

# **NEWFANE TOWN PLAN**

**Adopted September 13, 2006**



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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **THE NEWFANE TOWN PLAN**

This Town Plan provides a framework to assist Newfane in meeting its broad needs and achieving its diverse aspirations. The goals, policies, and recommendations expressed within this Plan, along with the various Town Plan maps, will serve to guide the Town's efforts in land use planning and growth management, in the provision of public services and facilities, and in environmental protection, economic development, and land conservation.

Central to the planning process is the belief that citizens of Newfane choose to live here because they like the Town. Thus, while change and growth are inevitable and often desirable, it is important that they be planned for and implemented in ways that enhance, rather than degrade, the Town's essential character. Newfane is a rural town defined by large tracts of forest and compact villages. A vision for the future should grow within this definition.

### **TOWN PLAN REVISION PROCESS**

Preparing a town plan is one of the most important responsibilities of the Planning Commission. Authority to prepare and implement the Newfane Town Plan is granted to the Town through the Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act (24 V.S.A., Chapter 117). The Act establishes 13 fundamental "planning" goals and four fundamental "process" goals to guide town, regional, and state planning efforts. Through the Town Plan review and update process, the Newfane Planning Commission determined that each of the state goals is directly relevant to the Town.

The 2006 Town Plan is an update of the 2003 Town Plan, which was a re-adoption of the 1998 Town Plan. This Plan update was developed by the Planning Commission with the assistance from the Windham Regional Commission.

To guide the Town Plan update process, provide for public participation, and solicit input a number of different strategies and information sources were relied upon. The Planning Commission solicited information from various municipal officials and volunteer boards. Community attitudes and opinions were solicited through a process known as Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats (SWOT) analysis. The SWOT analysis was conducted at a public meeting in March 2006. During the process, the public was split into four groups and each developed its own lists of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Following this, each individual ranked the top three opportunities for Newfane and the top three threats to Newfane. The results focused primarily rural character, traffic, Town government, business growth and energy.

### **STRUCTURE OF THE NEWFANE TOWN PLAN**

The Town Plan is based on a set of broad goals which collectively help to identify the direction the Town will take for the next five or more years. These goals represent generalized value statements which are more fully defined by the information and analysis found in each of the Town Plan chapters.

The Community Profile chapter establishes an informational snapshot of Newfane. The remaining chapters address the required elements of a town plan and, where applicable, are supported by mapped information. These chapters highlight special issues which face the Town of Newfane, present policy statements regarding those issues, and outline a series of implementation recommendations to be carried out by the community over the next five or more years. The recommendations have included a notation of who the responsible party may be. Together, Town Plan policies and recommendations chart a specific course which will help Newfane to achieve its broad planning goals.

The maps have been prepared to assist planners, public officials and citizens to understand Newfane and to assist in the planning process, governmental and business decisions. These maps are for planning purposes only. Together with Town Plan policies, these maps will be used by the Planning Commission as a guide for appropriate bylaws and other measures necessary to implement the Town Plan.

## **INTERPRETATION OF THE TOWN PLAN**

Throughout the text of this Town Plan many of the policy statements and recommendations steps include imperative verbs. "Should" or "may" means that an action encouraged but not mandated, whereas "shall" or "must" means that an action is required.

## **COMMUNITY GOALS**

The statements listed below represent the various Planning and Process Goals adopted by the Town of Newfane. These goals directly reflect those set forth by Chapter 117.

### **Planning Goals**

1. To plan development so as to maintain the historic settlement pattern of compact village centers surrounded by rural countryside.
2. To encourage a strong and diverse economy that provides satisfying and rewarding job opportunities and that maintains high environmental standards, and to expand economic opportunities.
3. To provide access to quality educational opportunities for all of Newfane's residents.
4. To plan for safe, convenient, economic and energy efficient transportation systems that respect the integrity of the natural environment, including public transit options and lanes for pedestrians and bicycles.
5. To identify, protect, and preserve important and historic features of Newfane's landscape, including significant natural and fragile areas; outstanding water resources including ponds, rivers, aquifers, shoreland, and wetlands; significant scenic roads, waterways, and views; important historic structures, sites or districts, archaeological sites and archaeological sensitive areas.
6. To maintain and improve the quality of air, water, wildlife, and land resources.

7. To encourage efficient use of energy and the development of renewable energy resources.
8. To maintain and enhance recreational opportunities for residents and visitors.
9. To encourage and strengthen agricultural and forest industries.
10. To provide for the wise and efficient use of Newfane's natural resources; to facilitate the appropriate extraction of earth resources; and to encourage the proper restoration and preservation of the aesthetic qualities of the area.
11. To support the availability of safe and affordable housing for all residents.
12. To plan for and support an efficient system of public facilities and services to meet existing and future needs.
13. To ensure the availability of safe and affordable child care and integrate child care issues into the planning process.

#### **Process Goals**

1. To establish a coordinated and comprehensive policy framework and planning process to guide local decisions.
2. To encourage citizen participation at all levels of the planning process.
3. To consider the use of resources and consequences of growth and development in Newfane.
4. To coordinate with neighboring communities to develop and implement compatible municipal plans.

#### **ADJACENT TOWNS & THE REGION: HOW THE NEWFANE TOWN PLAN RELATES**

In the next five year period (2006-2011) the Planning Commission will continue to work towards ongoing coordination of Newfane's Town Plan with the plans of neighboring municipalities and the Windham Regional Commission. Many issues are expected to be of concern to Newfane citizens and will likely cross Town boundaries such as: road corridor planning (Route 30), watershed planning, affordable housing, and emergency management. The Town of Newfane is committed to working with its neighbors through local and planning initiatives.

