future shift to electric vehicles; however, private electric charging arrangements are preferred. The town has also seen an increase in the use of electric vehicles. AS of 2024 there is a reported 8 EV's in use in the town of Eden.

Residential and Commercial Fuel Use

The heating of homes and businesses is an important sector in energy plans. One locally renewable source for heat in Eden is wood. Although federal and state restrictions regarding setbacks and emissions exist for external wood furnaces, called Outdoor Hydronic Heaters in federal regulations, many local residents heat with wood in furnaces and stoves. Solar power has also been used effectively for a few homes for both heat and water. Other sources of home heating fuels include oil, gas, kerosene, and electricity.

According to some studies the use of electricity for heating homes and commercial structures will increase in the future. Use of biomass, hydro, solar, and wind as sources of power for home heating can be explored for private use and for small scale shared arrangements within Eden.

Electricity and Infrastructure

Eden has one active transmission line starting at the border with Belvidere in the northwest corner of town, running along Route 118 to a sub-station at 308 Belvidere Road, just west of the junction between Route 118 and Route 100. From there, the transmission line heads south along the side of state highway Route 100 to Hyde Park.

There is an additional leg of the transmission line that was first used when the Vermont Asbestos Group mine was in operation. This transmission line, now owned and maintained by Green Mountain Power, runs from the old mine site along North Road about 1-mile veering south-south-west through a heavily forested area. The line then runs mostly parallel along Shover Road from just north of the junction between Shover Road and Hutchins Lane straight south to the substation, about 2 miles.

There is also a 3 phase power line that starts near the junction of Griggs Road and East Hill Road. This line crosses Route 100 just north of Eden Mills Village and proceeds south along Route 100 to the Eden-Hyde Park town line.

The lines that provide Eden with power for all residents and businesses alike are part of the state-wide network that includes 31 miles of high-voltage lines (>230 kV) and 1,134 miles of low-voltage lines (<230 kV).

Electrical Generation in Eden

There has been a considerable increase in the number of solar installations in town since the last Town Plan. The number of residential installations has increased from 4 to 33 as of 2025. In addition to the smaller scale residential sites is the community-based project, Eden 3E, a ground mounted fixed rack on Old Deuso Rd with a 120 kW annual generation capacity and an annual output of 144,014 kWh. As a member of Eden 3E, the Town of Eden has benefited with cost reductions for electricity at the Town Clerk's Office, the Town Garage and the Lake Eden Recreation Area. An additional larger solar generation site was constructed in the Eden Gravel Pit along Rt 100 since the adoption of the last Municipal Plan. This site is a 499.5 kW array with 34-watt panels in 9 rows of various lengths. There currently are no wind generation locations in town.

Solar Development at the Vermont Asbestos Mine Site

A 2013 study determined that during potential future site remediation, up to 150 acres could be configured to accommodate solar photovoltaic (PV) arrays. Such a project could provide excellent jobs, develop the idle land that cannot be used for other purposes due to contamination, mitigate and minimize any environmental impact of the abandoned mine site and provide this rural area of the state with a clean, renewable source of power and more than meet Eden's goals for renewable generation by 2050.

The Vermont Asbestos Group (VAG) site has several different locations in Eden and Lowell with potential for installing large solar arrays, including a 2.2 megawatt (MW) array on the waste-rock area, a 4.6 MW array in the areas where there are currently buildings, and/or a 11.6 MW array on the south facing slopes of the Eden and Lowell piles. This large property is also an advantageous site for potential solar generation as there is an active transmission line already in place. Although all of the designated areas identified by the feasibility study for development are not in the Town of Eden, solar at the mine could be a big win-win for both towns. This approach to the former asbestos mine could be a positive way for the State of Vermont to address the site and costs of remediation as it would be generating income for continued reclamation.

Looking towards the future

As of 2025, the Town of Eden is has an energy committee with 3 open positions working for the good of the town. The Eden Energy Committee, EEC, was appointed by the Eden Selectboard in 2015. The committee adopted the following mission statements:

1. The committee will focus on energy conservation and reduction of our carbon footprint in, and for, the benefit of the residents of Eden.
2. The committee will support regional efforts, in cooperation with other municipalities, for energy conservation and development.

The Town of Eden will work with the Energy Committee and the public to:

1. Determine how much electricity generation would be appropriate for the Town.
2. Design projects that would help meet state goals, improve reliability and energy independence for Vermont.
3. Identify locations for renewable energy projects in Eden after landowners have agreed, the Town of Eden government is supportive, and the placement makes sense for transmission from the perspective of the utility.

Goals, policies, & recommendations

Goals:

To provide energy, whether for heating, electricity, or transportation, in a safe, reliable, and efficient manner, and to generate energy from local, renewable sources, provided these sources are economically

viable and environmentally sound.

To promote energy efficiency and conservation in the design, construction, and maintenance of all municipal, residential, commercial, and industrial buildings.

Policies:

- Eden supports the use of residential installations of wind and solar to generate electricity, provided scenic and aesthetic concerns are met.
- Renewable generation development should avoid ridgelines, especially those visible from roadways and high density developed areas such as the Lake Eden shoreline. Any ridgeline development should be set back from the edge of the hill and have a forested buffer to protect the view from the valley.
- Development around the natural scenic resources identified should be sited and constructed in such a manner as to retain the natural scenic beauty of the area. Removal of the natural vegetation on a development site should be minimized and structures should be screened or hidden from view as best as possible.
- Within subdivisions, planning for transmission lines should be strongly weighted in favor of underground placement to achieve the scenic objectives of this plan.
- Energy efficiency will be included as a factor in municipal construction, purchases, and use.
- Outdoor lighting, especially parking areas, should use cutoff fixtures to reduce the amount of light pollution and to allow lower wattage bulbs.

Recommendations:

- The Planning Commission encourages the Selectboard and School Board to conduct energy audits of all municipal buildings to identify opportunities for savings.
- Builders and homeowners should check with Efficiency Vermont for energy standards and conservation opportunities for new construction.
- The Selectboard should participate in all Section 248 Public Service Board hearings to ensure local concerns are met.
- Encourage the State of Vermont to include neighboring towns in the decision making process regarding the siting of industrial power generation installations.
- Work with The Lamoille County Planning Commission to identify funding to implement energy efficiency upgrades to municipal buildings.

Chapter 6: Economic Development

Local employment characteristics

Historically, the foundation of Eden’s economy has been its natural resource base, which supported various scales of farming, timbering, and milling through much of the 19th and early-20th centuries. By the early-1900s, the town also experienced an influx of economic activity associated with the establishment of an asbestos mine along the town’s northeast boundary with Lowell. The asbestos mine was a staple industry of the regional economy for many decades and employed as many as 175 workers by 1981. Mining operations gradually diminished during the 1980s amid health and environmental concerns and the mine closed in 1994. At various points in the town’s history, Eden was also home to multiple factories, hotels, restaurants, and a casino.

Today, the most recent data from the Vermont Department of Labor indicates the total number of employed residents in Eden is 824. These residents do not necessarily work in the town of Eden. The largest employer is currently the Eden Central School, with the remainder of the local workforce spread among a small number of retail, agricultural, and construction businesses. In the coming years, as the reach of mobile broadband penetrates further into rural Vermont, there will be a corresponding increase in opportunities for telecommuters and home-based businesses to operate from outlying areas of the state. This will contribute to a more diverse local employment base and likewise increase the potential for entrepreneurship and small business start-ups.

Table 13 shows that the average wage reported incorporates both full and part-time workers. To protect the confidentiality of individual businesses, more detailed wage data for a population as small as Eden’s is not available. The average wages are based off of estimates based on Local and state-wide data. In 2025, the unemployment rate in Eden was 6.2%. Despite long-term instability in labor markets, Eden residents remain employed in a diversity of occupations and professions. The American Community Survey from 2005-2009 (the most current available data) reported the following industries as the largest fields of employment for the town’s workforce, estimated at 651:

- Educational services, and healthcare and social assistance (29.6-percent)
- Construction (16.4-percent)
- Retail trade (13.7-percent)

Journey to work

Local commuting data is often analyzed to classify towns as job centers, average communities, or bedroom communities. Job centers are those towns with more jobs than members of the resident

Table 13: Local employment characteristics in Eden (2010-2025)			
	2025	2015	2010
Private Sector			
Establishments	9	13	13
Employees	28	39	27
Average Wage	~\$60,000	\$22,956	\$17,645
Public Sector			
Establishments	3	3	3
Employees	44	51	60
Average Wage	~\$50,000	\$34,838	\$27,205
Source: VT Dept. of Labor			

workforce; bedroom communities are defined as having more than two-thirds of the resident workforce leaving the community for employment. Eden can be defined by conventional measures as bedroom community, with the majority of residents commuting to other job centers within the region for work.

According to American Community Survey estimates from 2022, Eden's workforce commutes to a wide range of employers scattered across the state. Roughly speaking, about one-quarter of the workforce is employed in Stowe and Morristown; another quarter is employed in other areas of Lamoille County, including Eden; another quarter is employed in Chittenden County; and the remaining quarter is spread across the state, including places as far away as Rutland and Bennington. This data underscores the economic importance of the state highway network in safely and efficiently circulating commuters throughout the region.

Rural public transit is being expanded within Lamoille county as well. Rural Community Transportation (RCT) has created a taxi like service for residents within their service area. This service are currently does not include Eden, but their goal is to serve all of Lamoille County within the next 10 years. If public transit it made available in Eden, the workforce and economic development data will likely be impacted.

Poverty

The U.S. Census Bureau defines annual poverty thresholds for households across the country, based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI). Established by the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics, the CPI is defined as the average price paid for an assortment of commonly consumed goods at a given time. It therefore fluctuates with changes in the price of gasoline, groceries, and other essentials, and is often used as a rough cost of living indicator. While imprecise, the CPI and associated poverty rates provide a useful basis for comparing trends in income and poverty across regions. Estimates from the American Community Survey (2020) indicate the poverty rate in Eden at 8% and Lamoille County at 8.6%.

Long-term economic development variables

Ultimately, economic development does not occur within the boundaries of a single municipality, but rather in a broader regional context. Eden residents purchase goods and services in town and from neighboring communities, which in turn create new economic opportunities for other residents of Lamoille County and beyond. To the same extent, the hundreds of visitors who come to Eden to enjoy the serenity of the area also support local businesses during their stay. Planned expansions at Jay Peak and proposed development in the Newport area may create new opportunities for Eden based businesses and residents. Thus while all communities strive for a vibrant local economy, different scales of development are appropriate for different types of communities.

Outdoor Recreation

Outdoor Recreation is an important economic driver within the State of Vermont. The ski industry is a major economic force in nearby communities, notably Jeffersonville, Stowe, and Jay. Expansions at the Jay Peak Ski Resort may provide opportunities for economic development in businesses directly related to recreation, as well as for other businesses that might sell products or provide services to visitors.

Smaller scale outdoor recreation-based opportunities, such as the Eden Dogsledding Center, VAST trail

system, Catamount Trail and Long Trail, are already located within Eden. Lake Eden, the Green River Reservoir, and other ponds and streams are also attractive areas for visitors interested in bird watching, swimming, boating, fishing, and other recreational activities.

Road bicycle touring is increasingly popular during the summer months. Formal and informal bicycle tours along Route 118 and Route 100 have the potential to connect Eden with Jay Peak to the north, Smugglers Notch Resort to the west and Stowe Mountain Resort to the south. Cyclists would be inclined to stop at businesses along the route for food, provisions, and lodging. Development of such tours could be hampered by the narrow shoulders on some areas of Route 118 and Route 100. Expansion of these shoulders should be considered an important economic development strategy.

A recent survey by the US Fish and Wildlife Service and US Census Bureau shows that Vermont ranks first among the lower 48 states in participation of its residents in wildlife-related recreation, including hunting, fishing and wildlife watching, with 62 percent of our residents enjoying these activities and resources. Residents and nonresidents spend \$744 million annually in Vermont in pursuit of these activities. Hunters alone spend more than \$292 million in Vermont annually, according to a survey conducted in 2013 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Census Bureau. Wildlife-based recreation represents a potential economic driver for Eden. However, given that a growing percentage of Eden's forestland is in public ownership, Eden will only benefit if traditional activities such as hunting and fishing are allowed to continue on these "conserved" properties.

Agriculture and Forestry

There are no longer any dairy farms in Eden. The low price of milk has been an incredible challenge for the dairy industry for many years. The emergence of new agricultural products however has led some to say that Northeastern Vermont is experiencing an "Agricultural Renaissance." Some new agricultural products include grass-fed beef, direct-to-consumer vegetable farming, seed and nursery production, and specialty products such as cheese and bread. The growth and popularity of "micro-breweries" in the region may create opportunities for producing hops. Both traditional and emerging agricultural products represent opportunities for Eden landowners. Eden farmers can also utilize new, digital tools such as *your farmstand* on the www.vtfarmtoplate.com website, an online farmers' market that connects consumers with local agricultural producers.

Along with traditional backyard sugaring operations there have been a number of new large scale sugaring operations established within Eden's boundaries.

Eden has a large, forested land base. Over the last several decades, many of the large sawmills in Lamoille County have closed, partially due to increased international competition and lower demand for timber in the housing market. Currently, while some timber is milled locally, the remainder of the raw timber produced in Lamoille County is exported for milling. Increasing the amount and types of forest products processed in Eden could provide local employment as well as an incentive for landowners to maintain active forestland. While it is unlikely that a large, traditional sawmill would be located in Eden, expansion of small "backyard" mills, portable mills, firewood suppliers, cottage furniture makers and wood turners all represent opportunities to process timber products. Some Eden

based businesses have also begun to market “non-timber” forest products, such as leeks and fiddleheads.

Construction Industry

As noted earlier in this chapter, many Eden residents are employed in the construction industry. Construction at Jay Peak and other resorts, renovation and expansion of camps and second homes, and new housing development all represent opportunities for Eden residents employed in the construction industry. This industry was particularly hard hit by the decline of the housing market at the onset of the “Great Recession,” in 2008. In the height of the downturn, Eden’s unemployment rate exceeded 14 percent. Identifying new opportunities that utilize the skills of residents in the construction industry should be a priority for regional and state workforce development organizations.

Home-Based Businesses

The recent initiative to bring hi-speed broadband internet access to Eden could represent an economic boom to the town. High-speed internet access is increasingly essential not only for remote businesses considering moving to Eden. High-speed internet is a vital tool for growing the local economic base and will make Eden more attractive to home-based businesses, telecommuters, the cottage software and web development industry, the creative economy, and even manufactures who increasingly rely on broadband for product specifications and advertising.

Regulatory Environment

Ultimately, the local and state regulatory environment is a determining factor in where businesses chose to locate. To this point, Eden has not elected to adopt any land use regulations. However, development proposals that exceed specified thresholds are subject to state review under Vermont’s land use law, Act 250. Proposals for the installation of various forms of infrastructure, energy generating systems, and telecommunications facilities are also subject to review by the Vermont Public Service Board (PSB), under the Section 248 statute. The Town of Eden has the opportunity to participate in both Act 250 and Section 248 hearings to advocate for the interests of the town and its residents. The goals and policies set forth in this plan are considerations in both the Act 250 and Section 248 processes. Therefore, it is important for the town to maintain a plan that incorporates specific language, expressing the community’s position on how Eden can grow and develop. As the economy continues to evolve, public input should be collected and reviewed periodically so that Eden is prepared to accommodate the character and scale of development desired by its residents.

Goals, policies, & recommendations

Goals:

To encourage a diverse and sustainable economy, through the provision of essential public infrastructure and participation in state regulatory proceedings.

For Eden to have a balanced and diverse local economy that provides rewarding job opportunities.

Policies:

- The town supports initiatives that will make farming and forestry more economically viable into the future.
- State owned properties and land “conserved” using public funds should be actively managed and remain open to public use. Active management includes, but is not limited to, forest management (including timber, maple, and other forest products), agricultural production, and recreational uses.
- The Town supports industries that utilize local resources to produce value added products.
- The development of appropriate industries and businesses, that utilize the skills of the local labor force, are encouraged.
- The Town supports proposals that will provide workforce training to improve opportunities for residents in new and existing businesses.
- The Town supports existing and proposed businesses that provide jobs.
- Economic development at the expense of the environment is not encouraged. Businesses and industries shall not degrade or endanger air and water resources.
- The Town supports recreational use of Eden’s land base and bodies of water, including, but not limited to, swimming, boating, fishing, snowmobiling, mountain biking, hiking, snow-shoeing and cross country-skiing.

Recommendations:

- Eden should lobby the Vermont Agency of Transportation to ensure appropriate maintenance of Routes 118 and 100 commensurate with increased traffic volumes (cross-referenced in the Transportation Chapter)
- In order to support recreational tourism, the Town should advocate for expanded, paved shoulders for cyclists along Route 100 and Route 118. Shoulders should be included in plans for repaving of both routes. (cross-referenced in the Transportation Chapter)

Chapter 7: Transportation

State & local highways

In Vermont, state highways bear a route number and are maintained by the VT Agency of Transportation (AOT). Eden's state highways are Routes 100 and 118. All local roads are classified according to their importance and general use (*Class 1-4*), and usually have a town highway number. This system is used to determine the amount of state highway financial assistance provided to each community. *Class 1* roads are extensions of the state highway system, have a state route number and are the responsibility of the town to maintain. Eden does not currently have any *Class 1* roads within its boundaries. *Class 2* roads include major transportation corridors between towns, usually carrying a larger volume of local and regional traffic. Eden's class 2 roads are East Hill Road and North Road. *Class 3* roads— such as Blakeville Road, Knowles Flat, Shover Road and Warren Road – are classified as secondary town highways that primarily carry only local traffic. Finally, *Class 4* roads are seasonal, unpaved roads that may be impassable in snowy or muddy conditions. In accordance with state statute, towns are only required to maintain existing bridges and culverts on *Class 4* roads. In emergency situations, where residents living on *Class 4* roads are isolated by weather or other obstructions, assistance is possible.

Table 14: State and local highway mileage in Eden.					
Town	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	State Hwy
Eden	0.0	8.4	21.6	12.0	13.8
Source: VT Agency of Transportation					

In addition to the road categories described above, the Town of Eden also owns a 0.19-mile segment of right-of-way, officially classified as a “Legal Trail.” This trail, which connects Cemetery Road and Blakeville Road is not maintained by the town and is accessible only by foot or other non-motorized transit.

Traffic

As the region's population and tourism sector have grown over the last two decades, traffic in Lamoille County has also increased.

Table 15: A comparison of observed Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) counts on major highways in Eden (2020-2022)			
Observation Point	2020	2024	% Change
Rt. 100, Hyde Park town line to VT118 intersection	4,585	5,125	11.8%↑
Rt. 100, intersection with Barrows Rd./Camp Rd. to Lowell town line	2,555	2,973	16.4%↑
Rt. 118, VT100 intersection to Knowles Flat Rd	1,047	1,220	16.5%↑
Rt. 118, intersection w/ Knowles Flat Rd. to Belvidere town line	635	722	13.7%↑
Source: VT Agency of Transportation 2022 AADTs			

Table 15 on the previous page shows the traffic counts at sites on Routes 100 and 118. Changes in traffic volumes, both up and down, can sometimes be attributed to changes in the economy and vehicle fuel prices, detours or road closures and may affect where people travel.

As the data in **Table 15** suggests, overall traffic volume increased on most state roads since the previous 2020. Eden residents have also observed a marked increase in heavy truck traffic, especially along Route 100. Two factors in this change are the growing number of tractor trailers going to and coming from the Casella landfill in Coventry (approximately 22 miles north). Daily between 17 and 20 tractor trailers of trash travel through town from Burlington to Coventry. Two trucks per day come from Hyde Park and 2 trucks per week come from Stowe. Relative to an average automobile, heavy trucks have a greater impact on the community in terms of noise, emissions and road surface deterioration. With these and other changes, the negative traffic impacts– from a financial, safety and a quality of life standpoint– are more pronounced than ever before.

Ultimately, there do not appear to be any highways or intersections in town that fail to provide an adequate level of service from the perspective of circulation and congestion. While Eden’s major businesses and public services are located along Routes 100 and 118, they are generally not cause for traffic congestion. All facilities have adequate, available off-street parking; and are not a cause for concern at this time.

Maintenance of the local transportation network

In addition to approximately 30 miles of town highways, Eden is responsible for maintaining a network of bridges and culverts that assist in the conveyance of storm water runoff and ensure the safe passage of motorists, pedestrians and other travelers. General maintenance of the local transportation network is the responsibility of the Eden Highway Department, staffed by 2 full-time and 4 on-call employees. The Eden Highway Garage is located on Route 100. Additionally, the State of Vermont Agency of Transportation (AOT) District 8 garage – housing equipment and materials for state highway maintenance – is located on Route 118.