The Newfane Town Plan is compatible with the goals and policies of the Windham Region Plan (adopted in 2001) as well as the town plans of Dummerston, Marlboro, Brookline, Townshend, Wardsboro and Dover. The proposed land use districts do not conflict with those in the neighboring towns. For example, the land abutting that is in a source water protection area in designated Resource in both Dummerston and Newfane while lands along Route 30 are Rural in Newfane and Rural Residential in Dummerston. Newfane and Brookline are separated by the

West River and both plans have policies to maintain and enhance water quality in the River. The lands in Newfane bordering Dover, Marlboro, Wardsboro, and Townshend are also similarly designated to perpetuate the rural land uses that currently exist and where applicable, protect valued natural resources and physical constraints on the landscape.



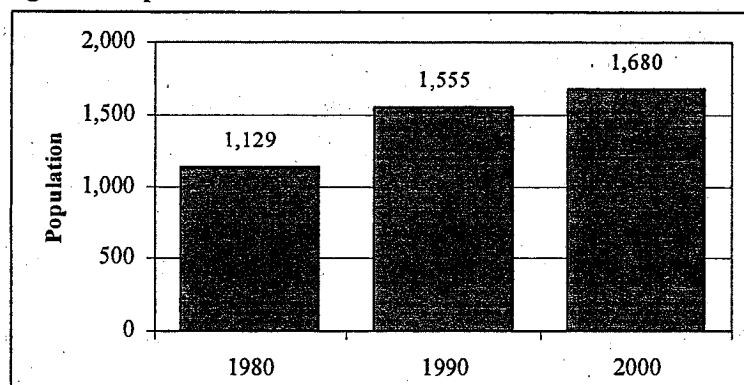
## NEWFANE COMMUNITY PROFILE

This introductory Community Profile identifies and quantifies the social, economic, and physical changes which have taken place in and around Newfane over the years. It establishes an important foundation for the review and understanding of subsequent sections of this Town Plan.

### POPULATION TRENDS

According to 2000 Census data, the number of persons living year-round in the Town of Newfane increased from 1,129 to 1,680 between 1980 and 2000 (Figure 1). This represents a rate of growth of nearly 49% during that time period, nearly two and half times greater than that of either the State of Vermont (19%) or Windham County (20%). Census data indicated that Newfane is the tenth largest town in the Windham Region in 2000, down from ninth in 1990 (when the population was 1,555), but its growth rate over the decade, 8%, surpassed the region's growth rate of 5% in the same period.

Figure 1: Population Growth in Newfane



Source: US Census

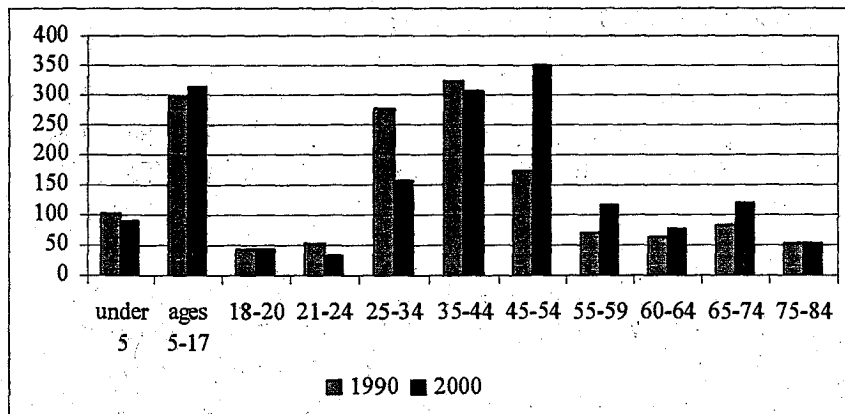
### AGE DISTRIBUTION

A comparison of age cohort data over time shows where changes in the population are occurring. When analyzing the population data from 1990 and 2000 for the Town (see Figure 2) the following observations are made:

- There has been a significant increase in the population of those people who will likely enter retirement in the next 10 years (age 45-59). At the same time, the age groups entering the working population (late teens and early twenties) is small
- The population of people in the childbearing ages has generally decreased<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The U.S. Census generally considers the childbearing years to be aged 15-44, with the 25.1 years as the average age of women when they give birth for the first time.

**Figure 2: Age Distribution of Newfane Residents, 1990 and 2000**



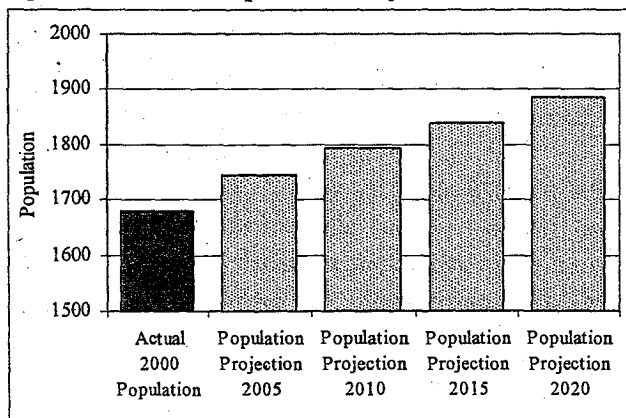
Source: U.S. Census

One way to determine whether the number of people in an age group is growing or declining is to track the population over time. For example, in 1990 one age group was 25 to 34, but in 2000 that same age group was in the 34 to 44 range. Figure 2 shows a significant increase in the number of people aged 45 to 54 in 2000 as compared to 1990. However, there was only a net increase of 25 when tracking the 35-44 year olds of 1990 as they become the 45-54 year olds of 2000. Therefore, this large increase can mostly be attributed to an aging population rather than a large number of middle aged people moving into the region.

### POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Population projections are of interest in projecting future housing, facility and service needs. Predicting future population trends; however, is made difficult by influences from outside the community -- including social, economic and political influences -- which often impact changes in local and regional population.