Regular maintenance activities in Eden include the grading and ditching of roads, replacement of culverts, and winter snow removal. Due to the high cost of bridge and culvert repairs, the town relies heavily on state aid and grants for such work. Potential funding sources include the State AOT programs such as: Better Roads, District Class 2 Highway Paving, District Structure Assistance, Bicycle/Pedestrian Program, and the Transportation Alternatives Program. Other sources that may have funding for eligible projects include the ANR Ecosystem Restoration Program and various State emergency preparedness and mitigation programs. The town has adopted the Vtrans 2019 Road and Bridge Standards. These standards have provisions to ensure that all maintenance on town highways is completed with proper drainage, ditching and construction techniques. These standards are also incorporated into eligibility requirements for emergency funding. Eden is familiar with the importance of a resilient transportation network and how highway infrastructure is susceptible to flooding. Eden has received emergency funding to mitigate damages from multiple storm events. The importance of road and bridge standards are also reflected by the rule making process under Act 64 (in progress), specifically the

drafting of the Municipal Road General Permit. Eden has been compliant with the MRGP since its first adoption. The town partnered with Lamoille County Planning Commission in 2019 to do a full inventory of the hydrologically connected segments in Eden. Since then, the town has used this data to prioritize road projects for yearly maintenance. The town pursues grant opportunities specific to maintaining hydrologically connected segments each year through the Grants in Aid program. The Better Back Roads program is another one the town regularly applies for to continue to maintain these road segments. The state has required that each town do a re-assessment of their hydrologically connected segments by the end of October 2027. The town has acquired grant funding to pay for that inventory to be completed.

Alternative and multi-modal transportation

According to estimates from the Census Bureau’s American Community Survey 2022, more than 93-percent of residents commute to work by personal automobile– 83-percent drive alone. As a rural community, Eden residents have limited opportunities to utilize non-motorized transit. However, to the greatest extent practical, the town encourages residents to utilize alternative modes of transportation, such as walking, bicycling, snowmobiling, and riding the available public transit offered in the county. In 2011, Vermont enacted “Complete Streets” legislation, mandating that designs for new and renovated paved roads consider the safe accommodation of motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians of all ages and abilities. Examples of design elements encouraged through the Complete Streets program include:

- Adding and maintaining sidewalks that are connected to public services;
- Improving lighting, signage and pavement markings; and,
- Installing curb ramps and sidewalk seating where appropriate.

Eden is supportive of the concept behind Complete Streets as there is pedestrian traffic along Routes 100 and 118 especially around Lake Eden, Eden Central School and the US Post Office. Presently, these state highways provide only very narrow right-of-ways for walking or bicycling, and pedestrian connectivity and is a major safety concern. To this end, the town strongly encourages the AOT to consider installing wide shoulders to act as bicycle-pedestrian lanes along Routes 100 and 118 as part of any future road surface upgrades. In addition to improving pedestrian safety, bicycle lanes would serve as a tourism amenity, especially to the increasingly popular “bicycle tours,” which bring visitors to Lamoille County throughout the spring, summer and fall months.

Air & rail travel

The nearest passenger rail service for residents of Eden is provided through AMTRAK, with a station in Waterbury and Essex (32 miles and 40 miles respectively) from the town center. The stations are stops on the daily route, “The Vermonter,” which runs from St. Albans to Washington, D.C. with stops in New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore.

Eden residents also have access to private and charter aviation services through the Morrisville-Stowe State Airport on Route 100 in Morristown. Airport Master Plan implementation (a plan for facility improvements) was published in 2018. Commercial airline service is available through Burlington International Airport (BTV) in South Burlington (45 miles from the town center), offering direct flights to destinations across the eastern United States and beyond.

Public transportation

Eden is not directly served by any regular public transit routes. The nearest available service is provided

by Green Mountain Transit (GMT) and Rural Community Transportation (RCT), through their Stowe/Morrisville Area routes. Currently, these routes include several circulators between major destinations in Morrisville and Stowe, as well as the Route 100 Commuter bus, connecting Morrisville to Waterbury. Rural Community Transport (RCT) provides service to Lamoille County (including Eden) with non-fixed routes and on-demand services including programs for elderly, disabled, and others with transportation needs for medical appointments and shopping. On-demand special services are available in Eden upon direct request to RCT. On an as-needed basis, numerous human-service organizations in Lamoille County also provide transportation services to assist Eden residents, including:

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

The RCT Rides Micro-transit program is also available to anyone within the service area in Lamoille County. Currently the program is available to those traveling within Morrisville, Hyde Park Village, Johnson Village, and Elmore. This service provides on demand transit service to all users in the service area for a fare-free taxi-style experience. Users can expect the service to make multiple pick ups that are traveling in a similar direction. This service is not limited to medical appointments or restricted by Medicaid eligibility like other programs offered in Lamoille County. Due to the reduction in fixed route services in the county, Micro-transit provides a more targeted service in fuel efficient cars rather than buses. Through implementation of the RCT Transit Development Plan (2024) the service area of this micro-transit service area will first be expanded to include all of Cambridge, Johnson, and Morristown. The expansion would then look to cover Elmore, Wolcott, and extend into Caledonia County. Finally, the Towns of Hyde Park, Eden, Belvidere, and Waterville will be included in the service area. Once the full Transit development plan is implemented, all of

Lamoille County will be served by RCT Micro-transit. This expansion process is anticipated to happen over a 10-year time frame. For more information on Micro-transit service in Lamoille County visit <https://www.riderct.org/>.

Rideshare & carpooling

According to estimates from the American Community Survey 2022, approximately 10-percent of Eden residents utilize a carpool as a primary means of transportation to work. As previously noted, the commuting destinations of Eden residents are generally clustered along major transportation corridors, such as Route 100 (north towards Jay and Newport, south to Stowe and Morristown) and Route 15 (east towards Hardwick and St Johnsbury and west to Cambridge and Chittenden County). Accordingly, there would appear to be additional carpooling opportunities for Eden residents, enabling commuters to save money, conserve energy and reduce demands on the local transportation infrastructure. To facilitate more ride-sharing, several neighboring municipalities have worked with AOT to construct designated “park-and-ride” facilities. If resident interest exists, LCPC is available to work with the Town of Eden to designate one or more such carpool lots. Although there is no official “park-and-ride” lot, there are multiple places where a vehicle can be parked safely when coordinating transportation with another driver. An additional AOT program, Go Vermont, is able to provide assistance with vanpooling coordination, including the use of a van.

Recreation and non-motorized travel

Both the Catamount Trail and Vermont Association of Snow Travelers (VAST) trails pass through Eden. The Catamount Trail, a cross-country skiing path that spans the entire length of the State, crosses town north of Green River Reservoir State Park and runs east along the hills of Eden, before entering Lowell. VAST trails also pass through various parts of town. Both systems provide winter recreational opportunities and potential walking or hiking trails during other times of the year.

In 2015, following several years of planning, a 17-mile segment of the former Lamoille Valley Railroad was redeveloped into a year-round, multi-modal recreation path, known as the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT). The redeveloped trail passes through the neighboring towns of Hyde Park and Johnson and has already begun to attract new visitors to the region. The County, State, and Towns have continued planning efforts since the last Municipal plan and in 2024 the entire length of the LVRT was considered open for use. The LVRT now spans 93 miles from St. Johnsbury to Swanton and is the longest rail-trail in New England. In addition to designated recreation paths, scenic highways also represent a tourism and leisure amenity in Eden and elsewhere throughout the region. Vermont Route 100 is a renowned fall foliage drive, while Route 118 offers stunning views of Belvidere Pond (also known as Long Pond) and Belvidere Mountain. These highways provide visitors with a window into Eden and preserve the scenic, rural image of the town.

Regional transportation planning

In July 1992, the Lamoille County Transportation Advisory Committee (LCTAC) was formed. The LCTAC is comprised of appointed representatives from each town in the County and several non-municipal members. The purpose of the LCTAC is to provide recommendations regarding regional transportation needs and concerns to the LCPC Board and Vermont AOT. The LCTAC serves as the eyes, ears and voice of communities in the regional transportation planning effort. A Regional Transportation Plan for Lamoille County was last adopted in 2022 as a part of Lamoille County Planning Commission’s Regional Plan.

The benefits to Eden of participating in regional transportation planning efforts, such as the LCTAC include: local influence on regional transportation planning and state capital budgeting processes; coordinated planning and project implementation with neighboring towns; and direct access to technical assistance on transportation issues.

Goals, policies & recommendations

Goals:

To provide a safe, efficient and diverse transportation network for the benefit of all residents and visitors.

To encourage opportunities for residents to access alternative modes of transportation, whether by carpool, public transit, walking or bicycling.

To preserve Eden's scenic highways and transportation corridors, promoting Eden as an attractive place to live, work and play.

To ensure adequate maintenance of important public corridors, especially Route 100 and Route 118.

Policies:

- New road and driveway accesses should have a suitable site distance so as not to create blind or hidden intersections with existing roads.
- All new driveways must have a permit and be constructed to conform to Eden's driveway policy.
- Land use and development must not adversely impact traffic safety and the condition of town roads and rights of way.
- Eden supports efforts to provide transportation services to assist elderly and disabled residents who wish to remain in their homes.
- Carpooling and vanpooling by local commuters to reduce transportation costs and impacts is encouraged.

Recommendations:

- The Town should assess road and culvert conditions on a regular basis to establish maintenance and repair priorities and to comply with state standards for funding assistance.
- The Selectboard should update road and bridge standards as necessary to comply with state standards. The Selectboard may periodically review policies that regulate the acceptance of private roads.
- Eden should lobby the Vermont Agency of Transportation to ensure adequate maintenance of Routes 118 and 100. These roads should receive higher priority in the State repaving schedule due to the impacts of heavy trucks transporting waste to the Coventry Landfill.
- In order to provide safe access for various transportation modes, the Town is an advocate for expanded, paved shoulders for cyclists along Route 100 and Route 118. Shoulders should be included in all plans when repaving both routes.
- Eden should continue to support the non-profit services that provide public transit and other transportation services at the regional level.
- The Selectboard should continue to appoint a municipal representative to the Lamoille County Transportation Advisory Committee (LCTAC) to coordinate transportation planning, road

maintenance and improvements with adjoining towns, and to ensure that the interests of the town are adequately addressed by the region and the state.

Chapter 8: Education

Lamoille North Supervisory Union

The Town of Eden belongs to the Lamoille North Modified Unified Union School District (LNMUUSD), a regional cooperative serving the towns of Belvidere, Eden, Hyde Park, Johnson and Waterville. Students within each town attend one of five local elementary schools. Students then advance to Lamoille Union Middle and High School, which are co-located along with the Lamoille North Supervisory Union (LNSU) district offices on Route 15 in Hyde Park (10 miles south of the Eden town center). The Green Mountain Technology and Career Center, a technical high school, is also located within this same complex in Hyde Park and serves students from additional towns such as Craftsbury and Hardwick.

Elementary Education

Children of Eden residents, from pre-kindergarten to 6th grade, may attend the Eden Central School, located on an 18-acre parcel off Knowles Flat Road, adjacent to Route 100. The school is operated by an 18 member collaborative board from the participating towns of the LNMUUSD. Representatives are voted in at Town Meeting. During the 2024-2025 school year, Eden Central School had an enrollment of 144 students.

The Eden Central School building was constructed in 1990 and has adequate capacity for current and projected near-term enrollments. In addition to classroom space, facilities include a library, kitchen, recreation fields and large multi-purpose room utilized for lunches, meetings, physical education and other activities. In 2010, Eden Central School became an American Red Cross certified shelter. During an emergency situation, the Selectboard can call upon the Red Cross to open the shelter to provide food, bedding and limited medical attention for temporarily displaced residents. Since the last plan the Elementary school completed an addition to the original building. This new space is used for offices for Special Educators, Counselors, and After School staff.

Middle & Secondary Education

As noted above, students living within the LNSU district may attend Lamoille Union Middle (grades 7-8) and High School (grades 9-12). Since opening a new wing of the building in 2002, the facilities are considered to have sufficient capacity to accommodate reasonable growth projections across the district. Current amenities at Lamoille Union Middle and High School include an auditorium, library, gymnasium, outdoor athletic fields and the Cricket Hill Trails system– a network of all-season recreation trails adjoining the campus.

Changes in student enrollment for both Eden Central School and Lamoille Union Middle and High School (LUM/HS) are shown in the table below.

School/Year	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2024-2025
Eden Central School	133	140	131	130	144	127
Lamoille Union Middle and High School	113	111	126	105	95	Unknown
TOTAL	246	251	257	238	238	

Source: Lamoille North Supervisory Union

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

Post-Secondary & Adult Education

In addition to GMTCC, which offers multiple courses eligible for college credit, there are two other local institutions offering college-level instruction in Lamoille County. Vermont State University in neighboring Johnson offers a variety of graduate and undergraduate degree programs, along with other continuing education services. The Community College of Vermont (CCV) also operates a campus in Morrisville, offering Associate Degrees, certificate programs and online instruction in various pre-professional concentrations. Finally, additional adult educational opportunities are available through Central Vermont Adult Basic Education (CVABE) in Morrisville, which offers instruction for students that are not enrolled in public schools.

Early Childhood Education & Child Care

Data tells us roughly 73% of Vermont children under the age of six all have parents in the workforce. While families rely on all different kinds of arrangements to meet the care and learning needs of their children, for many families, child care providers play a central role in the care and development of young children and allow parents to attend school or retain their jobs. Data also shows that, statewide, Vermont lacks sufficient licensed child care for infants and toddlers. This lack of access to early care is a significant challenge not only for Vermont's families with young children, but also for Vermont's communities and economy. (Source: Stalled at the Start. Vermont Child Care Challenge Report, June 2019).

In Eden, childcare services are provided by three licensed in-home child care operations and two licensed childcare centers. The licensed child care centers are the Eden Central School Pre-school and Eden After-School program both on Knowles Flat Road. The in-home child care centers are on Belvidere Road, Clifford-Thompson Road, and Ash Ln. These 3 in-home child care options can accommodate 26 children total. All licensed locations for child care will be listed on the Vermont Department of Children and Families online childcare directory under the Bright Futures Information System (BFIS).

Vermont statute mandates that a family child care operation serving six or fewer children is to be treated as a permitted single-family residential use within local development bylaws. While Eden has not elected to adopt zoning or subdivision regulations, the town fully supports early childhood education and child care services in all residential districts as described in the Land Use chapter of this plan. When developing site plans for new facilities, the town encourages property owners to address any potential traffic and pedestrian safety concerns within the neighborhood.

Future Concerns

The quality of instruction and educational facilities offered at local public schools are in many ways a reflection of a community's vibrancy. Eden seeks to balance the need to maintain high-quality

educational services within a tax structure that is not burdensome to current and prospective residents. Therefore, the town must carefully monitor demographic trends to ensure that future residential growth does not overwhelm the capacity of the local school system.

School Budget Trends

Overall, the cost of providing education has continued to increase throughout Vermont since the last plan update. Due to a multitude of changes to state funding formulas, it is difficult to make accurate comparisons of local tax assessments and per-pupil costs across school budget years

Goals, policies & recommendations

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

Policies:

- With the implementation of Act 46, Eden Central School shall continue to be an education center within our community.
- Eden supports efforts to broaden educational and vocational opportunities.
- Eden recognizes the importance to our community of high quality early education and daycare and supports organizations that provide these services.
- Eden supports the GMTCC and their efforts to broaden access to education for adult learners and to provide vocational opportunities for students.

Recommendations:

- Through its representative Eden should continue to have an active role on the Board of Directors of LUSD and in the new Lamoille North Unified Modified Union School District.

Chapter 9: Community Services & Facilities

As a small rural community, the Town of Eden's primary public service obligations are maintaining local transportation infrastructure and operating Eden Central School. Residents nonetheless have access to a multitude of public, private and municipally supported service providers to contribute to the health, safety and quality of life enjoyed by town residents.

Law Enforcement

The Vermont State Police (VSP) is the sole source of law enforcement coverage in Eden, providing a limited number of patrol hours, responding directly to emergency calls, and offering the services of criminal and investigative specialists, upon request. Starting on January 1, 2017, the town decided to contract with the Lamoille County Sheriff's Department (stationed in Hyde Park) for additional patrol coverage at an hourly rate as needed. This will provide coverage when the Vermont State Police are not available when immediately needed. LCSD serves as the emergency dispatch center for police, fire and rescue services across Lamoille County and a select number of neighboring communities. Eden residents also elect two constables, who have no direct law enforcement authority, but generally respond to domestic issues, such as animal control.

Fire Safety

Fire protection is provided by the North Hyde Park/Eden Fire Department (NHPE), a 25-member volunteer unit collectively serving all of Eden and northern Hyde Park. The NHPE fire station is located on Route 100 in the village of North Hyde Park, approximately four miles from Eden's town center. The department participates in the Lamoille Mutual Aid Association (LMAA), an organization of all eight county fire departments, designed to coordinate shared emergency response resources. Administratively and financially, NHPE is responsible to the Prudential Committee of Hyde Park Fire District #1. However, the department receives the majority of its funding from the Towns of Eden and Hyde Park. Operationally, NHPE is managed by an elected Fire Chief. The Town of Eden is also authorized to appoint a separate Fire Warden, responsible for issuing burning permits and monitoring forest and wildland fire vulnerability.

In addition to oversight of NHPE, the Hyde Park Fire District #1 operates a public water system within the village of North Hyde Park, which serves 48 customers (including the North Hyde Park Industrial Park) and five pressurized hydrants. A small portion of the fire district's wellhead protection area (WHPA) is located along Route 100 on the Eden/Hyde Park town line. There are no pressurized hydrants in Eden; firefighters rely on tanker engines, or one of eight "dry hydrants" located throughout town for water. A dry hydrant is a 4.5 to 6-inch diameter pipe with a threaded coupling that a fire hose can be attached to. The other end of the pipe terminates in a near-by pond or stream that the fire department can pump water from. The installation of these hydrants improves overall fire safety by providing a source of water closer to where it might be needed. Insurance companies do not credit dry hydrants as sources of water that would give the property owner any discount on their homeowners' insurance bill as the hydrants are not under any water pressure and the amount of water available may fluctuate.

Rescue/Ambulance Service

Emergency rescue services in Eden are provided by the Northern Emergency Medical Services (NEMS) squad – a division of Newport Ambulance Services – stationed in Johnson. Previously, the town was also served by the Eden Fast Squad, a local non-profit volunteer rescue service.

Emergency Coordination

The 1986 Federal Emergency Preparedness & Community Right to Know Act (EPCRA) established Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs), for the purposes of coordinating hazardous materials, emergency planning and preparedness activities throughout the country. Eden is a member of Vermont's LEPC 11 (serving all of Lamoille County) and is entitled to and has appointed a voting member to the committee. Under Vermont statute, the town must also appoint an Emergency Management Director (EMD) with the responsibility to establish a local organization for emergency management in accordance with the state emergency management plan. Resources for local emergency planning and coordination are available through LEPCs, Vermont Emergency Management and the Vermont Homeland Security Unit.

Health Care

The primary healthcare providers serving Lamoille County and the surrounding region are Copley Hospital and Community Health Services of Lamoille County (CHSLV), both located approximately 14 miles from Eden in Morrisville. Copley Hospital is a 25 bed critical access facility that serves as an emergency care center, along with providing in-patient and out-patient services, physical therapy, and rehabilitation programs. CHSLV is a federally-qualified health center, committed to providing quality medical, dental and behavioral health services to residents of Lamoille County, including the uninsured and under-insured.

Additionally, Eden residents may seek health services from among the many private practices and specialists within the region, or from other regional health centers including North Country Hospital in Newport (30 miles), Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital in St. Johnsbury (52 miles), Central Vermont Medical Center in Berlin (54 miles), The University of Vermont Medical Center in Burlington (56 miles) and the Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center in Lebanon, NH (110 miles). A range of additional health and wellness services—including family medicine, chiropractic and counseling—are also available through the Cambridge Regional Health Center (20 miles) as well as many other private medical offices.

Recreation

There are a multitude of recreational opportunities available in Eden in all seasons. During the spring, summer and fall months, residents and visitors enjoy activities such as hiking, bicycling and swimming. Lake Eden, in particular, is a major seasonal attraction, whose shoreline has many permanent homes, rental units and camps. The Lake Eden Recreation Area (owned and managed by the town) offers spaces for tents and camper trailers, a public beach, picnic areas, 2 covered pavilions and a modern bathhouse.

Lakeview Camping, also on the west side of the lake, was a privately owned campground with many sites for campers that has unfortunately closed as of the summer of 2024 and future prospects for this facility have not been disclosed.

The Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department maintains a fishing access area at the north end of Lake Eden. This $\frac{3}{4}$ acre state property offers public access right off of Route 100. The gravel access is used mostly for the launching of small water craft.

The Mt. Norris Boy Scout Reservation, operated by the Green Mountain Council since 1954, is a 1072.5 acre property in Eden offering summer Scout programs at the north end of the lake. Other public recreational facilities in town include the baseball and soccer fields at Eden Central School. Both the Long Trail and Catamount Cross Country Ski Trail pass through Eden.

During winter months, the aforementioned VAST snowmobile network connects Eden to virtually anywhere else in the state. Downhill skiers will also find several resorts only a short drive from town, including Jay Peak (23 miles), Smugglers' Notch Resort (25 miles), Stowe Mountain Resort (30 miles) and Owl's Head Mountain in Masonville, Quebec (36 miles). In addition, Eden is home to the Eden Mountain Dog Sledding Club offering tours, lessons and lodging.

The Babcock Nature Preserve is a 1000+ acre tract of boreal forest land owned by Vermont State University for scientific and educational study. The land was donated over a period of time by Robert and Anne Hanchett Babcock. There are 3 significant ponds, a bog, a lean-to for primitive camping and two enclosed small cabins and a larger open shelter. A mile-long gravel road provides non-motorized access to the area and is open to the public for recreational and educational use. One can also connect with the long trail as it comes close to the north end of the largest pond and another trail connects with an additional pond and continues on to Route 118.

Libraries

There is no municipal library in Eden. Eden residents have access to all public libraries in Lamoille County and beyond. The general public also has access to the Willey Library and Learning Center on the Vermont State University-Johnson Campus. The Library and Learning Center allows the general public access to circulation and reference services. Additional features include a 24-hour study room; three media booths for use of videocassettes, vinyl recordings and compact disks; a two-story reading room; six study offices; a children's room; and two seminar rooms. Students at Eden Central School may also borrow books and media from the school library. Eden residents can use libraries located in surrounding communities for free or for a nominal fee.

Solid Waste Facilities

Eden is a member of the Lamoille Regional Solid Waste Management District (LRSWMD), a municipal district formed to serve all of Lamoille County and the neighboring Towns of Craftsbury and Worcester. Funding for LRSWMD operations is covered entirely by user and service fees. As required by state law, LRSWMD has devised a 20-year plan for the management and disposal of all types of solid waste generated by its member communities. The Eden Town Garage serves as a drop-off location for recycling and bagged trash every Sunday, between the hours of 11am and 2pm. This drop-off is operated by a private company. From there, waste is

trucked to a landfill in Coventry. The life of this landfill depends greatly on the amount of waste sent to the facility. Through education, recycling, composting and other initiatives, the district strives to reduce the overall volume of trash generated within the district.

Water & sewer treatment

There are no central water or sewer systems available to Eden residents. Homeowners and businesses must obtain potable water through springs or private wells and all sewage treatment must be handled by on-site septic systems. Under regulations that went into effect in 2007, all permitting for septic systems, leach fields and wells is now delegated to the state. To comply, individuals must apply for a Wastewater and Potable Water Supply Permit from the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). Municipalities retain the right to adopt and enforce a local ordinance, providing it meets or exceeds state standards and can be administered by a licensed engineer. Any complaint or discovery of a failing septic system should be referred to DEC by the local Health Officer. Owners of failed systems will be instructed by DEC on how to bring their systems back into compliance.

Storm water

The term “storm water” applies to rain and snowmelt that runs off impervious surfaces, including roofs, driveways and paved streets, rather than infiltrating into the ground and natural water cycle. As it flows into streams and lakes, storm water runoff often picks-up pollutants, such as oils, fertilizers and sediment. Excess storm water also contributes to erosion and increases stream volumes during peak storm events. Larger municipalities may attempt to mitigate the negative impact of excess storm water runoff through the creation of storm sewers, and even storm water treatment plants.

Beyond the network of culverts and ditches that serve the local transportation network, Eden does not maintain any storm water infrastructure. However, developers and property owners may implement any number of affordable storm water management strategies, often referred to as “low impact development” (LID). For a community of Eden’s size, the most appropriate residential-scale storm water management techniques include the installation of rain gardens and other plantings, particularly on steep slopes and other areas prone to erosion.

Municipal Properties

According to the Grand List, the Town of Eden owns fifteen properties. Municipal properties are not taxed. The table below shows the value of the land and structures on each parcel.

Name	Parcel ID	Acres	Address	Land	Structure
Dodge Cemetery	05.01.46	0.65	Route 118	\$9,670.00	
Dodge Cemetery	05.01.45.02	1.19	Route 118	\$16,490.00	
Cemetery	05.01.48	3.7	Belvidere Rd	\$4,440.00	
Corey Pond	06.01.02	9.8	Off North Road	\$8,550.00	
Historic School Property	10.01.56	11.5	Route 100	\$42,700.00	
Old Gravel Bank	11.01.60.01	1	Shover Road	\$11,440.00	
Eden Corners Cemetery	11.01.68	9.8	Cemetery Road	\$59,360.00	\$2,360.00
Oldest Town Dump	11.01.95	3	Cemetery Road	\$3,600.00	
Town Clerk Office	11.01.99.01	2.7	71 Old Schoolhouse Rd	\$50,840.00	\$128,810.00
Town Garage	11.01.99.02	10.4	3625 Route 100	\$60,000.00	\$111,200.00

Beach (LERA)	11.02.04	9.32	5054 Route 100	\$397,500.00	\$227,690.00
Across from LERA	11.02.30	0.1	Route 100	\$13,760.00	
Jenny Shover	11.02.47	0.4	Route 100	\$10,080.00	
Old Town Dump	11.02.59	17	South Pond Road	\$36,980.00	
Old School site	14.01.05	0.25	Tree Farm Road	\$300.00	
Total Acres		80.81	Non-taxable Values	\$725,710.00	\$470,060.00
Total Non-taxable Value					\$1,195,770.00

Additional Non-taxable Properties

Listed below are 7 additional properties in Eden that are not required to pay any property taxes.

Name	Parcel ID	Acres	Location	Land Value	Structure \$
Eden Central School	10.01.56.01	18	140 Knowles Flat	\$211,610.00	\$744,020.00
Eden Cong Church	11.02.36	0.3	20 Ingalls Road	\$30,000.00	\$152,970.00
Eden Historical Society	10.01.56.02	1	2009 Route 100	\$30,500.00	\$75,550.00
GMC Boy Scout Camp	07.01.02	110.5	Route 100	\$95,400.00	
GMC Boy Scout Camp	12.01.01	843	83 BS Camp Road	\$1,244,800.00	\$332,800.00
GMC Boy Scout Camp	12.01.20	30	83 BS Camp Road	\$31,600.00	
GMC Boy Scout Camp	06.01.13	118	North Road	\$74,930.00	
Total Acres		1,122.85	Non-taxable Values	\$1,718,840.00	\$1,305,340.00
Total Non taxable Value					\$3,024,180.00

The total value of all non-taxable property in Eden, both municipal and other properties is **\$4,219,950.00**. This represents 2.6% of the total Grand List.

Other Public Lands

Table 16 below contains a listing of prominent state-owned lands within the town. While state parks and conservation areas serve as an amenity to both residents and visitors, the transfer of land from private to state ownership significantly reduces local tax revenue, which is necessary to support essential services. Comparatively, Eden already has a large percentage of lands in state ownership; therefore, as a general policy, the town does not support state ownership of any additional land in Eden, unless the impact on the local tax base is mitigated.

Table 16: Prominent state-owned lands in the Town of Eden			
Agency or Department	Description	Acreage	Use
Dept. of Forest, Parks & Recreation	Long Trail State Forest	~2,525	Recreation (hiking)

Dept. of Forest, Parks & Recreation	Green River Reservoir	~2,226	Electrical generation, recreation
Dept. of Forest, Parks & Recreation	North of Whitney Lane Bridge	~1.0	No identified use
Dept. of Forest, Parks & Recreation	Marjorie Drive	50	No identified use
Dept. of Fish & Wildlife	Wild Branch Management Area	~410	Recreation (hunting & fishing)
Dept. of Fish & Wildlife	Lake Eden Dam	~0.25	Dam facility
Dept. of Fish & Wildlife	Eden Access Area	~0.74	Public access to Lake Eden
VT State Colleges	Babcock Nature Preserve	~1,089	Research, nature preserve
Agency of Transportation	District 8 Garage	~2.9	Maintenance, operations
Agency of Transportation	Natural Spring	~0.2	Conservation
Total		6319.09	
Source: Eden Grand List			

Land that is in public ownership and subject to property tax may participate in the Payment In lieu of Taxes Program (PILOT) that may reduce property taxes if all criteria are met. This program is designed to compensate towns for lost revenue from any property tax reductions. The Agency's PILOT program for lands administered by the Lands Administration Division and the valuations are determined by the [Department of Taxes, Division for Property Valuation and Review \(PVR\)](#). The Agency's PILOT payment is calculated at 1% of the fair market value as determined by PVR, with the exception of some lands that were enrolled in the Use Value Appraisal Program as of 1999.

Power generation & transmission

At this time, there is one active solar powered community-generating facility on Old Deuso Road in Eden. Specific policies pertaining to the siting of energy facilities have changed due to recent legislation and have been outlined in detail within the Energy chapter. High-capacity electric transmission lines (33-35 kilovolts) run along Routes 100, 118 and along Shover Road coming from the old asbestos mine. The Vermont Electric Power Company's (VELCO) 2009 long-range transmission plan does not identify any reliability concerns within Lamoille County. Due to the minimal amount of commercial and industrial activity in Eden, there are no anticipated transmission capacity concerns at this time although future alternative generation proposals might challenge the transmission infrastructure.

Financing & future needs

The breadth of community facilities and services is naturally greater in urban settings than in rural areas. Town government must work to balance an appropriate level of public services within a property tax structure that is not burdensome to residents – both present and prospective.

The highest priorities of rural municipalities are the town budget, maintenance of town highways and management of the local school district. General concerns associated with transportation and school budgeting include unfunded mandates, declining tax revenues and the increasing cost of infrastructure maintenance associated with stricter regulations, inflation related to the cost of materials and greater demand for services. From a long-term perspective, continued residential growth in Eden could feed demand for additional public facilities such as a community center, school expansion or centralized water system. Ultimately, such decisions are several years out on the horizon and the town is currently focused on maintaining current service levels to ensure that Eden remains an affordable place to live and work.

Goals, policies & recommendations

Goal: To ensure adequate facilities and services are available to protect and enhance the lives of the residents and visitors of Eden.

Policies:

- All wastewater treatment systems must meet State standards and receive a state wastewater permit before construction begins.
- All wells must meet State established isolation distances.
- All residential development shall be accessible to emergency vehicles.
- Eden supports any reasonable proposal to locate a community health or dental facility.
- The development of day care facilities and other related services will be supported.
- Human services should be delivered locally to the extent feasible.
- Eden will continue to work with neighboring communities to ensure Eden residents have access to libraries.
- Eden's cemeteries shall be maintained with respect and dignity and have sufficient capacity to support future need.
- Eden supports efforts to improve public and private recreational facilities.
- Eden's residents and businesses will responsibly dispose of solid waste including efforts to reduce the amount of waste generated and increase recycling.
- All projects should maintain water quality in Eden's lakes and streams through proper treatment of storm water runoff.
- Before any purchase of land to be held by the public or the state, the entity should meet with the town to discuss any anticipated loss of value from the Grand List.

Recommendations:

- The Health Officer and Selectboard should report any failed wastewater systems to the state for compliance with state wastewater regulations.
- The Selectboard should review police contracts annually to determine the best coverage for Eden.
- Child care facilities should comply with State regulations.
- The town may support, through annual appropriations, the efforts of regional human service providers.
- The Selectboard should review local solid waste, junk and health ordinances to ensure the proper regulations are in place to protect the public health, safety and welfare.

Chapter 10: Water Quality and Flood Resiliency

Water resources serve a variety of form and function. Lakes and rivers support numerous recreational and economic activities including swimming, fishing and boating. Groundwater and reservoirs supply homes and businesses with potable water; and wetlands store floodwaters, while filtering natural and man-made contaminants. Bodies of water also provide irreplaceable habitats for a variety of aquatic and riparian plant and animal communities. Water systems serve as repositories for runoff and seepage, including (potentially) leaching septic systems and underground storage tanks. Pollutants can also be introduced into the water through the illegal dumping of chemicals. Contaminants may kill fish and plants, negatively impact existing and potential drinking water supplies, and may preclude recreational activities. Water resources also have the potential to impact human built structures and infrastructure through flooding and erosion.

Rivers and streams

Eden is fortunate to have abundant riparian resources. The town's numerous brooks, streams and rivers helped shape the local landscape. Most of the rivers and streams in Eden contribute to the Lamoille River watershed, the majority of which drains into the Gihon River flowing south to join the Lamoille River in Johnson. Additional waters contributing to the Lamoille River watershed begin at the Green River Reservoir and Wild Branch or North Branch. Eden also has smaller portions of town that drain into 2 other watersheds. Along the northern border with Lowell, streams drain north into the Missisquoi River watershed and the northeast corner of Eden provides headwaters for Seaver Brook, part of the Black River watershed. Ultimately, both the Lamoille and Missisquoi watersheds are part of the Lake Champlain drainage basin, while the Black River is part of the Lake Memphremagog drainage basin.

Lakes and ponds

Eden is also fortunate to have numerous bodies of water throughout town that support both public and private recreational opportunities as well as plant and animal habitats. Eden has three bodies of water greater than 20 acres, as identified by the Vermont Lakes and Ponds Inventory (1981) and six smaller ponds of at least ten acres.

Name of lake/pond	Surface area	Est. Depth	Elevation	Drainage Basin
Lake Eden	194 Acres	40'	1,239'	2347 Acres
South Pond	103 Acres	66'		
Belvidere Pond (Long Pond)	93 Acres	6'		723 Acres

All the above bodies of water are regulated by the Shoreland Protection Act passed by the Vermont Legislature effective July 1, 2014. This regulation pertains to any cleared area or impervious surface within 250 feet of the mean water level on bodies of water greater than 10 acres in size.

Eden's most prominent aquatic feature is Lake Eden, located adjacent to Route 100. Lake Eden has a fully developed shoreline of both permanent residences, seasonal homes and campsites as well as water frontage for the Boy Scout camp and the Lake Eden Recreational Area owned and managed by the Town of Eden. Present uses of the lake include fishing, swimming and boating. The Lake Eden

Association, a non-profit volunteer organization dedicated to the preservation of Lake Eden, together with the Town, operates a seasonal “greeter program” to welcome visitors at the State Boat Access and helps to educate all visiting boaters on preventing the spread of Eurasian Milfoil. The Lake Eden Association works to reduce nutrient and sediment runoff into the lake, improve the water quality, control the infestation of Eurasian Watermilfoil, prevent other invasive species from entering the lake, protect native flora & fauna, promote safe boating/recreational activities, foster a strong sense of community through social gatherings, and lobby for property owner's collective interests at a local and state level. The Lake Eden Association has pursued funding to help pay for treatment of the Watermilfoil. These treatments include benthic blankets and hand harvesting. These physical treatments have slowed the spread of the Watermilfoil but the Lake Eden Association has begun pursuing chemical treatments as well. In August of 2025 the first round of herbicide treatment began.

South Pond is notable as the second deepest body of water in Lamoille County (estimated at 66 feet), behind only the Green River Reservoir (estimated at 93 feet deep). The northern and eastern shores of South Pond are developed with a low density of camps and residences supporting fishing, swimming and non-motorized boating. There is no public access to South Pond and the mostly undeveloped southern shore abuts the Green River Reservoir State Park.

Belvidere Pond (Long Pond), located adjacent to Route 118, is a popular fishing spot. Nearly all of the shoreline is under conservation through the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation. Eurasian Milfoil, an invasive plant that threatens native vegetation, is present in Belvidere Pond. There are 3 approaches to combatting Milfoil. Natural predators can be introduced including the weevil, *Euhrychiopsis Lecontei*, an herbivoric insect that eats the milfoil; a native moth, *Acentria Ephemera*, who feeds on the milfoil while at the same time hiding in its leaves; and a caterpillar that likes to eat milfoil called *Cricotopus Myriophylli*. Chemical control through herbicides has also been done but is very costly and is typically disruptive to aquatic ecosystems and not selective in the vegetation it affects. The third option is manual removal of the plant. The Eurasian Milfoil can be either pulled out or cut with a machine and removed from the water. This is not a long-lasting solution because milfoil grows very rapidly and it is virtually impossible to remove all of the plant in this manner. In order for this to be effective it must be repeated all summer long.

Other smaller ponds found in Eden, less than 10 acres (identified in the Water Resources map in this plan’s appendix) include Corey Pond, Gut Pond, Round Pond and Rush Pond. With the exception of Gut Pond (contiguous to South Pond), these smaller water bodies are generally undeveloped, or have limited development along the shoreline.

Wetlands

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

- 1) The presence of water at or near the ground surface;
- 2) The presence of water-dependent plants occurring on site; and
- 3) Common types of soil.

Wetlands serve many important ecological functions including flood and storm water retention, erosion

control, ground water recharge and wildlife habitat. Wetlands throughout the country have been inventoried by the U.S. Department of the Interior, producing a set of National Wetland Inventory maps for each municipality. These maps were created using aerial photographs and are useful in determining the approximate location and size of the wetlands. In cases where detailed wetland characteristics for individual parcels are desired, a site visit and survey are usually necessary.

Wetland regulations were first adopted in Vermont in 1990, later consolidated into legislation under Act 115 in 2004 and last amended effective August 1, 2010. The current system establishes a three-tier wetland classification system. The majority of wetlands in Eden are designated as Class II and protected from development by a 50-foot buffer. There are also some Class III wetlands in town with no delineated buffer. Class I wetlands, the most sensitive areas requiring a 100-foot vegetative buffer between any adjacent land development do not currently apply as there are no Class I wetlands located in Eden.

Riparian habitat and buffers

Vegetation—in the form of trees, shrubs, grasses and herbs situated along stream banks and river corridors—provides food and shelter for many wildlife species. The Gihon River corridor, for example, supports essential deer habitat. These and other riparian corridors should be preserved both as a matter of wildlife protection, as well as for the purpose of preventing sedimentation and maintaining stream bank stability.

Upland Forests

While discussions of water quality and flood resiliency usually focus on areas immediately adjacent to rivers, streams, lakes, and ponds, upland forests play a critical role in attenuating floodwaters. Forested land can absorb, filter and hold water much more effectively than cleared or developed land. Maintaining fragmented, upland forests is an important component of both water quality and flood resiliency. As discussed in the Land Use Section, this Plan identifies lands over 1,500 feet in elevation (excluding North Road and East Hill Road) as the Forest District, designated for forestry, watershed protection, wildlife habitat, and low impact recreation.

Floodplains

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) defines a floodplain as an area of land adjacent to rivers and streams that is subject to recurring inundation. Development within floodplains can have many potentially damaging consequences, as construction may obstruct the natural flow of water or displace soil and raise base flood elevations. Eden is among a minority of communities in Vermont that has yet to have had an official FEMA flood insurance study published and, therefore, does not have Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) for the town. Rather, Eden's maps are approximate Flood Hazard Boundary Maps (FHBMs), which do not differentiate between tiers of floodplain (floodway, floodway fringe, etc.) This is likely due to the limited extent of floodplain that exists in Eden, consisting only of a small area surrounding Belvidere Pond, as well as a corridor along the Gihon River along Route 100. The Eden Planning Commission began exploring the possibility of adopting a flood hazard bylaw to allow the town to join the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), which would enable residents to purchase federally-subsidized flood insurance. To date, the Town has elected not to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program. Currently there are 5 existing structures located within the 100-year

floodplain. Participating in the NFIP and any potential benefits to residents is likely outweighed by administration and enforcement costs. The Planning Commission is concerned that by enabling new development to purchase subsidized flood insurance, participation in the NFIP could actually lead to more development in the floodplain.

River Corridors

While the FEMA mapped floodplain is primarily related to inundation hazards, most flood related damage in Vermont is caused by fluvial erosion rather inundation. Fluvial erosion occurs as rivers and streams meander across the landscape, and can range from gradual bank erosion to drastic changes in river channel location and dimensions during a large flood event. The area in which a river or stream is likely to meander is referred to as a “River Corridor.” The VT Agency of Natural Resources has delineated “River Corridors” for all rivers and streams in Vermont. It should be noted that the State mapped river corridors may over-depict the actual erosion hazards in some areas and under-depict them in others. More accurate and up to date maps would need to be developed if they are to be used for regulatory purposes. The current maps may serve as a useful guide for identifying areas for further study.

Water quality

As a byproduct of Eden’s vast and well-preserved landscape of mountains, fields and forests, the town enjoys excellent water quality. All residents and businesses derive potable water from groundwater wells and springs. Accordingly, it is critical for the town to monitor activities that introduce contaminants into the ground, such as underground storage tanks, septic fields and agricultural activities (in the form of fertilizers and animal waste). Ultimately, substantial impacts to rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, wetlands and public water systems are subject to a range of state and federal regulations as described within this plan. While Eden does not enforce local development bylaws, the town does retain the right to participate in Act 250 proceedings and comment on development proposals—such as those impacting local water quality—based on the policies established throughout this plan.