**Figure 3: Newfane Population Projections, 2000-2020**



Source: VT Department of Aging & Independent Living, MISER Population Projections 2003

Continued fluctuations in the state and national economies will undoubtedly affect the rate of population growth in Newfane. Considering strong trends in population increases over the past three decades, however, and the cyclical nature of the economy, it is highly probable that

Newfane will continue to grow. Based on Vermont Department of Health population projections, Newfane's population is expected to grow to 1,794 residents by the year 2010 and to 1,886 residents by 2020 (Figure 3). It is interesting to note that this figure is considerably lower than the previous projection from the Department of Health (2,452 residents by 2010) that was reported in the 1998 Newfane Town Plan.

## INCOME CHARACTERISTICS

Census data offers detailed information regarding the income characteristics of Newfane's residents. This information provides an important framework for understanding social, economic, and housing needs of various segments of Newfane's population. For the purposes of this discussion, "household income" includes the income of the householder, and all other persons 15 years old and over living in the household, whether related or not. Table 1 shows a breakdown of household incomes in Newfane.

**Table 1: Actual Household Income in Newfane by Percentage of Households**

	1990	2000
less than \$15,000	15%	10%
\$15,000-\$35,000	39%	25%
\$35,000-\$50,000	24%	20%
\$50,000+	22%	44%
Median household income (adjusted <sup>2</sup> )	\$42,075	\$45,735
Median household income (unadjusted)	\$31,935	\$45,735

Source: U.S. Census

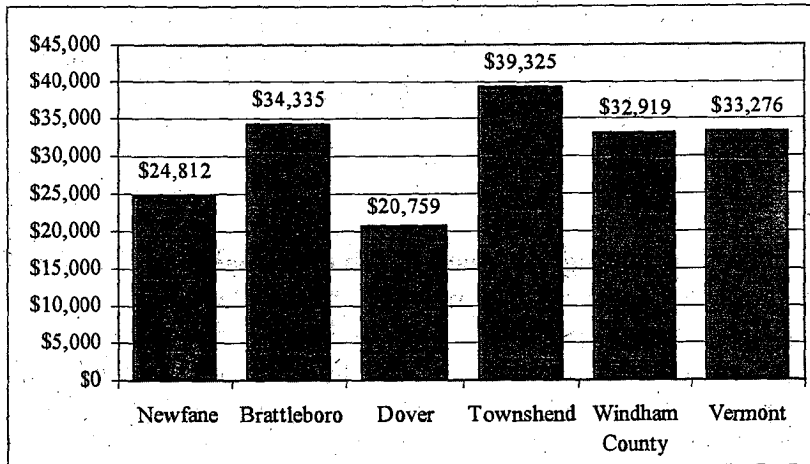
As reported by the 2000 Census, median household income in Newfane was \$45,735, up from the 1990 median household income of \$42,075. This was higher than both the Windham County's median household income of \$38,204 and the State of Vermont median household income of \$40,856. According to the Census, 5% of the Town's population fell below the poverty level in 2000, also a level that is below Windham County (9%) and the state (9.4%).

## EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS

According to 2000 Census statistics, Newfane is a "bedroom community" with 72% of its resident workforce working outside of the community. Newfane's residents rely heavily on neighboring towns throughout the region for employment opportunities, especially the Town of Brattleboro where more than 35% of local residents were employed in 2000 and where average annual wages are relatively higher than in Newfane and the state and county as a whole (Figure 4).

<sup>2</sup> Adjusted income calculated by using the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis Consumer Price Index

**Figure 4: Annual Average Wage, 2004**



Source: Vermont Department of Labor, U.I. Covered Employment & Wages (QCEW)

Newfane had 903 employed residents in 2000, compared to 858 in 1990. Newfane's workers are employed in a variety of industries (Table 2). Educational, health and social services employed the largest number of Newfane workers (23%), followed by retail trade (12%) and other professional services (also 12%). Other important industries included construction and manufacturing, though both sectors showed slight decreases in employment from 1990. The agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting and mining industries showed the largest decline at 44%.

**Table 2: Employment by Industry of Newfane Residents, age 16 and old**

Industry	1990	2000	Employed 1990	Employed 2000	Change 1990-2000
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, mining	36	20	4%	2%	-44%
Construction	79	60	9%	7%	-24%
Manufacturing	113	81	13%	9%	-28%
Transportation and warehousing, other public utilities	11	28	1%	3%	155%
Wholesale trade	31	47	4%	5%	52%
Retail trade	164	105	19%	12%	-36%
Information and communication	25	30	3%	3%	20%
Finance, insurance and real estate, rental and leasing	38	47	4%	5%	24%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, food	64	83	8%	9%	30%
Educational, health and social services	168	212	20%	23%	26%
Other professional services	44	106	5%	12%	141%
Other services	57	50	7%	6%	-12%
Public administration	28	34	3%	4%	21%
<b>total employed</b>	<b>858</b>	<b>903</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>5%</b>

Source: U.S. Census

Census data indicated that there was a 5% increase in the number of Newfane residents who worked at home or walked to work in from 1990 (14%) to 2000 (19%). With no specific data available regarding home occupations, it is not possible at this time to quantify or categorize the types of employment activities taking place in homes throughout Newfane. It is reasonable to suggest from basic knowledge of Newfane's citizens, however, that a wide variety of clerical, data processing, craft production, product distribution, business, and service-oriented occupations that provide important employment opportunities to Newfane's residents.

## HOUSING TRENDS

Newfane is a community dominated by single-family homes (Table 3), occupied primarily by year-round residents. Census data indicates that 74% of all housing units in Newfane in 2000 were year-round residences; in 1990 that figure was 61%.