Gihon River Corridor Management Plan

A detailed River Corridor Management Plan has been developed for the Gihon River. The river corridor planning team for the Gihon watershed is comprised of the Lamoille County Planning Commission, the Agency of Natural Resources, Bear Creek Environmental, local municipalities and landowners. This plan identified and prioritized restoration projects. These projects will reduce sediment and nutrient loading to downstream receiving waters such as the Lamoille River and Lake Champlain, will reduce the risk of property damage from flooding and erosion, and will enhance the quality of in-stream habitat. Many of these projects involve conservation and re-vegetation of riparian areas. Since many of these areas are privately owned property, coordination and collaboration with property owners will be especially important to implement these projects. The plan also identified undersized bridges and culverts that may be constricting the natural flow of water, as discussed in more detail below.

Road/River Conflicts

The term “Road/River Conflict Area” refers to areas where the natural flow of a river comes into conflict with the transportation network. Approximately 5% of the entire road network in Eden (5 road miles, including the local roads and state highways) is located in the 100-year floodplain or river

corridor area. These are areas with a higher likelihood for road/river conflicts. During a major flood event, these road segments may be overtopped with water or subject to washout which can compromise safety, disrupt the flow of traffic, hinder rescue efforts, and strand residents. Road/River conflicts can also cause dramatic damage to both the river and the roadway. For example, when a culvert is undersized, water may pond close to the road and undermine the roadbed. Undersized bridges and culverts may result in downstream erosion that destabilizes stream beds and banks and may even change the path of the stream, possibly damaging other roadways. Rivers may meander into roads, while roads may transport sediment and other contaminants into rivers.

The Town of Eden maintains inventories of culverts and roadside erosion and is working to reduce Road/River conflicts. In addition, the Gihon River Corridor Management Plan referenced above identifies several bridges and culverts that could be either retrofitted or replaced to reduce conflicts with the river. Before undertaking an effort as large as retrofitting and replacement of a bridge or culvert, the community will need to weigh all options and consider if it is the most effective means of addressing the issue or if there are other actions that are more cost effective.

Preparing for the Next Flood

Unlike many communities in Lamoille County, Eden has very few existing structures located in the floodplain. Even so, Eden is not immune to flooding. The Eden Hazard Mitigation Plan contains extensive background and data regarding flooding and other natural hazards. The Hazard Mitigation Plan is incorporated into this Plan by reference. **Table 17** below summarizes major flood and storm events that have occurred over the last ~20 years. Note that this table is not an exhaustive list and may not include information about more localized weather events. Events with “NA” in the damage column are events that the Town did not meet the FEMA damage threshold for reporting. This does not mean the town did not have damage, but that the town was not a part of a FEMA disaster declaration.

Table 17

Year	Type of Event	Public Assistance Funds Received
2023	Flooding	\$28,549.25
2020	Snow Removal	NA
2019	Flooding	\$938,312.42
2019	Snow Removal	NA
2018	Snow Removal	NA
2017	Flooding	NA
2017	Snow Removal	\$15,000.00
2017	Snow Removal	\$10,000.00
2016	Flooding	\$146,520.00
2014	Ice Storm	\$2,222.00
2014	Flooding	\$8,710.30
2013	Ice Storm	\$30,521.13
2013	Flooding	\$8,762.75
2012	Flooding	\$34,678.93
2011	Flooding	\$88,390.37
2008	Flooding	\$115,454.65
Source: FEMA Disaster Declarations		

Preparation is an important element of flood resiliency. Eden maintains an up-to-date Emergency Operations Plan to ensure that public officials and emergency responders are prepared for flooding and other emergencies. Adequately protecting homes and businesses against future flood damage requires a pool of contractors and design professionals with specialized skills in flood mitigation techniques, knowledge of FEMA rules and regulations, and experience working with “flood resistant” building materials. As noted in the Chapter 6: Economic Development, many Eden residents are employed in construction and construction related industries. While very few structures in Eden are located within the floodplain, there are many structures vulnerable to flooding in nearby communities such as Johnson and Jeffersonville. The growing demand for flood proofing may create a potential “niche” for contractors with these specialized skills.

Goals, policies & recommendations

Goals:

To preserve Eden’s water resources, including its lake reservoir, ponds, streams, rivers, wetlands, groundwater, and associated habitats. Where degraded, work to improve these resources in order to ensure water quality for drinking, recreation, and the environment.

To protect the health, safety, and welfare of the residents of Eden by discouraging development in flood hazard areas and river corridors.

Policies:

- Development within floodplain and river corridors should be avoided. If new development is to be built in such areas, it should not exacerbate the potential for any flooding or fluvial erosion. Agriculture, recreation fields, parks, and open spaces are all appropriate uses of flood hazard areas.
- Wetlands shall be protected from pollution, filling, and any other uses or activities that will result in their degradation or a reduction in its capacity to provide wildlife habitat, flood control and water storage. Any development related to wetlands shall adhere to state regulations.
- Existing floodplain encroachments caused by the transportation network should be mitigated when technically and financially feasible. This may involve upsizing bridges and culverts and/or restoring floodplain areas disturbed by past infrastructure investments.
- Development within or proximate to designated rivers and streams should follow Vermont Fish and Wildlife Guidelines for Stream Crossings and should protect and maintain a natural vegetative buffer.
- The Town of Eden encourages support for lake and pond association grant applications to monitor milfoil and other lake issues.
- Per State regulations, withdrawal of groundwater should not exceed the recharge rate over a reasonable period of time. No form of waste disposal or storage of possible contaminants should be permitted in high-water table and groundwater recharge areas.
- All construction should provide adequate erosion control per state guidelines and regulations.
- Agriculture and forestry must abide by State Guidelines (Accepted Agricultural Practices and Accepted Management Practices.)
- Upland forests should be maintained and managed to attenuate floodwaters.

Recommendations:

- Maintain signage at all boat accesses and public shore accesses to notify the public of Eurasian Milfoil and how to protect the lake.
- Educate lakeshore property owners about the importance of maintaining lakeshore vegetation.
- Work with the Agency of Transportation to upgrade undersized bridges and culverts located on the State transportation network. Work with the Lamoille County Planning Commission to have these highway structures added to the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).
- Identify funding sources to upgrade undersized bridges and culverts located on Town Roads.
- New bridges and culverts should be built to town and State standards.
- Work with landowners in the Forest District to maintain large blocks of unregimented, upland forest while ensuring that forestland ownership remains economically viable.
- In order to prevent additional property from being removed from the Town's Grand List, as an alternative to buyouts, Eden encourages elevation or relocation of existing structures within the floodplain or river corridors when possible.
- Work with regional partners to better map critical habitats and priority forest blocks in town to help prevent fragmentation.

Chapter 11: Natural & Productive Resources

Eden residents derive a vast amount of economic, recreational and scenic value from the town's natural resource base. The mountainous, heavily wooded landscape supports an abundance of rare and irreplaceable forests, wildlife and natural areas. These resources are integral parts of Eden's cultural history and identity and will be critical to the town's future prosperity. This chapter provides an inventory of Eden's natural and productive resources, alongside goals and policies to support sustainable conservation practices.

Identified fragile and natural areas

In 1976, the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) created an inventory of significant natural areas throughout the state. While a natural area designation does not necessarily preserve a site from development, it does act as a tool for increasing local knowledge of Vermont's important natural heritage. Today, many sites nominated to this list are also included in the state's Fragile Area Registry. The following sites within town have been noted for their local and regional significance:

Lake Eden: This body of water is the most prominent aquatic feature in town located adjacent to Route 100 at an elevation of 1,239 feet. Lake Eden has a fully developed shoreline of permanent residences, seasonal homes, camps, and public camping opportunities. The Lake surface measures 194 acres with a drainage basin of approximately 2,347 acres. Maximum depth reaches 40 feet.

Belvidere Pond: A 97-acre body of water (otherwise known as Long Pond) located on Eden's western boundary at the foot of Belvidere Mountain. The area contains features characteristic of a Pleistocene Mountain glacier and the pond's undeveloped shoreline and deep marshes also provide food and cover for waterfowl.

Babcock Nature Preserve: A 1,000 + acre tract of forestland in north-central Eden, owned and maintained by Vermont State Colleges. The preserve is open to the public and also serves as an

outdoor laboratory for environmental sciences. Both Big Muddy, Little Muddy Pond and Ritterbush Pond are located within the tract.

Big Muddy Pond: A 17-acre natural glacial tarn, located in a mountainous and heavily wooded undisturbed setting. The surrounding area includes prominent glacial features including kames, eskers, and drumlins.

Little Muddy Pond: A small pond within the Babcock Nature Preserve, which includes a number of beaver ponds layered upon a mountain slope.

Ritterbush Pond: Downstream from Big Muddy, Ritterbush Pond has a surface area of 14 acres and contains similar glacial features. It is also a valued scenic area, with the Long Trail passing along its western shores.

White Branch Swamp: This shrub swamp and bog is located along the White Branch of the Gihon River, east of Crooks Road. The area provides food and excellent cover for waterfowl that utilize it for nesting and during migration periods.

Beaver Meadow: This 6-acre deep marsh and shrub swamp is located along upper stretches of the Green River. The area also provides food and cover for waterfowl; as implied by the name, beavers are quite active in the meadow.

Devil's Gulch: A narrow ravine north of Bowen Mountain, the floor of Devil's Gulch includes massive boulders and thick fern stands, while also serving as a passage for the Long Trail.

Eden Notch: A relatively undeveloped mountain notch at an elevation of approximately 2,000 feet on the Lowell town line.

Green River Reservoir State Park: A 5,110-acre state park surrounding the Green River Reservoir—a 653-acre body of water, with a 19-mile undeveloped shoreline. The park and reservoir span the Eden/Hyde Park town boundary; the area is renowned for its remote and wilderness-like setting. While the majority of the reservoir shoreline is located in Hyde Park, 2,226 acres of the park are located in Eden, including the Upper Diggings—a 1,700-acre mapped deer habitat. The official website of the park is: www.vtstateparks.com/parks/green-river-reservoir

Mount Norris Scout Reservation: A 953-acre camp owned by the Boy Scouts of America, located south of Mount Norris on the northeast shore of Lake Eden. The reservation hosts scouts for week-long stays throughout the summer and has dedicated areas for swimming, fishing, hiking and archery, among other activities. Visit <https://www.scoutingvermont.org/mtnorris.html> for more information.

Critical wildlife habitats

Deer wintering areas

Vermont's deer herd requires a protected habitat to endure severe winter weather and heavy snowfall. Winter deer yards provide two features important to whitetail deer survival: shelter and food. Statewide, under average winter conditions, between 6 and 8-percent of Vermont's forestland is suitable for winter

deer range. Wintering areas do not change substantially between years and can be used by generations of deer over several decades, if appropriate habitat conditions are maintained. Eden's mapped deer wintering areas include the lowlands west of Route 100, the northern and southern shores of South Pond, and a corridor between Green River Reservoir State Park and East Hill.

Bear habitat

Bears also require large areas of uninterrupted forestland for breeding and travel between seasonal habitats. The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department prepared a map in 1989 to indicate general areas of black bear habitat throughout the state. According to this map, potential bear habitat exists throughout the town, outside Eden's more developed corridors along Routes 100 and 118, and Lake Eden.

Other critical habitat areas

The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department maintains an ongoing effort to identify and map special natural features in towns throughout the state. These maps demonstrate the locations of rare plant and animal species, significant wildlife communities, and other natural or fragile ecological areas. According to these maps, Belvidere and Big Muddy Pond have populations of rare flora, as shown in the attached Critical Habitat map. One noteworthy species, the Green Mountain Maidenhair Fern *adiantum viridimontanum*, flourishes most prevalently at the base of the tailing piles of the VAG mine. Additionally, the area surrounding the asbestos mine in Eden, Lowell and Westfield are rich serpentine soils, and support a wide variety of rare and endangered plants.

In August 2009, the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department, in partnership with other federal, state and local organizations, published a report titled *Critical Paths: Enhancing Road Permeability for Wildlife in Vermont*. In essence, the study reviewed major wildlife crossings along the span of the Green Mountains, provided policy recommendations to improve habitat connectivity, and reduce points of conflict with humans and vehicles. Route 118 between the Towns of Eden and Belvidere was identified as one of the study's priority crossings. The report noted this stretch of highway is commonly referred to as "Moose Alley." Other wildlife observed in and around this crossing includes deer, fisher, bobcats, coyotes, beavers, minks, skunks and raccoons.

Regulatory considerations

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

In 2016, Act 171 was passed by the Vermont legislature to encourage and address protection of high priority forest blocks and habitat connectors, while supporting the forestry industry. Municipalities are encouraged under Act 171 to prevent forest fragmentation and protect wildlife corridors. Forest fragmentation should be avoided or minimized for the health of the forest, wildlife, and communities within and downstream from the forests.

Working landscape

The Town of Eden recognizes that farm and forest-based activities are essential to the community's

economy and rural character. These prominent natural resource-based industries, including farming, logging, sugaring, forestry silviculture and outdoor recreation, are often associated with the term “working landscape.” Maintaining Eden’s working landscape is critical to the community’s long-term prosperity.

One mechanism helping property owners maintain working lands is the state’s Use Value Appraisal (UVA) program. UVA was established by the Vermont Legislature in 1977, in recognition of the fact that tax pressures placed on farm and forestlands were contributing to their development and fragmentation throughout the state. The program allows farm and forestland to be taxed on resource production value, rather than the value of the parcel’s development potential. Despite the fact that it was a popular program statewide, the growth of UVA enrollment was curtailed by a decrease in funding in 1991 and 1992, and an enrollment moratorium in tax years 1992 and 1993. During the moratorium, property owners enrolled in UVA program were allowed to withdraw from the program without penalty. Since that period, local enrollment has steadily increased. As of 2025, there were 66 parcels in Eden enrolled in UVA, totaling more than 21,511 acres, or 52.6-percent of the town’s land area.

Goals, policies & recommendations

Goals:

To maintain healthy conditions in natural areas, fragile areas, and areas with significant ecological value including wetlands, uplands, and critical plant and animal habitats; to ensure fragile and natural areas are protected and preserved; and to maintain the natural diversity of wildlife.

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

Policies:

- Eden supports voluntary efforts by private landowners to maintain and enhance wildlife habitat through the efforts of Act 171.
- Eden supports maintaining land for agriculture and forestry.
- Eden supports efforts to promote active land management through use and growth of e-commerce and telecommunications tools such as the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Landowner/Hunter Access Registry: <http://www.vtfishandwildlife.com/wildlife>
- Eden supports the reduction of forest block fragmentation.

Recommendations:

- As a result of living in Eden, many landowners have an ethic to be good stewards of the Land. More can be accomplished by supporting education of advice and assistance to all landowners with any natural or wildlife resource concerns than could be accomplished through regulations, such as the VT Right to Farm Laws..
- Given the large amount of State-owned land within Eden, public use of this land for recreation, wildlife management (including hunting), and timber management should be allowed and encouraged.

Chapter 12: Information Technology & Telecommunications

The availability of high-speed internet and mobile phone service is not only a quality of life amenity, but an essential public safety and economic development tool in the 21st century. Due to a variety of factors—including Vermont’s rural character, low population density and mountainous terrain—the state has yet to achieve full wireless telecommunications coverage. Today, Eden’s cell phone service coverage is intermittent. Currently there is not a cell phone service provider that offers contiguous service coverage in all of Eden. This chapter is intended to express Eden’s support for broader telecommunications access, while acknowledging the land use and aesthetic impacts associated with extending internet and mobile phone services.

2025 Broadband Coverage in Eden

Lamoille County has multiple fiber network providers, which deliver digital voice services and high-speed internet services. With the help from federal grants, the county should have universal fiber coverage by 2028. Eden was a beneficiary of the ongoing work from Lamoille Fibernet. More than 98% of residents in Eden are considered served by high-speed fiber internet. This is a resounding increase from the data in 2016 that showed 579 residential and commercial buildings (70%) were served by a broadband service of 4/1 Mbps or better and 251 residential and commercial buildings (30%) were underserved. The 2025 data from ([BEAD Final Project Area Eligibility](#)) shows that now less than 2% or 10 structures are underserved in the town. That means a total of 734 residential or commercial buildings served.

The Lamoille Fibernet continues to work with municipalities and The Lamoille County Planning Commission to achieve their service goals as outlined on their website ([Service Goals - Lamoille FiberNet](#)). These goals include:

- Provide access to reliable internet access service for every residential and business e911 address in our district with initial speeds of 100/100 mbps or better, and the capability to keep apace over time with the evolving service needs of our community.
- Pursue a logical network build-out while prioritizing service to unserved and underserved (currently, under 25/3 mbps) locations.
- If a location cannot be served feasibly by FTTP (Fiber to the Premises), we will consider other service options.
- Promote knowledge-sharing and partnerships that improve awareness of and access to benefits of quality, equitable internet such as telecommuting employment, online/remote education, health services, and community-building.
- As a community-owned organization, fiscal responsibility is a priority, but profit is not. We listen to our communities; use objective metrics and community surveys to gauge success, guide improvement and transparency, and hold us accountable. Create opportunities for the community to exercise control over what broadband service solutions look like by maximizing CUD ownership of last-mile assets as

possible.

- From planning to building to operations, we will remain sensitive to the local economy and natural environment.

The town of Eden is willing to work with local partners to help get the remainder of underserved residents connect to viable and reliable broadband.

Point telecommunications service

Point telecommunication facilities (or point-to-point networks) are those designed to provide services to a fixed-point, such as a home or business. Residents commonly have up to three-point facilities in their home: cable or satellite television, home telephone, and internet service. However, such point systems are swiftly consolidating, so that it is now possible to have a single-point telecommunication facility serving multiple functions: a cable line used for television, internet, and voice simultaneously.

Telephone

In many areas of the country, the hard-wired home telephone (otherwise known as a landline) is being replaced by mobile devices and web-based services, such as Skype. However, given the service inconsistency and lacking reliability of mobile devices and web-based services, most families still retain a landline in Eden. Consolidated Communications is the current home telephone service provider in town; Eden is part of the “635” service exchange, which also includes the Town of Johnson.

Internet

High-speed internet service can be delivered by one of several mediums—DSL, cable, fiber optic, satellite, or fixed wireless (WISP). At the time of this plan’s adoption fiber optic coverage is largely available in Eden. Other alternatives are generally considered less-than-ideal, either on the basis of cost (satellite) or performance (dial-up). In the end, comprehensive statewide broadband coverage is likely to be achieved initially through a wireless network. The Town of Eden recognizes that access to high-speed internet is a primary consideration for home-based businesses, telecommuters and vacationers who may consider Eden as a destination.

Telecommunications facilities

As a byproduct of the growing demand for telecommunications coverage, the state may still need to consider construction of additional fiber optic lines and wireless towers to extend service to Vermont’s dispersed population of residents and businesses. Although the Town of Eden acknowledges that its residents demand world-class telecommunications, they accept the fact that infrastructure will need to be built in adherence to the policies listed below:

- In order to minimize tower proliferation, developers should co-locate antenna on existing towers, whenever possible.
- To minimize conflicts with scenic values, facility design and construction shall employ the following principles:
 - A) Where feasible, structures should be sited in areas not highly visible to the traveling public, or from residential areas, historic districts and public lands and outdoor recreation areas, including hiking trails and beaches;

- B) Be located in forested areas, or be sufficiently landscaped to screen the lower sections of towers and related ground fixtures from public vantage points, such as trails, roads or water bodies;
 - C) Utilize materials, architectural styles, color schemes, lighting fixtures and other design elements to promote aesthetic compatibility with surrounding uses and to avoid adverse visual impacts;
 - D) Where prominent views of a site exist, be located downgrade of the ridge so as not to exceed the elevation of the immediate ridge;
 - E) Where construction of access roads is involved, to minimize visibility, be situated to follow the contour of the land and to avoid open fields or meadows;
 - F) To avoid peaks and ridges identified in the Historic, Scenic & Archaeological Resources chapter of this plan; and
 - G) No external lights.
- In planning for telecommunication facilities, consideration shall be given to the environmental limitations of any given site. Impacts of the use on wildlife habitat, soil erosion, forestry and agricultural lands, and similar resources should be carefully addressed. Projects that materially impact these resources shall be discouraged.

Goals, policies & recommendations

Goal: To support investments in telecommunications infrastructure that benefits the local economy, while avoiding negative environmental and social impacts.

Policies:

- Eden supports investment in telecommunications infrastructure in town, provided aesthetic concerns are addressed in accordance with the recommendations above.

Recommendations:

- Eden should participate in decisions related to development of telecommunications infrastructure at the State and Local level.
- Encourage growth of E-ventures for any type of home based business.

Chapter 13: Topography & Land Use

Eden's landscape is dominated by rolling hills and flowing streams. Elevations range from over 3,100 feet above sea level on the slopes of Belvidere Mountain, to a low of approximately 860 feet along the Gihon River, near the Hyde Park town line. The highest summit is Eden Mountain (within the Lowell Range) with a peak elevation of 2,640 feet (see the Elevation Map in the Appendix).

Topography

The hills and mountains of Eden provide a beautiful scenic character to the town. However, the factors that contribute to this effect also provide limitations to development. For decades, Vermont has established an upper limit for development at 2,500 feet. Areas above this elevation are typically slower to recover from disturbance and are at greater risk to erosion. All development activities, including forestry operations, require an Act 250 permit above 2,500 feet. The aforementioned Belvidere and Eden mountains are the only such locations in town. Future land uses over 2,500 feet should be limited to hiking trails and wildlife habitat. Logging should be permitted only with an approved forest management plan that will protect water quality and prevent soil erosion. Many communities in Lamoille County have also established a policy to limit or restrict growth above 1,500 feet.

Slopes

A second factor presenting potential limitations to development is slope. Steep slopes introduce complications when they are cleared for development and timber extraction, as downhill erosion increases as vegetation is removed. Slopes of greater than 30-percent over distances of more than 50 feet are generally considered unsuitable for development. Some soils (particularly clay) may be unstable even at slopes as shallow as 5 to 8-percent. Overall, Eden's soil characteristics are generally stable to at least 30-percent grade, provided they have some degree of vegetation cover (such as grass or trees). The Topographic Limitations Map (Appendix) identifies those parts of town with slopes greater than 20-percent. These areas impose limitations on residential development, due to conventional septic rules established by the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC).

Unlike lands above 2,500 feet, there is no state regulation of steep slopes, other than DEC septic and wastewater system permitting rules. Like other development-related issues, municipalities have the option to establish policies on slope within the Town Plan and other development bylaws, where applicable.

Vermont Asbestos Group Mine

The deposits of ultramafic rock on Belvidere Mountain were discovered to contain chrysotile asbestos in the late 1800's. A commercial mine was established in 1900 and ran, with some interruptions in production, until 1994. In 1975, the employees purchased the mine from the parent company, G-1 Holdings. At the time, it was the largest employee owned company in the United States.

Increased environmental and health regulations and decreased demand for the asbestos product finally closed the mine permanently. The site has been a desired destination for geologists, mineralogists and rock hounds as garnets, Vermont jade and additional unique minerals have been found there. It is also a unique ecosystem for botanists as it is the home of the Green Mountain Maiden Hair Fern *Adiantum Viridimontanum*, a rare and endangered plant that thrives at the base of the tailings piles, remnants of the mining process.

The community did consider the possibility of designating the Vermont Asbestos Group (VAG) site as an EPA Superfund site on the National Priorities list. The vote at Town Meeting in March 2012 in both Eden and Lowell was conclusive. Both towns voted against a Superfund site by substantial majority. With the mine now closed, any significant exposure to asbestos fibers is now well in the past. The VT Department of Health concluded that there are no increased incidences of disease related to asbestos exposure in Eden or any surrounding towns.

A feasibility study conducted by the National Resources Energy Laboratory in conjunction with EPA in 2013 showed potential of the site for development of a solar generation facility.

Ultimately, Eden received funding to implement projects in town as the result of a settlement related to the asbestos mine. Over the past few years the town has completed multiple road projects focused on storm water repairs on Griggs Rd, East hill, Knowles Flat Rd, and Boy Scout Camp Rd. this money was also used to implement a rain garden at the lake.

Eden's topographic and geographic characteristics have allowed for a rural, residential development pattern that has left preserved scenic ridgelines, riparian corridors and vast tracts of forestland and open fields. These natural resources are defining characteristics of the town and contribute to the community's vibrancy, economy and overall quality of life.

Assessment of Existing Land Uses

Eden's topographic and geographic characteristics have allowed for a rural, residential development pattern that has left preserved scenic ridgelines, riparian corridors and vast tracts of forestland and open space. These natural resources are defining characteristics of the town and contribute to the community's vibrancy, economy, and overall quality of life. These assets have attracted a growing number of residents to town, and it is reasonable to expect that Eden will experience continued residential growth in the near-term. For information on population and housing growth, refer to Chapter 2, Community Profile.

Future Land Use

The Town of Eden has not elected to enact regulatory measures, such as zoning or subdivision bylaws, to direct future land uses. However, in accordance with statute (24 V.S.A. § 4382), this chapter of the plan is intended to establish a vision for "prospective land uses, indicating those areas proposed for forests, recreation, agriculture, residence, commerce, industry, public and semi-public uses and open spaces reserved for flood plain, wetland protection, or other conservation purposes." This guide for future land uses in Eden is not regulatory in nature, insofar as it does not prescribe development standards for properties located in town. However, Act 250 criterion 10 establishes that development proposals triggering Act 250 jurisdiction must be in compliance with all duly adopted local and regional plans. Accordingly, this chapter does provide an opportunity to broadly characterize the types and scales of development appropriate in different areas of town.

The 2007 Eden Town Plan established six land use districts: Rural Residential, Eden Mills, East Hill, Shorelines, Forest, Natural Areas, as well as two Overlay Districts. Please refer to the Land Use map (Appendix) for specific district boundaries. Additional information on these non-regulatory designations is described in the following paragraphs:

Rural Residential

- *Description:* The Rural Residential district includes all lands not otherwise classified; generally, those below 1,500 feet in elevation between the Green Mountains and the Lowell Range.
- *Purpose:* This district is expected to accommodate the vast majority of future growth in town.
- *Present Land Uses:* Due to the large area of this district, it accommodates a diversity of land uses. It currently includes residential, agricultural, forest and other natural resource-based activities, as well as a limited number of commercial uses. Most developed lands are located along the existing road network.
- *Future Land Uses:* The district should continue to be used as described above. Additionally, future development must respect on-site environmental constraints, including slope, soil capacity and wildlife habitat. Preservation of open space for continued use in forestry and agriculture is also desirable.

Eden Mills

- *Description:* The Eden Mills boundary is established in accordance with the Eden Mills Historic District, designated by the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation.
- *Purpose:* This area represents the historic village center of Eden. Due to its proximity to Lake Eden, this area is expected to continue to be used for commercial and residential purposes.
- *Present Land Uses:* Eden Mills is currently characterized by residential, commercial and public land uses. Many structures within the district have historic value.
- *Future Land Uses:* This district should continue to be used as described above. Mixed-uses and commercial development providing services to Eden residents are encouraged in this district. Any development or redevelopment in this area should respect the historic character of the district. Improvements in pedestrian infrastructure would help connect properties to the recreational areas surrounding Lake Eden.

East Hill

- *Description:* East Hill Road is one of the few developed areas in town above 1,500 feet in elevation. The district includes all lands within 500 feet of the road, from the point at which it rises above 1,500 feet until reaching the Craftsbury town line.
- *Purpose:* East Hill Road is a Class 2 town highway that connects Eden to Craftsbury. However, the provision of services to this area can be expensive, given the high elevation and remoteness of the landscape.
- *Present Land Uses:* This area is currently used for residential purposes, but also includes agriculture and forestry.
- *Future Land Uses:* East Hill should continue to be used as described above. To avoid negative impacts on an already strained road (especially at the junction of East Hill Road and Route 100) future development should be limited to low density and seasonal dwellings. Forestry and agriculture, including value-added operations, may also occur in this district. Larger scale development is discouraged.

Shoreline

- *Descriptions:* The shoreline districts include all lands within 500 feet of the three major water bodies in town: Lake Eden, South Pond and Belvidere Pond (Long Pond).
- *Purpose:* Each of the three bodies of water is unique, but the overall goals of the district are the

same—to protect water quality and the scenic character of the surrounding areas.

- *Present Land Uses:* Lake Eden has a developed shoreline, with public access. Much of the residential development consists of seasonal camps, but year-round dwellings are becoming more common. The shores of South Pond are privately owned and developed at a far lower density. Lastly, Belvidere Pond or Long Pond has an undeveloped shoreline and is valued as a natural area.
- *Future Land Uses:* The goal for the Shoreline district is to allow the types of land uses found along each of the respective bodies of water to continue. As specific issues arise, they should be addressed, especially to the extent that they impact the water quality or scenic values of these areas. Any new development, redevelopment or clearing within 250 feet from mean water level will need to follow Vermont's Shore Land Protection Act and may need to obtain a permit from the State.

Forest

- *Descriptions:* The Forest districts (east and west) are generally lands over 1,500 feet in elevation, excluding North Road and East Hill Road, as well as areas on the “back sides” of these hills out to the Belvidere and Craftbury town lines.
- *Purpose:* These areas have been chosen to conserve forest and wildlife resources. They are considered difficult to develop, due to the presence of wetlands, steep slopes and shallow soils, or based on their distance from maintained town highways. In the Forest west area, there is also greater concern for the protection of scenic values, based on the nearby presence of the Long Trail.
- *Present Land Uses:* The Forest district is currently used for forestry and wildlife habitat. A limited amount of agriculture and residential development also exists, primarily in the Forest east area.
- *Future Land Uses:* The district should continue to be used for forestry and wildlife habitat. Forestry uses may include value-added operations such as onsite processing. Recreational uses with limited structures may also occur in this area.

Natural Areas

- *Descriptions:* The Natural Areas district includes separately designated Long Trail and Mountain areas. The Long Trail area includes the Babcock Nature Preserve and all the land within 500 feet of the delineated watershed line and Long Trail. The Mountain area includes all lands over 2,500 feet in elevation and are regulated by Act 250.
- *Purposes:* These areas are chosen for protection from development; no residential or commercial uses are allowed.
- *Present Land Uses:* The Natural Areas district is generally reserved for wildlife and recreation. There is limited existing development associated with the Babcock Nature Preserve, but it is intended for ecological research and protection.
- *Future Land Uses:* The district should continue to be used as described above. No development should occur in these areas.

Overlay Districts

Overlay districts are generally created to provide additional protections on the lands to which they apply, without changing the underlying land use designation. There are two identified overlays within Eden:

- *Flood Hazard Overlay:* This area consists of the FEMA delineated Special Flood Hazard Area

(SFHA), it is identified to protect the safety and welfare of residents and to prevent economic losses from flooding.

- *Wellhead Protection Overlay*: As noted in the Natural & Productive Resources chapter, a small portion of the well-shield area for the North Hyde Park public water system falls within Eden. This area is protected by public water supply regulations established by the state Department of Environmental Conservation.

Timing and intensity of growth

Future development in Eden should be conscious of the impact on the town's ability to extend and maintain public services, including but not limited to, local highways and educational facilities. The Town of Eden has a responsibility to its taxpayers to continue to provide the highest level of service, within a tax structure that is not burdensome to current or prospective residents. Future development—both residential and non-residential—should take place in a manner that is sensitive to this responsibility.

Goals, policies & recommendations

Goal: For development and growth in Eden to occur in a reasonable and sustainable manner so as to protect the natural resource base, use services efficiently and preserve Eden's rural character and historic settlement patterns.

Policies:

- Eden encourages development that provides economic opportunities and employment for Eden residents.
- The clustering and/or siting of development should be established in a way to replicate traditional patterns of development, to protect rural and scenic character, and to maintain contiguous tracts of resources and open land.
- All development within the town must follow state wastewater regulations.
- Further fragmentation of productive agricultural and forestland should be avoided. Continued access to productive forest and farmland will be encouraged.
- Earth resource operations (sand and gravel pits and stone/mineral quarries) shall comply with Act 250 regulations.
- Development in the floodplain is discouraged.

Recommendations:

- The Planning Commission should periodically review Eden's population and housing growth patterns, and population projections.
- The Planning Commission should review all Act 250 applications for their impact on the town. Where the application is determined to not conform to this Plan, the Planning Commission or Selectboard should participate in the Act 250 process in order to ensure the concerns of the town are addressed.
- Encourage forest landowners to continue to work with the County Forester.
- Encourage participation in Agricultural Extension Service programs.
- Eden should work with LCPC and other organizations to educate landowners about ways to minimize risks for development in Flood Hazard Areas.

Chapter 14: Implementation

Each of the chapters in this town plan establishes a set of recommendations to accomplish the goals and objectives. With many recommendations throughout this plan, there is no way each and every task can be completed. Over any time period, money or resources may become available to tackle an issue and the policies and recommendations will be in place to take advantage of them.

Implementation can take place in big and small steps. Some chapter recommendations can be undertaken over the course of a few years. With that in mind, the Planning Commission would like to recommend a few projects for the Selectboard and Planning Commission to accomplish in the next eight years. In this way this plan will hopefully lead to some direct actions and take the town a step closer to their goals for the future.

Recommended Actions for Implementation of the Town Plan

Over the next eight years the town, Planning Commission, and Selectboard should take action to implement parts of this plan.

Selectboard

One of the Selectboard's primary responsibilities is the road system and municipal infrastructure. Roads are an important factor in municipal taxes and help determine where future development is possible. Having clear highway policies helps the Selectboard decide on reclassification of roads, to what standards roads need to be built, and how much say the town has in the construction and location of driveways. Therefore, it is recommended that within the next eight years:

- The Selectboard should develop a basic road surface management schedule for budgeting needed road repairs and major improvements.
- The town should review State assessments of bridge conditions and develop a long term budget for road/bridge repairs. The Planning Commission encourages the Selectboard to develop a "rainy day fund" that addresses emergency repairs to roads, bridges and culverts.
- The Selectboard should continue to update road and bridge standards as needed.
- The town may consider purchasing the rights to a gravel pit or to purchase a property with sufficient gravel to provide for the town's needs in the future.
- The Selectboard should encourage the Vermont Agency of Transportation to make needed repairs and upgrades to Route 100 and 118.
- The Selectboard should encourage the State to provide funding for enforcement of violations of state regulations related to abandoned vehicles and junkyards.

Planning Commission

In addition to working with other groups and boards in town, the Planning Commission should undertake the following priorities:

- The Planning Commission should pursue funding, perhaps through a municipal planning grant program, to develop a strategy for moving forward with the goals of this Plan.
- If the number of persons moving into Eden becomes a major issue, the Planning Commission may consider growth management tools.

Other groups or individuals

Other groups were mentioned throughout this plan. The Planning Commission encourages groups to participate in the overall Goals of this Plan. These groups include:

- Eden Historical Society
- Eden Cemetery Association
- Local Officials
- Lamoille Housing Partnership
- School Boards
- Lake Eden Association
- A community based group working for children (currently reorganizing)
- Eden Youth Sports

How the Plan Relates to the Regional Plan and Adjacent Municipalities

The Eden Planning Commission and Selectboard look forward to cooperating with our neighboring towns to improve services and planning for all residents and visitors. This town plan is one step towards achieving this goal. The Planning Commission and Selectboard believe this Town Plan complements and enhances the efforts of our surrounding communities.

Hyde Park: Hyde Park is Eden's neighbor to the south. Eden and North Hyde Park share a volunteer fire department. Except along Route 100, the border between the two towns is sparsely populated. The two towns share portions of the Green River Reservoir State Park as well. North Hyde Park is the closest "village center" to Eden and is the site of the Vermont National Guard Armory. Growth in North Hyde Park Village and the North Hyde Park Industrial Park may create future opportunities and impacts for Eden residents. This town plan supports the Hyde Park Town Plan.

Johnson: Eden connects to Johnson along the southwest edge. Ober Hill Road and Tree Farm Road are roads connecting the two towns. One of Johnson and Eden's connections is the Gihon River, whose headwaters lie in Eden and whose confluence is in the village of Johnson. Johnson's Plan designates a forest conservation district above 1,500 feet elevation, primarily in the area around Laraway Mountain. This town plan supports the Johnson Town Plan.

Belvidere: Belvidere and Eden are connected via Route 118. The western border of town falls within the North Branch Lamoille watershed. Activities in these areas, especially around Belvidere Pond, may impact water quality downstream; therefore, it is important to residents in Belvidere. Belvidere's forest conservation district includes a large contiguous land area around Laraway Mountain for future forestry, wildlife and recreational opportunities. This town plan supports the Belvidere Town Plan.

Lowell: Historically, Eden and Lowell shared a strong connection. The VAG Asbestos mine straddles the line between the two towns. The question of designating the site as a "Superfund" was voted down by both towns at the 2012 Town Meeting. Route 100 and North Road connect the towns of Lowell and Eden. Both towns are encouraged to cooperate with the Vermont Agency of Transportation to make needed repairs and upgrades to Route 100. This town plan supports the Lowell Town Plan.

Montgomery & Albany: While technically adjoining communities, Montgomery and Albany share only a very small border with Eden, but no roads connect the towns. Albany Road connects to the Town of

Albany after crossing through the southeastern corner of Lowell.

Craftsbury: Craftsbury and Eden are connected via East Hill Road and the Square Road. Recent development in Eden and Craftsbury has increased traffic volumes on East Hill Road. Both communities are rural and conflicts in land use are not expected.

Regional Plan: The Lamoille County Regional Plan is guided by these overall objectives:

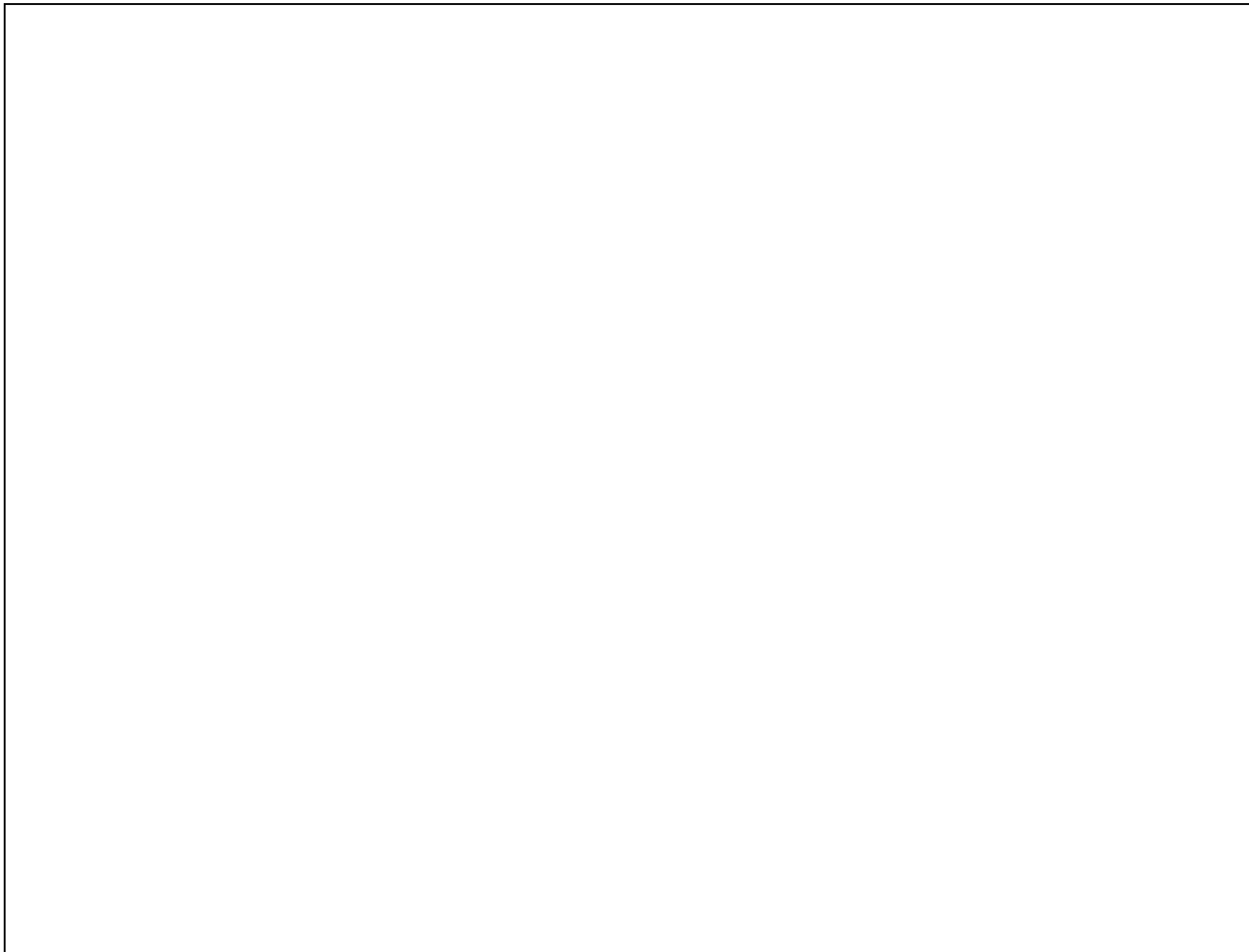
- Assist municipalities in the County in quality planning to guide future growth and mutual understanding among the region's municipalities and adjoining municipalities. •
- Ensure that planning decisions are educated decisions that are made at the local level. • Develop and provide information about Lamoille County and its communities to aid in the educated local decision-making process. •
- Facilitate the exchange of information and resources between local, state, and federal governments. •
- Balance the region's economy with the natural environment and resource base. • Support and encourage other local/regional organizations working towards the betterment of all of Lamoille County.