**Table 3: Newfane Housing Units in a Structure**

Type of Structure	1 unit detached structure	1 unit attached structure	2 units in structure	3-4 units in structure	5-9 units in structure	10 or more units in structure	Mobile Home	Total Housing Units
1990	715	17	45	19	8	0	54	858 <sup>3</sup>
2000	848	10	33	17	4	1	58	971 <sup>3</sup>

Source: U.S. Census

In 2000, of the 693 occupied housing units, approximately 83% were owner-occupied, with the remaining units renter occupied. The number of owner occupied housing units grew by 20% between 1990 and 2000 while the renter-occupied housing units experienced a 6% decrease in stock. There was also a 23% decrease in the number of actual seasonal units, possibly the result of seasonal homes being converted to year-round residences.

<sup>3</sup> This figure excludes "other" such as boats, vans, or recreational vehicles that the Census Bureau counts as housing units.

## LAND USE

### EXISTING LAND USE

The Town of Newfane covers approximately 24,500 acres in the West River Valley of Windham County. In terms of local settlement patterns, Newfane has been described as a microcosm of Vermont, with three separate villages (Newfane Village, Williamsville and South Newfane) connected by a network of local roads. Each village is a uniquely clustered settlement, dominated by older, historic homes with small commercial and community-related services. These village centers are surrounded by a more rural, forested landscape which has experienced residential growth over the years. Housing development has been targeted most significantly in many of the more rural, back-road areas of the community, including areas on and around Parish Hill Road, South Wardsboro Road, Timson Hill Road, and Newfane Hill Road (see Existing Land Use Map). Little new development has occurred in the villages of Williamsville and South Newfane or in the more inaccessible, western-central geographic areas of Newfane.

The manner and intensity in which land is used in Newfane has changed since 1985. Table 4 compares the distribution of parcels by land use category as reported in the Town's Grand List for the years 1985, 1995, and 2004. There has been an increase in the number of overall parcels in Newfane. Of note is that between 1995 and 2004 there was a decrease in the number of parcels classified as vacation while residential parcels increased. The number of commercial parcels in Newfane has remained relatively steady. While farming remains a small part of the parcel distribution in Newfane, in 2004 there were five parcels classified as farms compared to just one in 1985.

**Table 4: Parcel Distribution in Newfane**

Land Use Category	Parcels			Percent Change		
	1985	1995	2004	1985-1994	1995-2004	1985-2004
Residential <sup>4</sup>	412	613	757	48.8	23.5	83.7
Vacation	371	383	329	3.2	-14.1	-11.3
Commercial	34	35	33	2.9	-5.7%	-2.9
Utilities	8	9	3	12.5	-66.7	-62.5
Farm	1	2	5	100	150	400
Woodland	130	246	116	89.2	-52.8	-10.8
Miscellaneous	175	110	79	-37.1	-28.2	-54.9
Total	1,167	1,398	1,322	19.8	-5.4	13.3

*Source: Newfane Grand List Abstract*

Newfane's rural character is clearly defined by its vast acres of forest land. While the ongoing parcelization of local forests and agricultural fields could one day jeopardize the community's rural character as well as its long term productivity capabilities, the number of acres enrolled in the Vermont Land Use Appraisal Program (commonly referred to as Current Use) is growing. Approximately 9,450 acres of forest land and 375 acres of farmland were enrolled in the in 2004. This is approximately 1,500 more forest acres and 164 more farmland acres than were enrolled in

<sup>4</sup> Residential includes Residential and Mobile Home properties

1996. The Current Use program encourages sound forest and farm management practices in exchange for a reduction in property taxes. For many local residents, decreased taxes help to alleviate some of the financial burdens of long-term ownership.

## **FUTURE LAND USE**

In order to encourage a pattern of development that conforms to the goals and policies outlined in this Plan, the following general land classification system is proposed for the Town of Newfane. This system is based upon the delineation of districts which are described below and depicted on the Proposed Land Use Map. Together, descriptive and mapped information present a generalized picture of the Town as it should be developed in accordance with sound planning practices. The classification of lands into Resource, Village, and Rural districts has been formulated to generally be consistent with the various other maps included in this Town Plan which identify natural features, resources, and opportunities and limitations for development.

This chapter and map are not regulatory devices, except for their possible application to the Act 250 development review process. The implementation of this classification will require further definition, adjustment, and clarification as the Town considers zoning amendments and other means of reaching its objectives, as outlined in various sections presented throughout this Plan.

A brief explanation of the criteria, purposes, and suggested development guidelines for each district follows.

### ***Resource District***

The Resource District includes large areas of land that serve as watershed areas and/or are characterized by the presence of steep slopes, shallow soils, important wildlife habitat, and large blocks of unfragmented forest. For the most part, these lands have very limited access to improved public roads. Much of this land is unsuitable for development. These areas are generally in a natural state and contribute positively to the perception of the rural character.

The Resource designation is intended to be a statement indicating the Town's commitment to the proper management of and protection of these sensitive areas. These areas should be placed in the least intensive zoning classification. Lands within the Resource District should be used for forestry, low-intensity recreation and open space. Residential development should be at very low densities which can be sustained by minimal infrastructure improvements, cause minimal environmental degradation, and which will not cumulatively create the future necessity or expectation of increased levels of municipal services. Commercial and industrial uses are not appropriate in the Resource District.

### **Resource District Policies**

1. Restrict development to uses and activities that will not diminish the ecological function, scenic and natural beauty, and natural character of these areas.
2. Give lands in the Resource District high priority when considering long-term conservation efforts.

3. Protect wildlife corridors that join tracts of resource land and important wildlife habitat in order to avoid fragmentation.
4. Direct new residential development away from critical natural resources.