Eden strongly prefers that implementation of these Regional Goals occur through non- regulatory and non-compulsory means. These regional objectives are compatible with the Land Use Section of this Plan.

Appendix: Maps

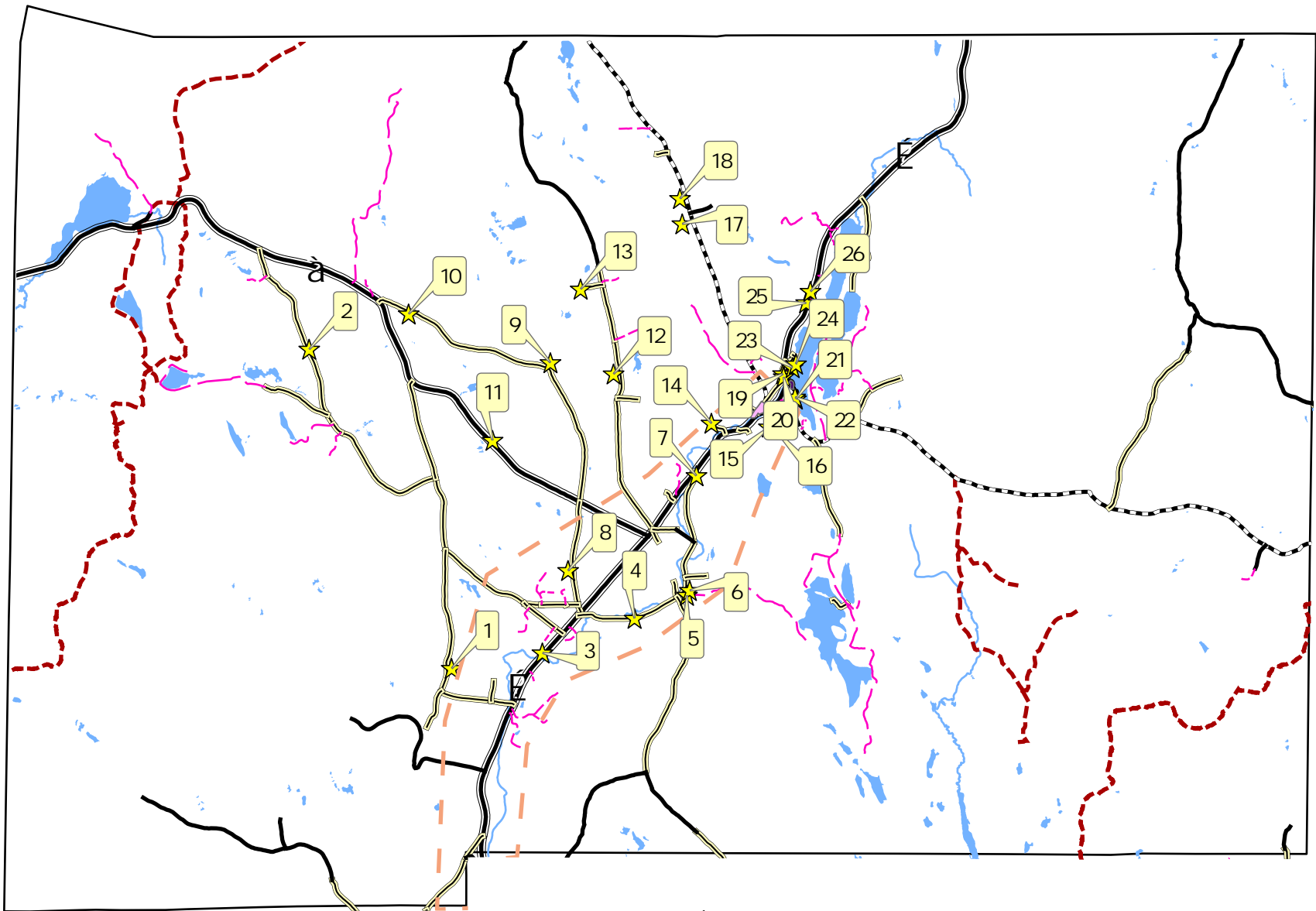
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7. Water Resources Map
8. Soil Resources Map
9. Suitability of Soils for Conventional Septic Systems Map
10. Elevation Map
11. Topographic Limitations Map
12. Land Use Map



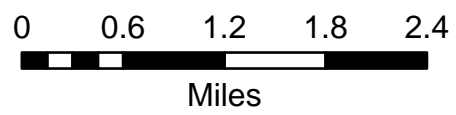
Historic, Scenic,
and Archaeological
Resources
Map
Eden, Vermont
Municipal Development
Plan 2025-2033

- Legend
- Historic Districts:
- Eden Historic Camp District
 - Eden Mills Historic District
- Historic Sites:
- 1. Former McKinley House
 - 2. Former Bill Cook House
 - 3. Huntley House
 - 4. O'Hear's Gun Shop - O'Hear House
 - 5. Nicheolls House
 - 6. Morin House
 - 7. Former Despault House
 - 8. Former Deuso House
 - 9. Carroll House
 - 10. Lanphear-Warren Barn
 - 11. Former O'Hear House
 - 12. Former Burke House
 - 13. Hutchins-Noah House
 - 14. Lanphear House
 - 15. Former Buchanan House
 - 16. Emory-Earle House
 - 17. Former Ludy House
 - 18. Bullmoose Mansion/Brown-Cheney Camp
 - 19. Earl-Y-Don/Gray/McAllister/Cubit/McAllister Camp
 - 20. Clark-Ceconci Camp
 - 21. Bay View- Dow Camp
 - 22. Crescent- Styles Camp
 - 23. Hunter-Miller Camp
 - 24. Lee Camp
 - 25. Tebbets Camp
 - 26. Former Hinds-Weightman House



- Area of Moderate to High Archeological Sensitivity
- Long Trail
- Road Class
- State Highway
 - Class 2 Town Highway
 - Class 3 Town Highway
 - Class 4 Town Highway
 - Legal Trail
 - Private Road
 - Stream/River
 - Lake/Pond

F



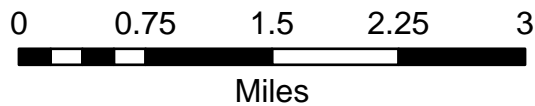
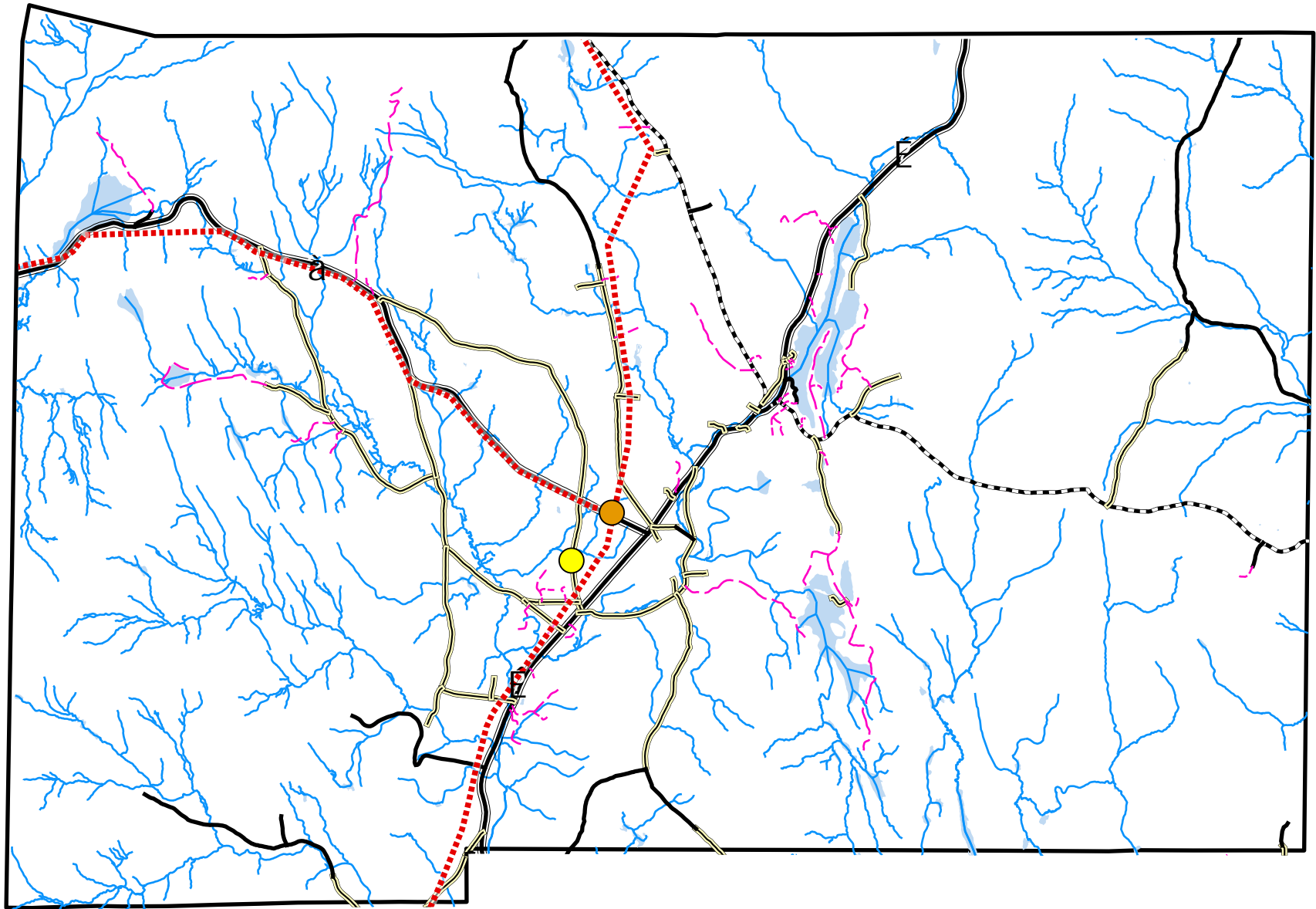
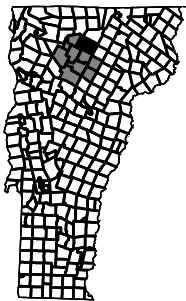
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SURFACE WATER: VT USGS Digital Line Graph Surface Waters - boundary lines, VCGI, 2021, VT USGS Digital Line Graph Surface Waters - area polygons, VCGI, 2021
HISTORIC DISTRICTS: VT State Register Historic Districts, ACCD, VCGI, 2020
HISTORIC SITES: Digitized by LCPC, 2007.Town of Eden Historic Sites and Structures Survey by the Division of Historic Preservation 1983.
LONG TRAIL: Trails, VCGI, 2022

Utilities Map

Eden, Vermont
Municipal Development
Plan 2025-2033

Legend

- Substations
- Existing Solar
- Electric Transmission Lines
- Road Class
 - State Highway
 - Class 2 Town Highway
 - Class 3 Town Highway
 - Class 4 Town Highway
 - Legal Trail
 - Private Road
 - Stream/River
 - Lake/Pond








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ROADS: VT Road Centerline, VTrans, VCGI, 2021
SURFACE WATER: VT USGS Digital Line Graph Surface Waters - boundary lines, VCGI, 2021, VT USGS Digital Line Graph Surface Waters - area polygons, VCGI, 2021
UTILITIES/FACILITIES: VT Data - E911 Site Locations (address points), VCGI, 2024

Public Facilities Map

Eden, Vermont
Municipal Development
Plan 2025-2033

Legend

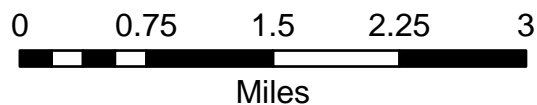
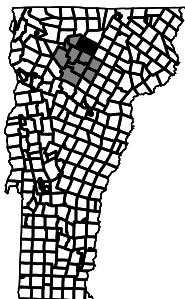
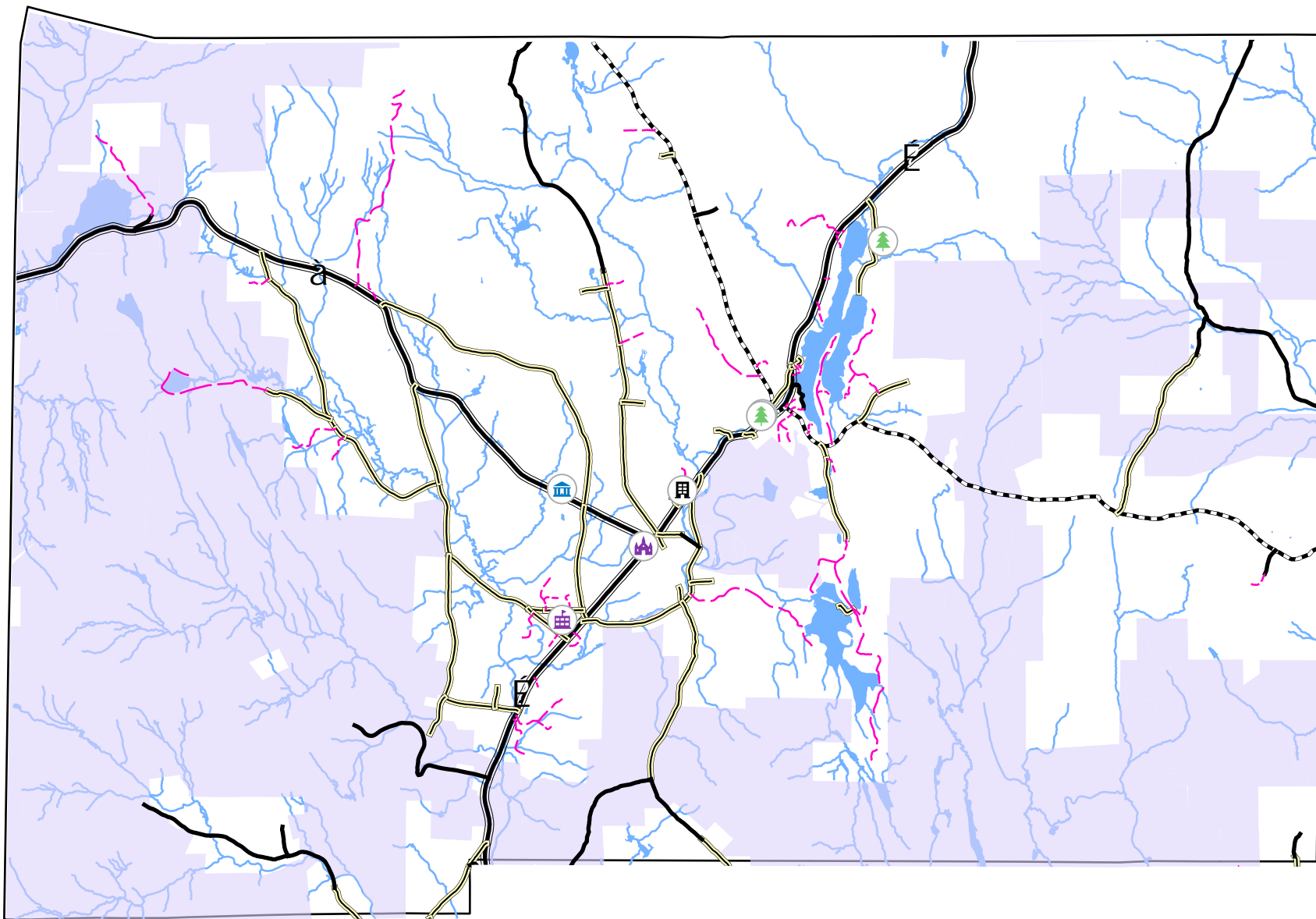
Eden Public Facilities

-  GOVERNMENT
-  HOUSE OF WORSHIP
-  PUBLIC GATHERING
-  SCHOOL K / 12
-  TOWN OFFICE

Public Conserved Lands

Road Class

-  State Highway
-  Class 2 Town Highway
-  Class 3 Town Highway
-  Class 4 Town Highway
-  Legal Trail
-  Private Road
-  Stream/River
-  Lake/Pond



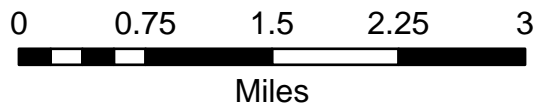
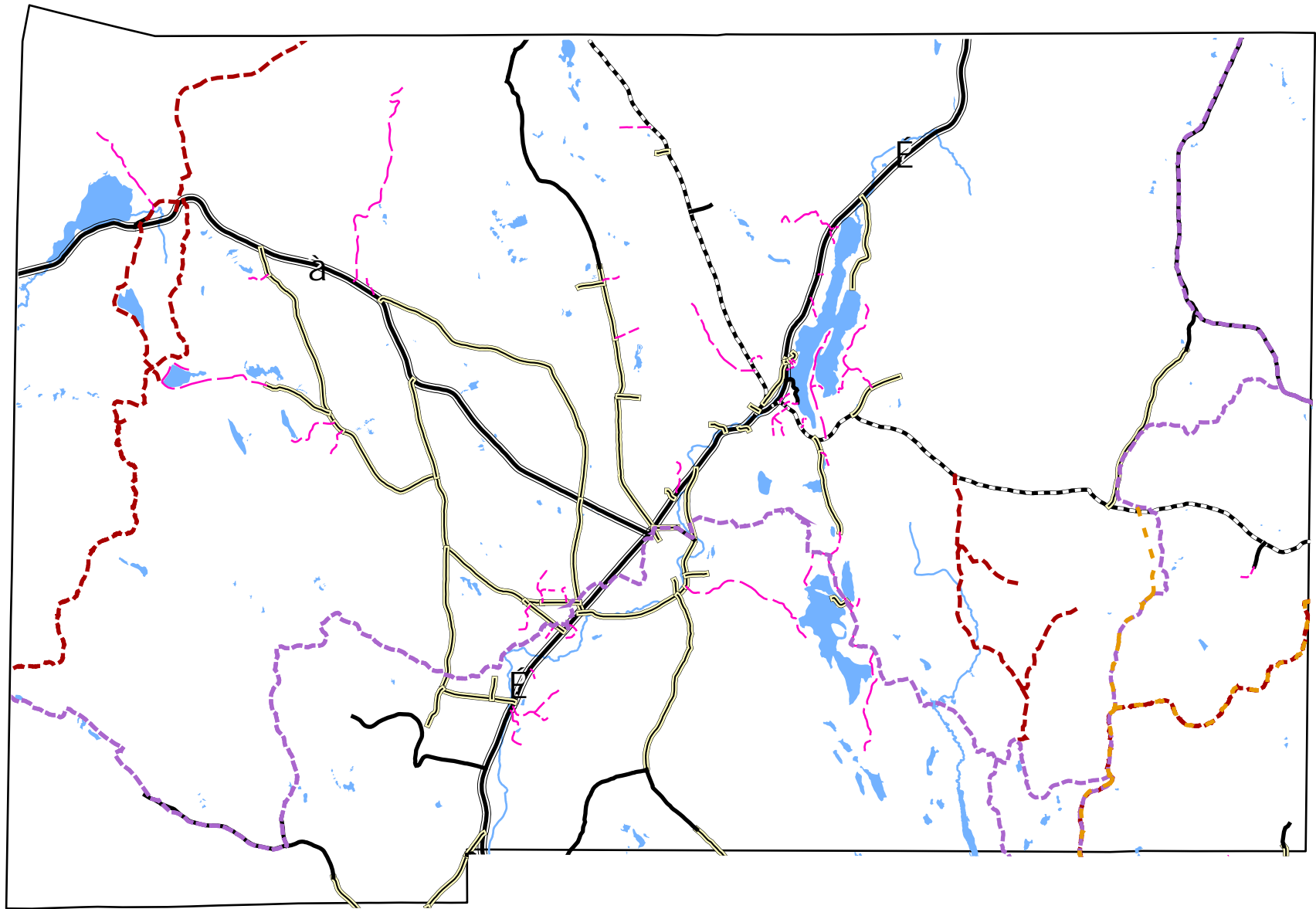
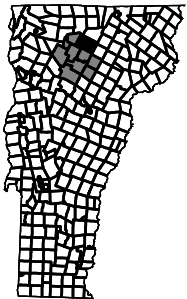
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 PUBLIC FACILITIES: VT Data - E911 Site Locations (address points), VCGI, 2024
 CONSERVED LANDS: VT Protected Lands Database, VCGI, 2021

Transportation Map

Eden, Vermont
Municipal Development
Plan 2025-2033

Legend

- Catamount Trail
- VAST Trail
- - - Long Trail
- Road Class
- = State Highway
- · - · Class 2 Town Highway
- Class 3 Town Highway
- Class 4 Town Highway
- · - · Legal Trail
- Private Road
- Stream/River
- Lake/Pond



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LONG TRAIL: Trails, VCGI, 2022
VAST TRAIL: VCGI, 2022.