### ***Village District***

These areas include the lands within Newfane Village, South Newfane, and Williamsville as well as additional lands that appear suitable for future village growth. Each village is a uniquely clustered settlement, dominated by older, historic homes and interspersed with small commercial and community-related services. Village areas are served by Newfane's two major highways, Route 30 and Dover Road. The additional lands are convenient to the existing village, offer few or slight limitations for development, and can be developed for village uses without causing undue damage to resource values

The purpose of the Village District is to preserve the historic integrity and support the traditional role of the village as the focus of many of the social and economic activities which support the surrounding community, and to provide for residential and commercial development, as well as governmental uses that serve the needs of the village and the community. Vacant or underused structures and infill development should accommodate new development. Infill development should respect the historic character and function of the area. Efforts to enhance pedestrian accessibility are encouraged. The existing density should be maintained or increased in order to support the vitality of the village.

### **Village District Policies**

1. Allow a mix of commercial, residential, and civic uses.
2. Maintain the traditional social and physical character and scale in the three villages.
3. Promote opportunities for pedestrian traffic.
4. Encourage infill development and the appropriate reuse of vacant or underused existing structures in the villages.

### ***Rural District***

The Rural District comprises areas which are already committed to development, easily accessible from the existing road system, or which appear capable to be developed. Residential uses dominate the Rural District. There is a mix of commercial development along Route 30 that includes retail, service, and office uses.

The purpose of the Rural District is to accommodate low to moderate density development that is consistent with existing land uses and sensitive to the limitations of the land. Residential uses and accessory uses (including home businesses or industries) are permitted. Non-residential uses, including small business, retail, and office uses are acceptable land uses for the Rural District provided that such uses are planned to be small in scale, are located on a paved road, are not



primary or dominant uses in the area, do not adversely conflict with existing or planned residential uses, and do not adversely affect the rural character.

### **Rural District Policies**

1. Allow a mix of rural land uses including residential, home occupations, land based industries (agriculture, forestry, and resource extraction), commercial and outdoor recreation so long as these uses are compatible with one another and do not cause excessive noise, pollution or disturbance.
2. Develop lands at densities that will contain rural sprawl.
3. Restrict commercial development to paved roads. Require appropriate site planning and landscape design of commercial uses to minimize negative impacts of strip development.
4. Maintain the character of the area and minimize the burden on municipal services and facilities.
5. Promote cluster development as a means of preserving open space and productive resources.
6. Manage agricultural lands and forest lands to promote a long-term sustained yield of crops and timber products.

### **Land Use Recommendations**

1. Revise zoning regulations for conformance to the Town Plan; review minimum lot sizes, setback requirements, and permitted and conditional uses. (Planning Commission)
2. Propose Subdivision Regulations. (Planning Commission)

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT

#### *Government Structure*

The Town and Village of Newfane are separately incorporated municipalities. Village residents are also Town residents, taxpayers and voters. Town residents living outside Newfane Village do not pay Village taxes, and cannot vote on Village matters.

The Town governs services and facilities that serve all residents, including roads and planning and zoning. It is through the combined efforts of elected officials, appointed officials and hired employees that the services of the Town are provided. Town government is overseen by a five-member Selectboard. Other elected officials, including the Town Clerk, Town Treasurer, Delinquent Tax Collector, and three Listers, are also actively involved in Town government. Elected officials such as Moderator, Grand Juror, Town Agent, Constable, and Justices of the Peace serve their respective roles as may be required. There are many officials who are appointed by the Selectmen, including the Road Commissioner, Zoning Administrator, Sewage Officer, Dog Control Officer, members of the Planning Commission and the Development Review Board, who also actively participate in Town government. A host of other appointed positions and committees serve on an "as needed" basis. Hired employees include an Administrative Assistant and a five-member Road Crew which includes a Road Foreman.

Newfane Village is governed by a three-member Board of Trustees. The Village is responsible for the sidewalks, street lights and Union Hall.

#### *Facilities*

Located just south of Newfane Village on Route 30, the Newfane Town Office sits on approximately 2 acres. The building was built in 1924 and served as the grade school before being converted into the Town Offices in 1987. Currently, the Town Clerk, Treasurer, Listers, Zoning Administrator and Administrative Assistant work in the office daily. Built in 1997, the Town Garage is located on Depot Road near the Town Forest. The old Town Garage, located near the intersection of Grimes Hill Road and Depot Road in Williamsville, is used for storage. The Community Resources and Utilities Map shows the location of the various buildings.

Williamsville Hall is located in the center of Williamsville near the intersection of Dover Road and Timson Hill. Constructed in 1910, the Hall has been used as a gathering place for community functions and meetings. Recent improvements to the Hall include a new septic system, disability access, painting of the exterior and refinishing of the hardwood floors.

Union Hall, built in 1832 and located in Newfane Village just south of the Newfane Common, is owned by the Village of Newfane and operated by the Village Trustees. Over the past few years, numerous repairs and renovations have been made, including rebuilding the steeple. The Village Trustees anticipate the need to continue normal maintenance including painting in the upcoming years.

## **MOORE FREE LIBRARY**

The Moore Free Library is located on West Street in Newfane Village. The library is a private charitable trust administered by five elected trustees. It does not receive funds from the Town and is supported by volunteers. The Friends of the Library Group assists in raising additional funds and finding needed volunteers.

The library maintains a book collection and is open from 1-5 on Tuesday through Friday and 9-1 on Saturdays. While the library's primary purpose is to provide books and information, it has also provided cultural opportunities in the Town. The Robert L. Crowell Art Gallery, located on the library property, houses an art collection that was donated to the library.

In the past couple of years two additional rooms have been added to the library and the barn was renovated with handicapped accessible bathroom and ramps. While the building space needs are adequate, storage remains an issue given the various materials that the library houses. As the format of the various materials change (e.g. audio cassette to CD), storage needs will continue to change. Other needs for the library facility include downstairs storage shelving and a rug. Future projects that the library has considered include adding a small playground with swings and the development of the Crowell Nature Trail.

## **PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES**

### ***Fire Protection***

There are two volunteer fire departments in Newfane: 1) the South Newfane-Williamsville Volunteer Fire Department, located in Williamsville, and 2) the Newbrook Fire Department, located on Route 30. Both departments respond to fires, hazard conditions, and mutual aid calls to neighboring departments. Newbrook Fire Department also responds to emergency rescue calls. There are active volunteer firefighters in both fire departments, which belong to the region's mutual aid system. Each department is responsible for fire prevention within the community, maintenance of facilities and equipment, training of members, and participation in community events. Funds for these services are approved annually by Newfane voters as special appropriation items. The majority of funds needed to cover each departments' annual operating costs are secured through local fundraising efforts.

### ***Police Protection***

Newfane does not have its own police force. Instead the community relies upon the State Police, from its barracks in Brattleboro, and the Windham County Sheriff, from the department's office in Newfane Village, to respond to local complaints and emergency calls. Safety issues, including traffic/speed enforcement, have been areas of frequent citizen concern.

### ***Emergency Rescue Services***

The Newbrook Fire Department and the South Newfane-Williamsville Fire Depart act as first responders for emergency situations in Newfane. Emergency rescue and ambulance transport services are provided by Rescue, Inc. in Brattleboro and Townshend. Funds to support these services are approved annually by Newfane voters as special appropriation items.

### ***Emergency Planning***

Newfane has a Rapid Response Plan to help organize the Town in case of an emergency. The Rapid Response Plan contains basic emergency preparedness essential for responding to local emergencies. It includes critical phone numbers, contact persons, and critical facilities. Steps are listed in the plan as to what to do in case an emergency arises. The Town has appointed an Emergency Management Director who is responsible for coordinating the Town's response to emergency situations. The Town has designated five emergency shelters: Newbrook Fire House, the Town Garage, Newfane Elementary School, Newfane Congregational Church, and the Town Office.

### **SOLID WASTE**

Newfane has been a member of the Windham Solid Waste Management District (WSWMD) since 1991. The purpose of the WSWMD is to provide for the effective and efficient management of solid waste generated by its eighteen member municipalities and their residents. Membership in the District establishes a guaranteed waste disposal option for the Town.

Solid waste disposal is handled at either the WSWMD Convenience Center located in Brattleboro or through private companies which provide pick-up service throughout the region. Recyclables can be dropped off in the bins located at the Town Office in Newfane. The recycling program accommodates mixed paper, cardboard, and containers (including tin, aluminum, glass, and plastic bottles). Other services that are provided through the WSWMD include Hazardous Waste Collection days and a Swap Shop located in Brattleboro. Significant amounts of trash and other non-recyclables are being left outside of the containers, leaving a mess and causing an eyesore in the Town Office parking lot.

### **RECREATION**

The Newfane Elementary School grounds offer a ball field, a soccer field, basketball hoops, and a playground with an extensive array of climbing and swinging equipment. All of these facilities are maintained by the school and are available for public use. In May 2006, voters authorized the Newfane School District to purchase the approximately 13 acre parcel of land that is adjacent to the Newfane Elementary School. This was previously owned by the Valley Lion's Club.

The Town owns two forested parcels in Williamsville; one on the east bank of the Rock River near the old dam, the other, the Newfane Town Forest which is generally located south of the new Town Garage. Under the direction of the Newfane Conservation Commission, three hiking trails were created in the Newfane Town Forest.

Aldrich swimming hole (Indian Love Call) is located on private lands along the Rock River off of Depot Road and has been used for swimming and picnicking for many years. This swimming area has been the focus of public debate regarding ways in which to control unsafe parking, deter trespassing on private lands, and mitigate health hazards resulting from a lack of available sanitary facilities.

The West River Trail is being planned in communities both north and south of Newfane. The goal is to establish a 36-mile scenic trail through the West River Valley, stretching from

Londonderry to Brattleboro. To date, trail work has been concentrated in Londonderry, Jamaica, and Townshend. When the project becomes viable in Newfane, the Town will evaluate its role in the development of the trail through Newfane.

## MEETING PLACES

There are a number of community facilities that offer places for the public to gather (see Table 5). Some of the facilities are owned by the Town while others are owned by separate entities.

**Table 5: Meeting Places in the Town of Newfane**

Meeting Place	Location	Accommodation
Newfane Town Office	Route 30	50 people
Williamsville Hall (formerly Williamsville Grange)	Dover Road, Williamsville Village	125 people
Moore Free Library	West Street, Newfane Village	50 people
Union Hall	Newfane Village Common	150 people
Newfane Elementary School	Route 30	100+ people
Newbrook Fire Department	Route 30	125 people

## CEMETERIES

Table 6 provides an inventory of Town-maintained cemeteries. All spaces in the Town-owned cemeteries are currently committed.

**Table 6: Inventory of Town Maintained Cemeteries**

Name	Location	First Burial	Number of Graves
Betterly	Dummerston Town Line	1825	26
Wheeler	Sunset Lake Road	1817	22
Newfane Hill	Newfane Hill Road	1795	168
Perry Family	Near Brookline Bridge	1837	11
Parish	Parish Hill Road	1811	78
Wardsboro Road	Wardsboro Road (right side)	1812	90
Wiswall Hill Road	Wiswall Hill Road (top)	1827	44
Holland	Route 30	1795	28

## HISTORIC RESOURCES

Many of Newfane's historic buildings have retained the essence of their original historic character, and together, they form an excellent example of a well-preserved Vermont village scape. This is particularly true of Newfane Village which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, as well as the smaller villages of Williamsville and South Newfane.

The Newfane Village Historic District includes most of the Village of Newfane, incorporating some 60 principal buildings. The only other structure in Newfane which is currently on the National Register is the Williamsville Covered Bridge, built in the early 1870s. The National Historic Register affords historic structures protection from any adverse impacts resulting from

projects involving federal funds; it may also make available financial assistance for restoration and preservation.