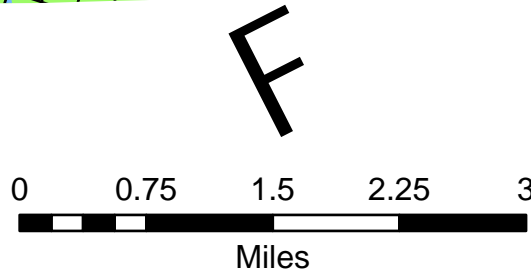
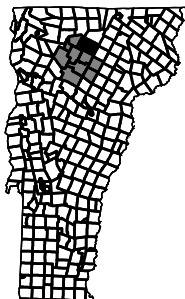
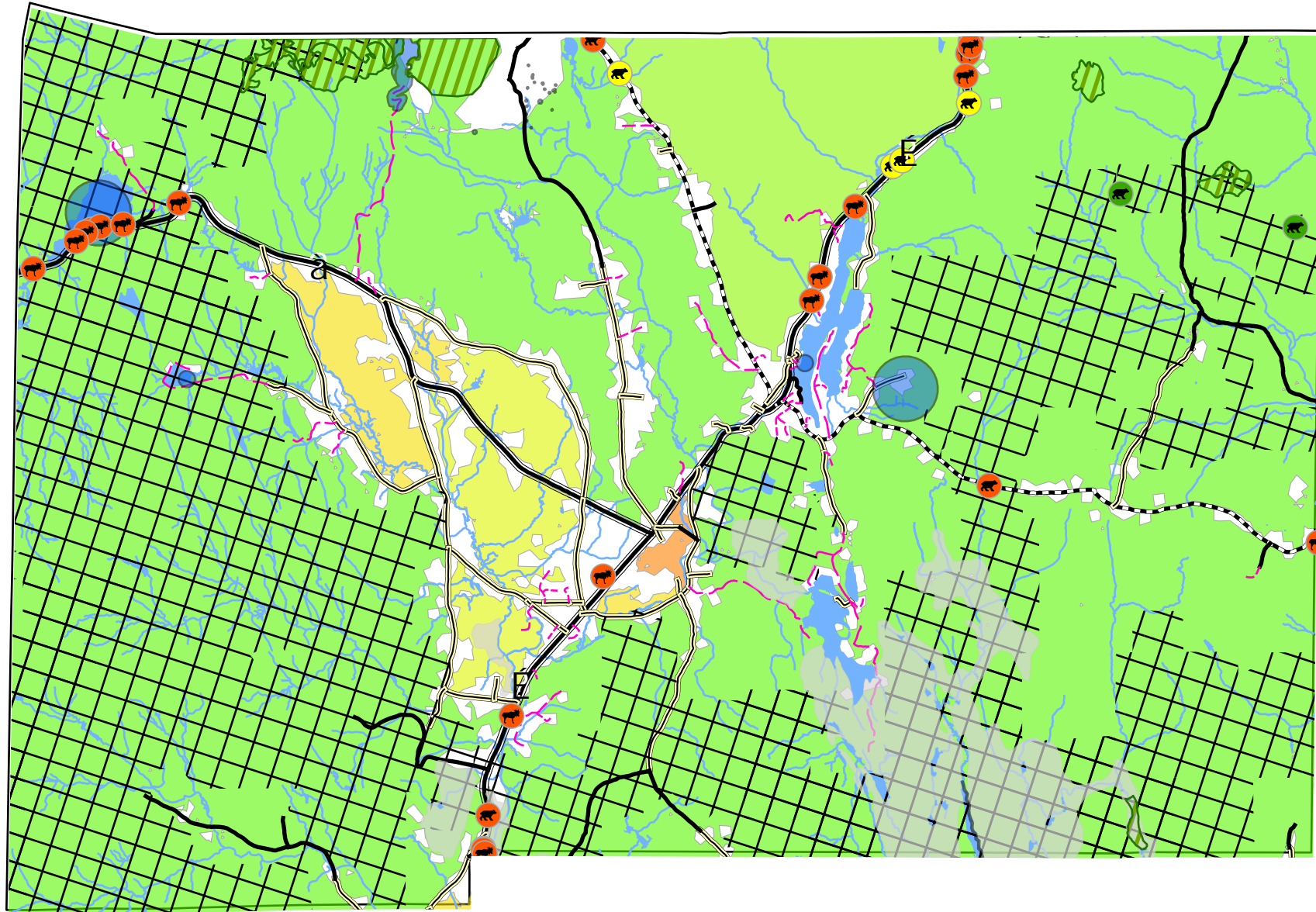
Critical Habitat Map

Eden, Vermont

Municipal Development Plan 2025-2033

Legend

-  Moose Collision
-  Bear Mast (foraging) Area
-  Bear Crossing
-  Bear Collision
-  Natural Community
-  Rare, Endangered, or Threatened Vascular Species
-  Deer Wintering Areas
-  Public Conserved Lands
- Forest Habitat Blocks - Quality
 -  Low Rank
 -  High Rank
- Road Class
 -  State Highway
 -  Class 2 Town Highway
 -  Class 3 Town Highway
 -  Class 4 Town Highway
 -  Legal Trail
 -  Private Road
 -  Lake/Pond
 -  Stream/River

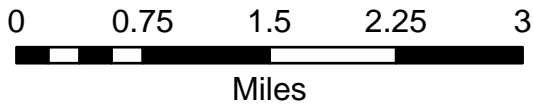
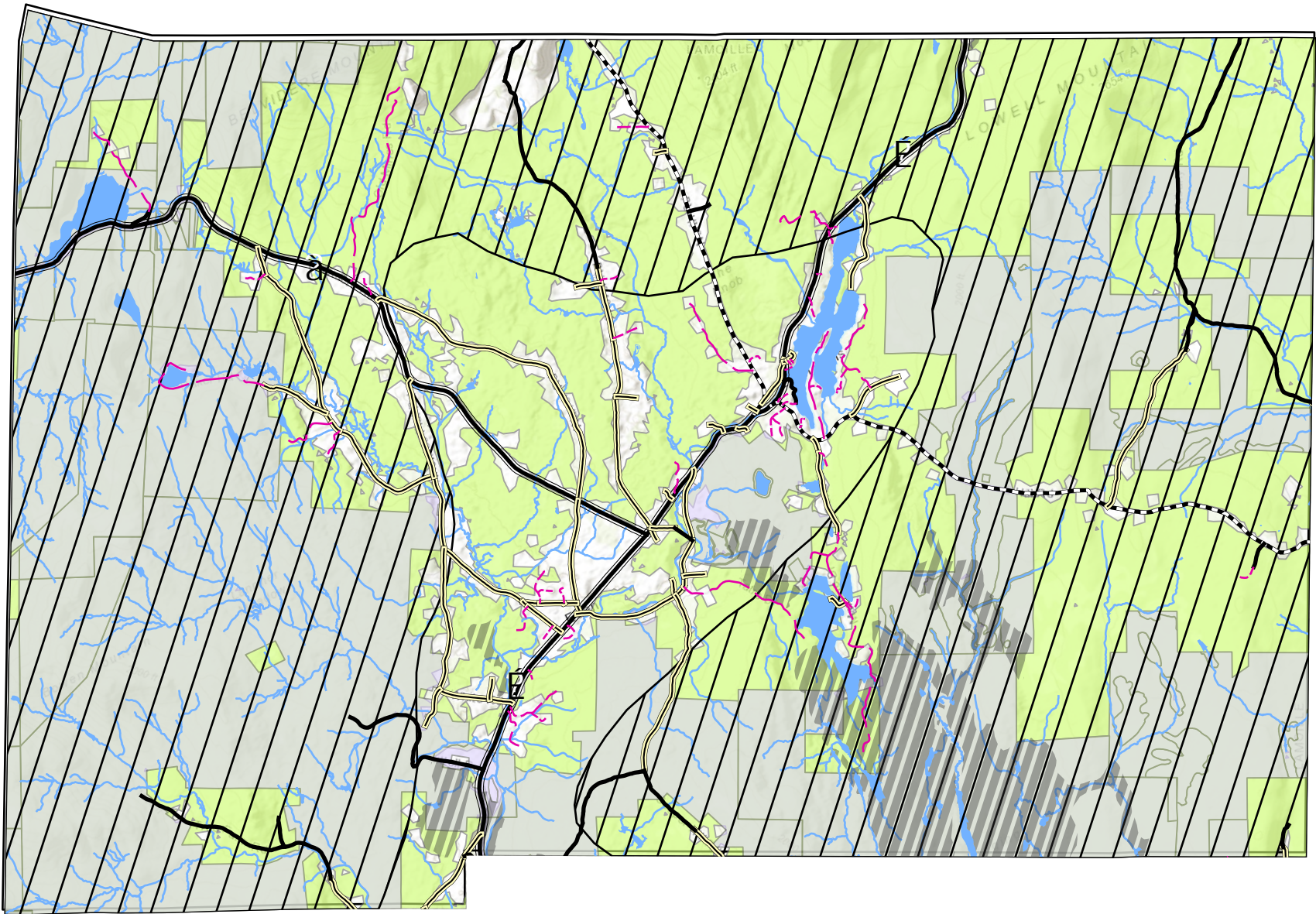
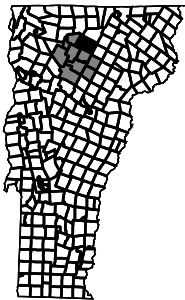


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 DEER WINTERING AREA: Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, VCGI, 2022
 CONSERVED LANDS: VT Protected Lands Database, VCGI, 2021
 HABITAT BLOCKS/BEAR AND MOOSE AREAS: Jens Hilke, Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife; Eric Sorenson, Vermont Agency of Natural Resources; Jon Osborne, Vermont Land Trust. Quality ranking based on several weighted factors including cost distance to core areas, ELU weighted acreage, element occurrence count, percent core, block size, road density, percent ponds, percent wetlands, exemplary aquatic features, density of rivers and streams, and percent of block within a TNC matrix block.
 RARE SPECIES SITES: Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species & Significant Communities, 1:24000, Vermont Nongame and Natural Heritage Program, VANR, 2011

Critical Habitat Map 2

Eden, Vermont
Municipal Development
Plan 2025-2033

- Legend
- Public Conserved Lands
 - Deer Wintering Area
 - Bear Habitat
 - Habitat Blocks/Wildlife Corridors
 - Road Class
 - State Highway
 - Class 2 Town Highway
 - Class 3 Town Highway
 - Class 4 Town Highway
 - Legal Trail
 - Private Road
 - Lake/Pond
 - Stream/River















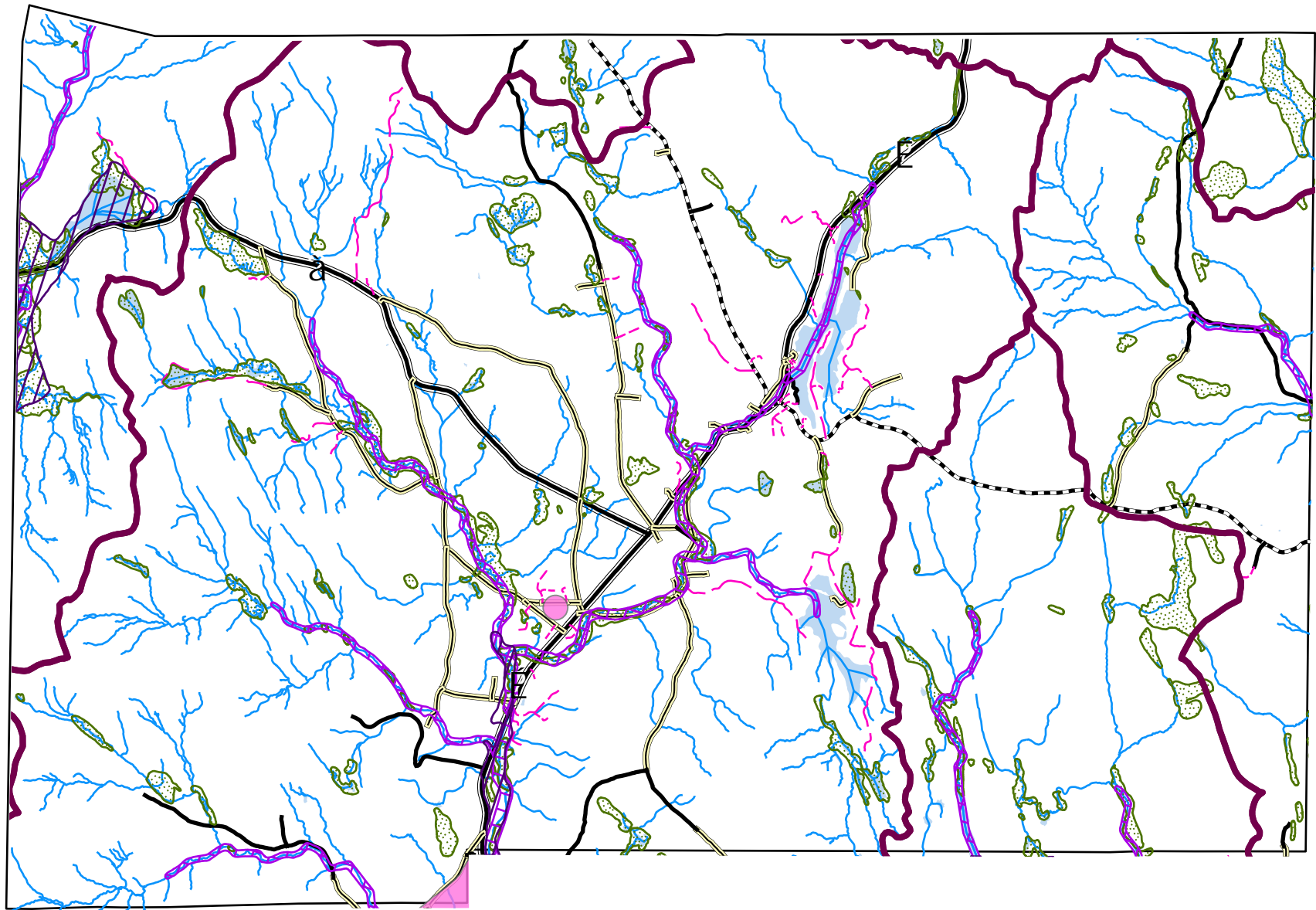
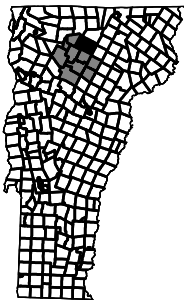
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 ROADS: VT Road Centerline, VTrans, VCGI, 2021
 SURFACE WATER: VT USGS Digital Line Graph Surface Waters - boundary lines, VCGI, 2021, VT USGS Digital Line Graph Surface Waters - area polygons, VCGI, 2021
 DEER WINTERING AREA: Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, VCGI, 2022
 BEAR HABITAT: Jens Hilke, Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife; Eric Sorenson, Vermont Agency of Natural Resources
 CONSERVED LANDS: VT Protected Lands Database, VCGI, 2021
 HABITAT BLOCKS AND WILDLIFE CORRIDORS: Jens Hilke, Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife; Eric Sorenson, Vermont Agency of Natural Resources

Water Resources Map

Eden, Vermont
Municipal Development
Plan 2025-2033

Legend

-  Watershed Line
-  100 Year Floodplain
-  River Corridors
-  Wetlands
-  Municipal Well-Head Protection Area
- Road Class**
-  State Highway
-  Class 2 Town Highway
-  Class 3 Town Highway
-  Class 4 Town Highway
-  Legal Trail
-  Private Road
-  Stream/River
-  Lake/Pond



0 0.75 1.5 2.25 3
Miles



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FLOODPLAIN: Digitized from FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps, LCPC, 1983. Floodplains for planning purposes only. Refer to the VANR-DEC, Water Quality Division, Floodplain Coordinator for official floodplain determinations. (802) 241-3759.
WETLANDS: VSWI Wetlands Class Layer, Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, VCGI, 2024
MUNICIPAL WELL-HEAD PROTECTION AREA: Ground Water SPA, Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, VCGI, 2022

Soil Resources Map

Eden, Vermont
Municipal Development
Plan 2025-2033

Legend

Primary Agricultural Soils

Statewide Agricultural Soils

Prime Agricultural Soils

Road Class

State Highway

Class 2 Town Highway

Class 3 Town Highway

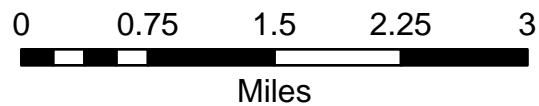
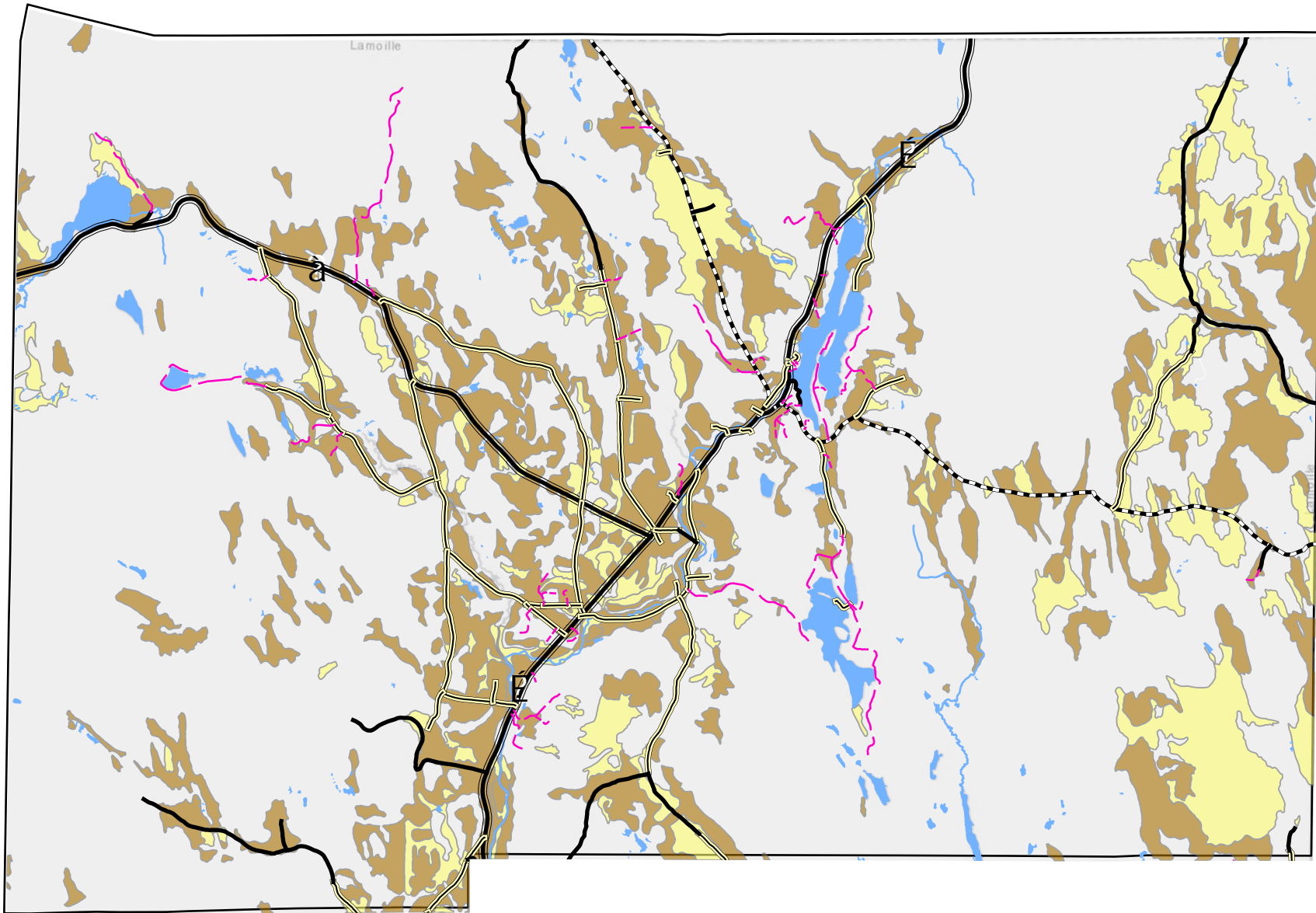
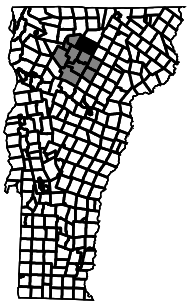
Class 4 Town Highway