The following are listed on the Vermont State Register of Historic Sites and Structures Survey and are identified as having significant historical value, and as such, deserving of protection and continuing maintenance so that they may continue to contribute to the Town character and quality of life:

- Williamsville Village
- South Newfane Village
- Newfane Hill Settlement
- Concrete arch bridge (Bridge #12) over the Rock River in Williamsville; built in 1934
- Steel truss bridge (Bridge #49) over the Rock River on Parish Hill Road in South Newfane; built in 1936.

## EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

### *Elementary and Secondary Education*

Newfane is a member of the Windham Central Supervisory Union which includes the towns of Jamaica, Townshend, Newfane, Brookline, Marlboro, Wardsboro, Dover, and Winhall. Students from Newfane attend the Newfane Elementary School from kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade. A comparison of enrollment figures, as well as some other education trends is shown in Table 7. After a period of sharp increases in the 1980s, enrollment at the Elementary School hit a peak of 187 students in 1992. Since 2000, enrollment has remained relatively steady.

Table 7: Newfane Elementary School Education Trends by School Year

	2001- 2002	2002- 2003	2003- 2004	2004- 2005
Total School Enrollment <sup>5</sup>	118	116	122	121
Student/Teacher Ratio	10.7	12.5	12.1	11.5
Home Study	2	2	2	2
Classroom Teachers	9	8	8.10	9.5
Other Teachers	3	2.6	3.15	1.8
Instructional Aides	3.5	7	9.4	6.4
Average Teacher Salary	n/a.	\$36,796	\$41,959	\$41,267

Source: Vermont Department of Education

The last addition to the Newfane Elementary School was completed in 1996. The school is comprised of a library, administrative wing, conference room, as well as classrooms. A playground and ball fields are also located at the school. Outside school hours, the facility is used by various organizations on an ongoing basis.

Students from Newfane attend Leland and Gray Union High School, which is located in Townshend, from 7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The facility currently has a student body of approximately 400.

<sup>5</sup> Data is based on total number of students enrolled as of October 1 of a given year. The data includes Early Essential Education, Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten.

### ***Childcare***

In addition to education for school-aged children, child care and early childhood education are important components of the Newfane community and its future. Although childcare is not a service provided by the community, it can be an important concern for existing and prospective families, especially in regards to finding quality, affordable service.

As of March 2006, the Vermont Department for Children and Families Bright Futures Child Care Information System reported that there were 3 registered child care homes and one licensed child care center operating in Newfane.

The local demand for child care services is difficult to measure by looking at statistics alone because they do not take into account stay-at-home parents, out-of-town childcare options or alternative childcare options that parents might have available to them. Census data reported that in 2000, 464 families resided in Newfane and 46.8% (217) of these families had children under the age of 18. Of the families with children under 18, 13% were headed by a female with no husband present. The percentage in Newfane is smaller than both the Vermont (19%) and Windham County (22%) average.

As illustrated in the Community Profile section of this Plan, there has been a decrease in the number of Newfane residents that are of the typical childbearing age. However, there has also been an increase in the number of residents since 1990. If the Town continues to grow, it is possible that there will be more working parents moving to Newfane and therefore, a need for additional local child care.

### ***Adult Education***

Adult education opportunities for Newfane residents are available regionally. The Community College of Vermont has a learning center in Brattleboro that offers associate degrees, career-related certificates, and credit and non-credit training programs.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

The federal Telecommunications Act of 1996 governs federal, state and local government oversight of wireless facility siting. The Act preserves state and local regulatory authority for the placement, construction or modification of wireless facilities with some limitations. In 2002, the Selectboard adopted an interim telecommunications bylaw that is no longer in effect. Newfane should implement a telecommunications ordinance or bylaw to ensure that the placement of wireless facilities are sited in appropriate locations and satisfy applicable public health and safety concerns.

### **Community Facilities and Utilities Policies**

1. Provide adequate public facilities and services without exceeding the Town's fiscal capacity.
2. Plan community facility improvements to minimize development of actively managed agricultural and forest lands.

3. The take over of any privately owned facility such as roads (which must first be built to Town specifications) or water system and sewage systems (which would need to comply with State regulations) shall only be undertaken after careful study of its fiscal impact on the Town.
4. Implement strategies for reducing and/or minimizing increases in the overall cost of Town government.
5. Make new investments in the library in a manner that will serve the community needs.
6. Support the fire departments, rescue services and law enforcement services which directly serve Newfane residents and businesses.
7. Design and site development so as to minimize the risks of fire and to maximize the fire departments' ability to combat fires; designs shall be in conformance with the manpower and equipment capabilities of the fire departments.
8. Prepare for and respond effectively to an emergency situation through the appropriate use of community resources.
9. Manage Newfane's solid waste in an efficient, affordable, and environmentally sound manner.
10. Encourage the reduction of the overall quantity of waste generated in Newfane and support programs that provide public education for the safe disposal of hazardous waste materials generated within Newfane.
11. Provide a variety of recreational opportunities for all Newfane residents.
12. Provide high quality educational programs and amenities which creatively and flexibly meet state mandates and adequately prepare the community's students for life.
13. Integrate the school and community and support the use of the Newfane Elementary School for community activities.
14. Provide the highest quality education as is possible while keeping within the financial capabilities of the Town.
15. Support Town and regional efforts to increase the availability and affordability of child care.
16. Maintain and improve the availability of education and vocational training opportunities and resources to develop the full potential of all residents.
17. Protect, maintain and encourage the use of Newfane's historic structures.



18. Require that the placement, construction or modification of wireless facilities comply with Newfane's land use and policies.
19. Encourage the expansion of telecommunications receiving equipment at existing facilities, if the expansion is deemed to be in the best interest of the public.