Legal Trail

Private Road

Stream/River

Lake/Pond



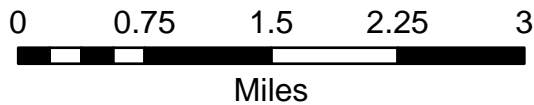
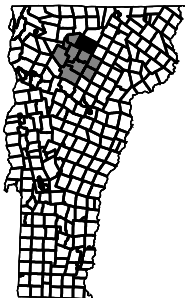
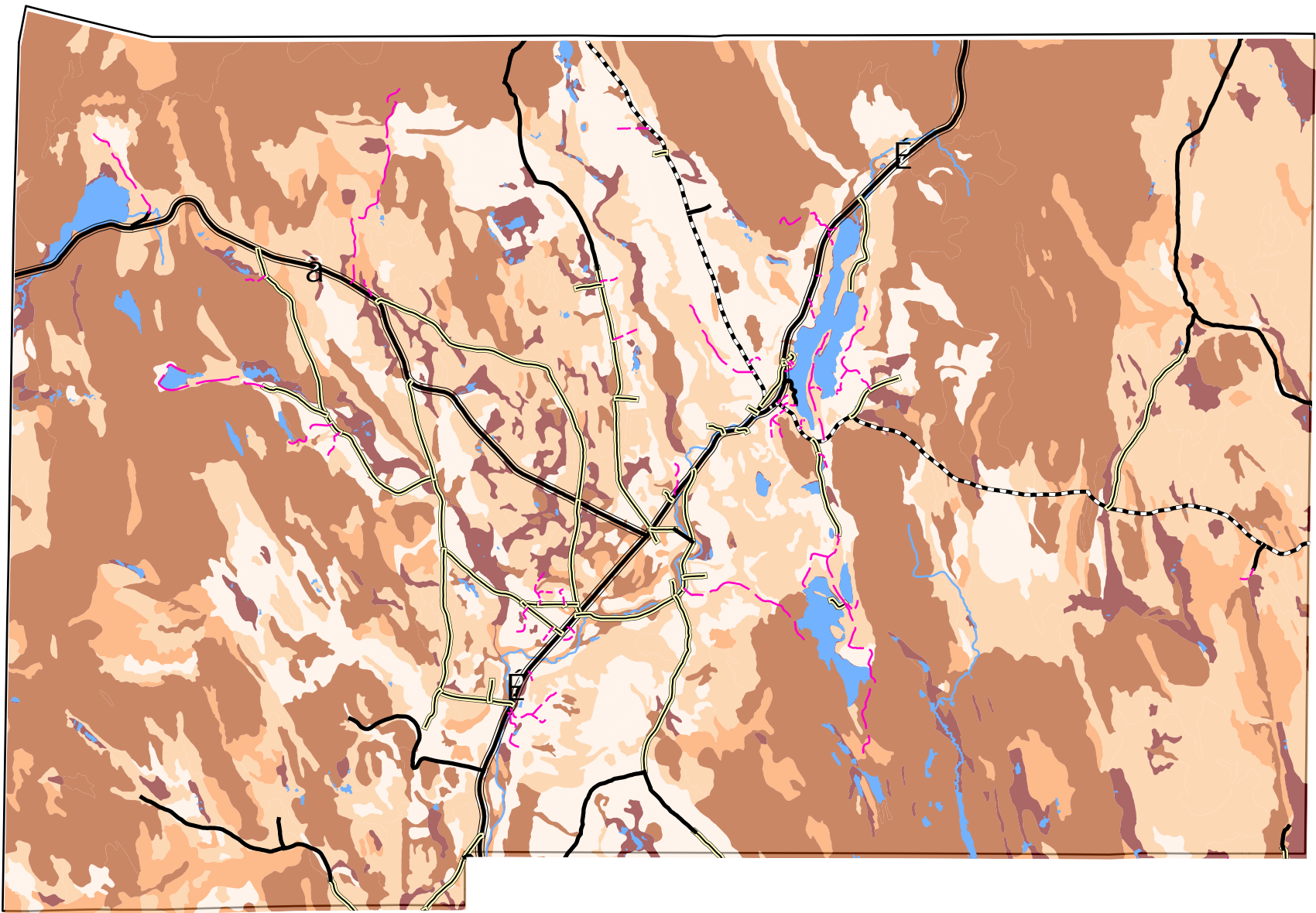
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POLITICAL BOUNDARIES: VT Data - Town Boundaries, VCGI, 2024, VT Data - County Boundaries, VCGI, 2024, VT Data - State Boundary, VCGI, 2024
ROADS: VT Road Centerline, VTrans, VCGI, 2021
SURFACE WATER: VT USGS Digital Line Graph Surface Waters - boundary lines, VCGI, 2021, VT USGS Digital Line Graph Surface Waters - area polygons, VCGI, 2021
SOILS: VT Data - Agriculturally Important Soil Units, VCGI, 2022

Suitability of Soils for Conventional Septic Systems Map

Eden, Vermont
Municipal Development
Plan 2025-2033

- Legend
- Onsite Septic Suitability
- Well Suited
 - Moderately Suited
 - Marginally Suited
 - Generally Not Suited
 - Not Rated
- Road Class
- State Highway
 - Class 2 Town Highway
 - Class 3 Town Highway
 - Class 4 Town Highway
 - Legal Trail
 - Private Road
 - Stream/River
 - Lake/Pond

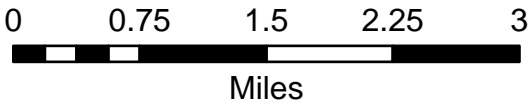
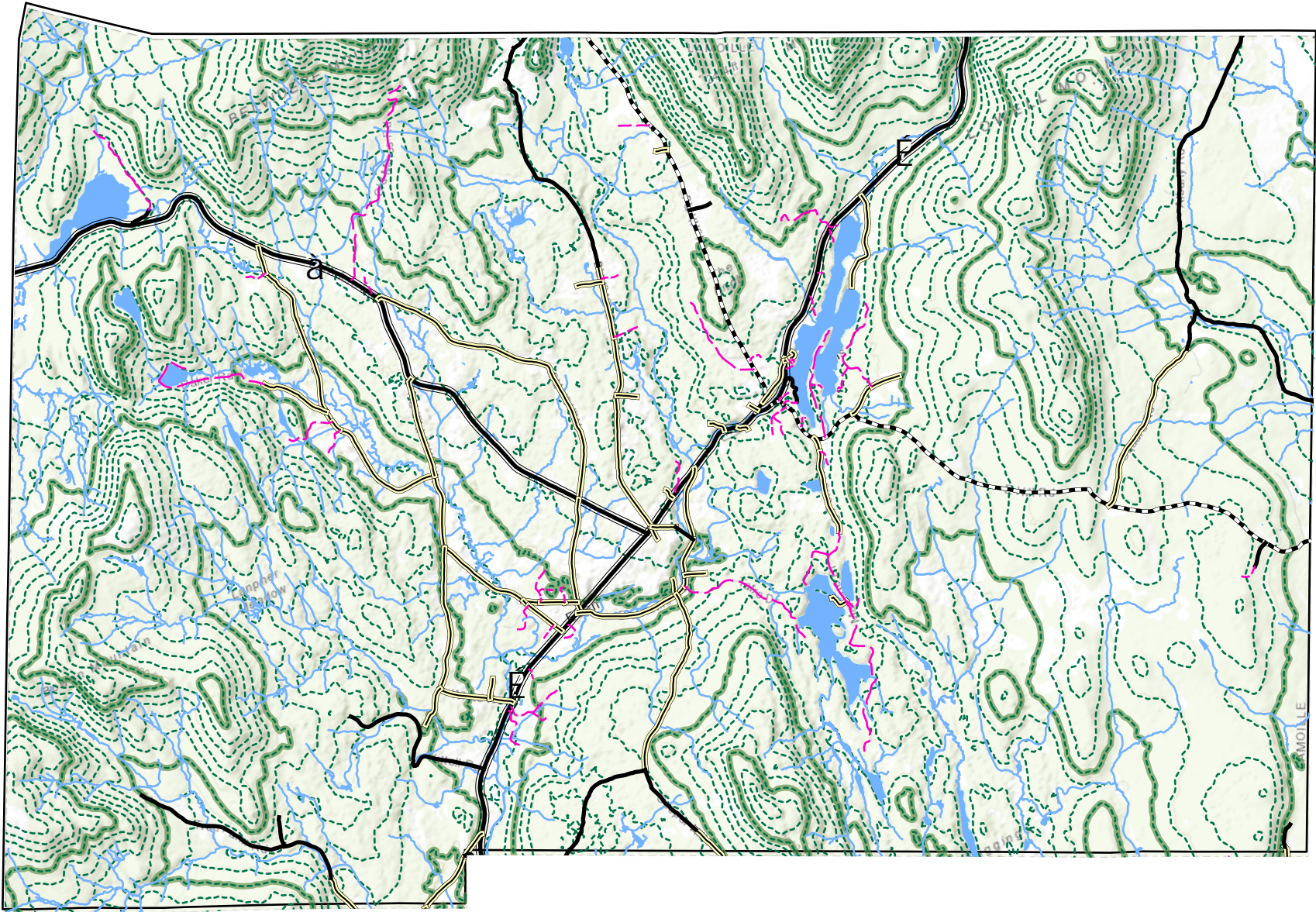
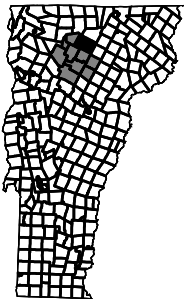


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ROADS: VT Road Centerline, VTrans, VCGI, 2021
SURFACE WATER: VT USGS Digital Line Graph Surface Waters - boundary lines, VCGI, 2021, VT USGS Digital Line Graph Surface Waters - area polygons, VCGI, 2021
SOIL SUITABILITY: VT Data - Onsite Sewage Disposal Soil Ratings, VCGI, 2023

Elevation Map

Eden, Vermont
Municipal Development
Plan 2025-2033













- Legend
- 100' Contour
 - 500' Contour
 - Road Class
 - State Highway
 - Class 2 Town Highway
 - Class 3 Town Highway
 - Class 4 Town Highway
 - Legal Trail
 - Private Road
 - Lake/Pond
 - Stream/River

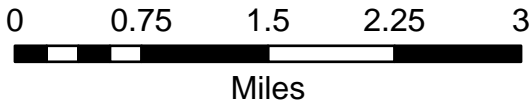
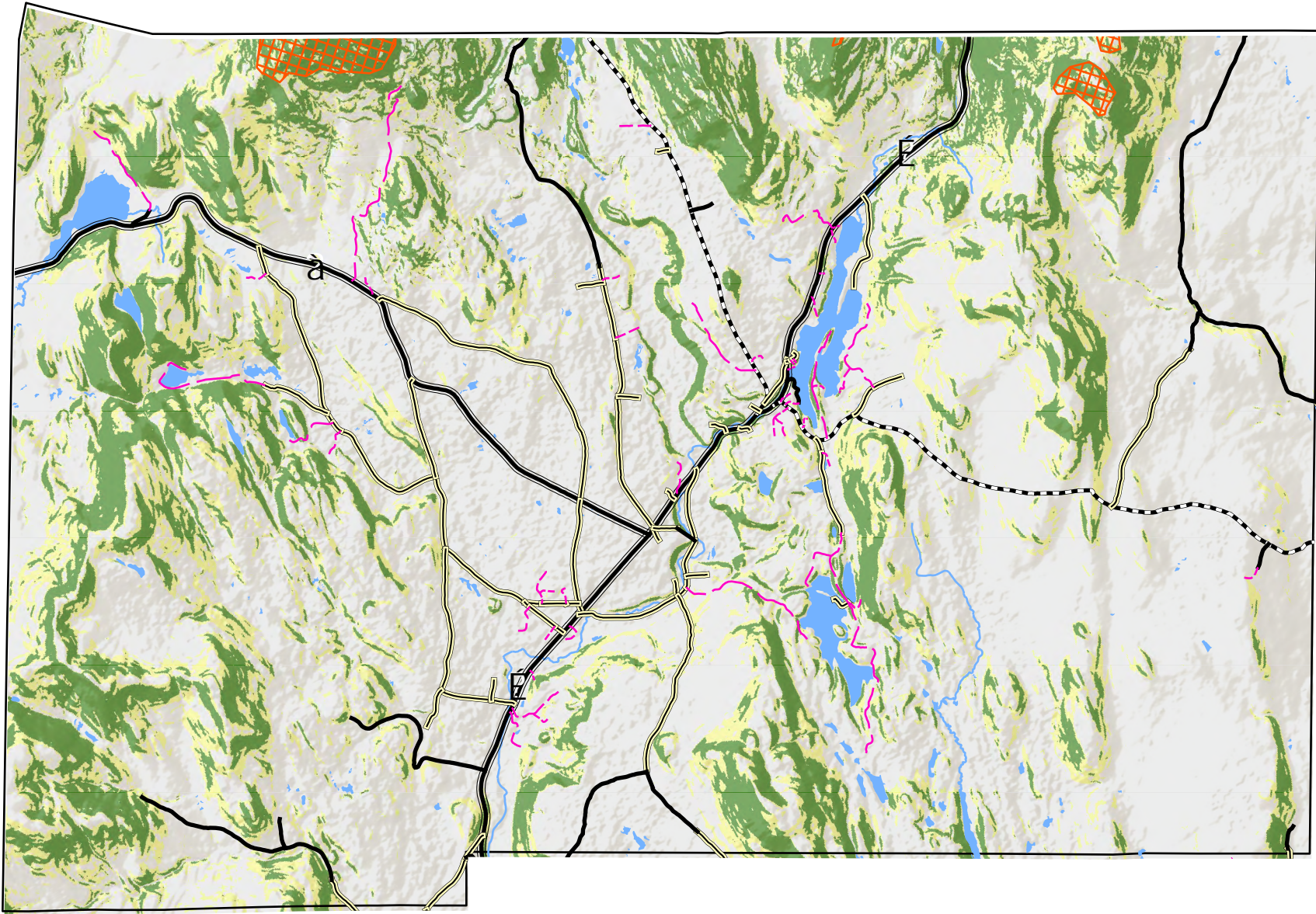
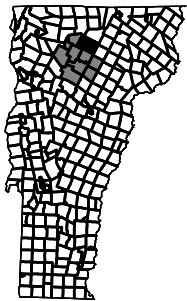


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SURFACE WATER: VT USGS Digital Line Graph Surface Waters - boundary lines, VCGI, 2021, VT USGS Digital Line Graph Surface Waters - area polygons, VCGI, 2021
CONTOUR LINES: USGS Small-scale Dataset - 1:1,000,000-Scale Contours of the Conterminous United States

Topographic Limitations Map

Eden, Vermont
Municipal Development
Plan 2025-2033

- Legend
-  Area Above 2500'
- Slope (%)
-  0 - 20%
 -  20 - 30%
 -  > 30%
- Road Class
-  State Highway
 -  Class 2 Town Highway
 -  Class 3 Town Highway
 -  Class 4 Town Highway
 -  Legal Trail
 -  Private Road
 -  Stream/River
 -  Lake/Pond



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SURFACE WATER: VT USGS Digital Line Graph Surface Waters - boundary lines, VCGI, 2021, VT USGS Digital Line Graph Surface Waters - area polygons, VCGI, 2021
SLOPE: Derived from 1:24,000 USGS digital elevation model, VCGI, 2012.
AREA OVER 2500': Derived from 1:24,000 USGS digital elevation model, VCGI, 2012





















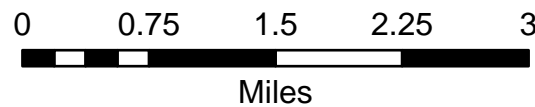
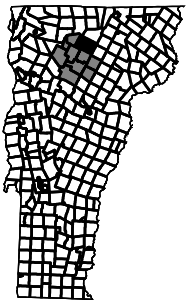
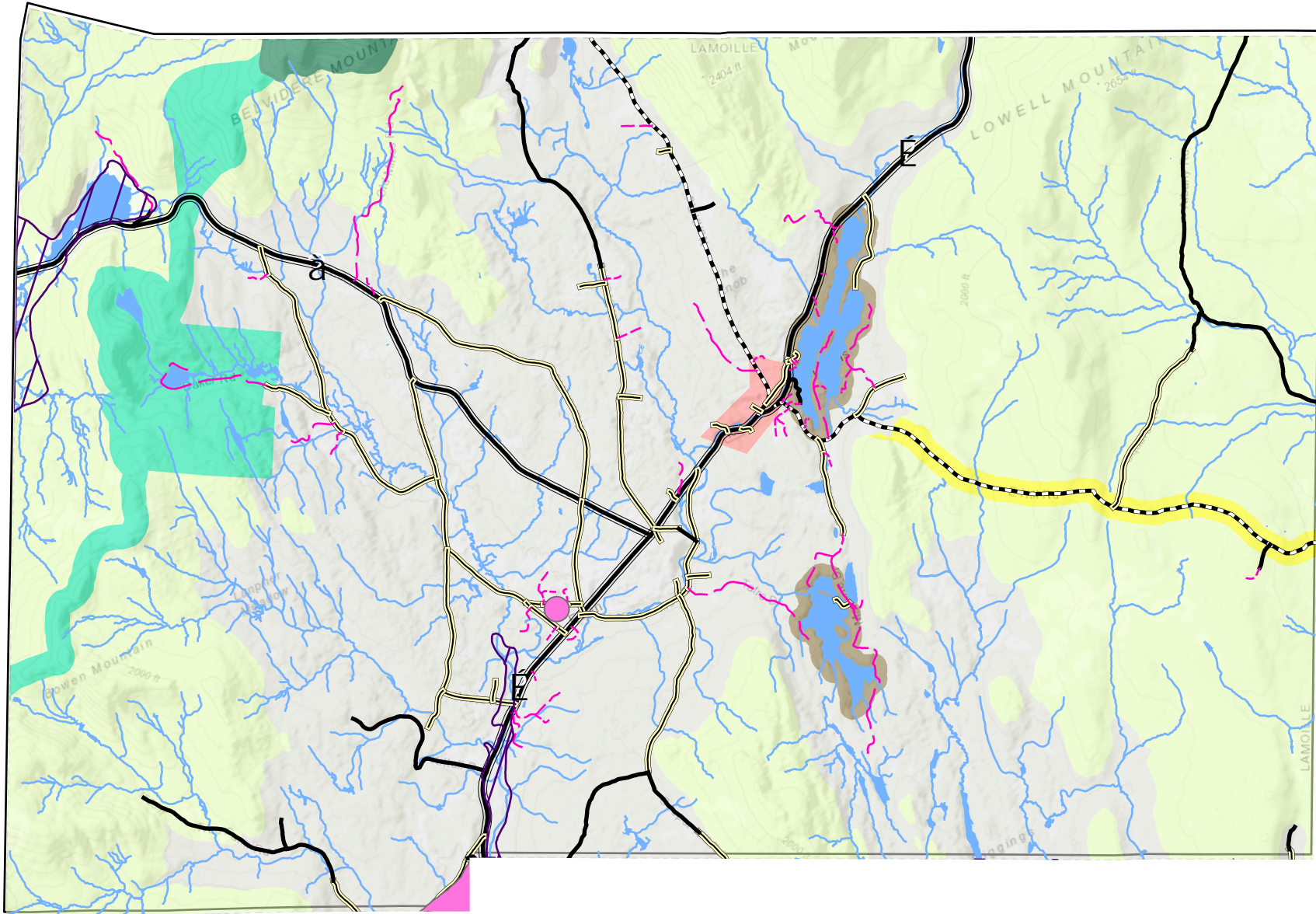
LAMOILLE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Land Use Map

Eden, Vermont
Municipal Development
Plan 2025-2033

Legend

-  Municipal Well-Head Protection Area
-  100 Year Floodplain
-  Stream/River
-  Lake/Pond
- Land Use District
-  EAST HILL
-  EDEN MILLS
-  FOREST EAST
-  FOREST WEST
-  LONG TRAIL
-  MOUNTAIN
-  RURAL RESIDENTIAL
-  SHORELINE
- Road Class
-  State Highway
-  Class 2 Town Highway
-  Class 3 Town Highway
-  Class 4 Town Highway
-  Legal Trail
-  Private Road



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POLITICAL BOUNDARIES: VT Data - Town Boundaries, VCGI, 2024, VT Data - County Boundaries, VCGI, 2024, VT Data - State Boundary, VCGI, 2024
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MUNICIPAL WELL-HEAD PROTECTION AREA: Ground Water SPA, Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, VCGI, 2022
FLOODPLAIN: Digitized from FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps, LCPC, 1983. Floodplains for planning purposes only. Refer to the VANR-DEC, Water Quality Division, Floodplain Coordinator for official floodplain determinations. (802) 241-3759.
LAND USE DISTRICT: Digitized by LCPC from Eden Town Plan