### **Community Facilities and Services Recommendations**

1. Seek assistance from appropriate state and regional agencies. (All Local Boards)
2. Participate in appropriate state and local development reviews to enhance the Town's ability to manage development in a way that minimizes impacts on public infrastructure and facilities. (Selectboard or its designee, Planning Commission)
3. Investigate options to bury power lines in Newfane Village. (Village Trustees)
4. Educate the public regarding the history and value of historically and architecturally significant structures and sites in Newfane (Town, Historical Society)
6. Project necessary school capital expenditures. (School Board)
7. Continue to encourage the participation of qualified volunteers from the larger community. (School Board, School Administration)
8. Explore opportunities for regional programs and service as a means of reducing educational costs while meeting educational needs. (School Board, School Administration)
10. Propose and enact a Telecommunications Ordinance. (Selectboard, Planning Commission)

## TRANSPORTATION

### EXISTING TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Newfane is located at the crossroads for a significant portion of the traffic that moves throughout the region. The Town is located between Brattleboro, the region's economic center of activity, and the various ski areas and bedroom communities to the north and west. These areas are linked by two major roadways, Route 30 which travels through the eastern portion of Newfane, and the Depot and Dover Roads, which pass through Williamsville and South Newfane and on to Route 100 where tourists can have access to several ski areas.

There are nearly 70 miles of roads in Newfane, the majority of which are Town roads (see Table 8). The Town's network of roadways has been categorized by the state's town highway classification system, which refers primarily to highway conditions (see the Transportation System Map). This system is the basis on which the state allocates highway aid to municipalities.

**Table 8: Newfane Highway Mileage Summary**

Class	1	2	3	4	Total Mileage <sup>6</sup>
Town Roadways	0	16.9	47.05	0	63.95
State Highways: Route 30					5.662
Total					69.612

Source: Vermont Agency of Transportation Highway Maps, February 2003

The Selectboard is responsible for the maintenance and repair of public roads in Newfane. Since 1998, there have been no substantial road projects in Newfane, however emergency repairs have been made on an as-needed basis. The Selectboard is also responsible for issuing access and excess weight permits.

Newfane also has adopted local policies on road and bridge design specifications. These serve to ensure that replacement of facilities will be up to current design standards and consistent throughout the Town. Using these specifications also helps to reduce town matching requirements in some highway grant programs. Newfane currently has uniform road specifications for all roads in the Town.

Two villages, Newfane Village and Williamsville have partial sidewalk systems. The sidewalk system in Newfane Village is highly used and dates back to the early 1900's. All of the major destinations within the Village are conveniently accessed by foot. Approximately 44% of sidewalk in Newfane Village is located along Route 30 and under state jurisdiction. The remaining 56% is located along local streets. The Town of Newfane assumes maintenance responsibility for local streets in Newfane Village while the Village assumes maintenance responsibility for the sidewalks. In order to address the design and condition of the sidewalks, fill gaps in the existing pedestrian system, increase pedestrian safety, and enhance the historic sidewalks, the Village of Newfane received both local funding and funding from the Vermont Agency of Transportation to make sidewalk and traffic calming improvements to portions of

<sup>6</sup> Excludes Class 4 mileage

West Street in the Village (see Transportation Map). Construction of the improvements began in 2006.

### ***Traffic Calming***

Traffic calming is a term used to describe various design and traffic techniques intended to reduce speeds or redirect traffic flow. There are a number of techniques including speed tables, rumble strips, curb bump-outs, lane shifts, narrower streets and round-a-bouts that can be used to reduce the speed at which automobiles travel. In the summer of 2005, state funding was used to implement dynamic striping on Route 30 as a means to slow drivers down as they entered Newfane Village from both the north and south. A Traffic Calming Committee is actively seeking to implement various traffic calming methods.

### ***Parking***

There is a lack of adequate parking spaces in the Town's three villages and the closeness of parked cars to fast-moving thru-traffic continues to be a safety concern. The lack of safe parking is most noticeable in the vicinity of each of the general stores. The narrow road and pedestrian-motor traffic mix works so long as drivers slow for the marked village speeds and pedestrians and local bikers remain alert.

### ***Bridges***

Newfane has 42 bridges. In 2005, the bridge between Brookline and Newfane was reconstructed. Ninety percent of the reconstruction costs were paid by the State of Vermont. Increased car and heavy traffic has taken its toll on the bridges. The Selectboard has placed weight restrictions on several bridges. The Green Iron Bridge (BR-49) that connects to Dover Road in South Newfane is currently accommodating heavy truck traffic that is being detoured around the Williamsville Covered Bridge. In order for the weight and permit limits to be effective in slowing bridge deterioration, aggressive enforcement measures need to be taken.

The only remaining covered bridge in Newfane is the Williamsville Covered Bridge. Located on Dover Road, this bridge between Williamsville and South Newfane has served as an historic focal point in the valley for residents and tourists. It is listed as an historic structure with the National Register of Historic Places and the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation. While it serves local traffic as well as tourists through the valley, it is currently off limits to heavier transport, including logging, emergency and some delivery vehicles which must detour one extra mile between the villages. The bridge currently accommodates a 20,000 lbs. weight limit and will be rebuilt to accommodate about 40,000 lbs. Historic bridges are a particularly valuable cultural asset of many towns and decisions about how to preserve and use them (and sometimes whether to do so) can be extremely difficult. Concerns about rehabilitating or replacing obsolete bridges and the desire to preserve rural or scenic quality often conflict.

### ***Public Transit***

Public transportation options are limited, as is the case in most rural communities. The automobile is, and will likely continue to be in the foreseeable future, the principal means of transportation for Newfane residents. Connecticut River Transit (CRT) provides fixed-route, paratransit, and elderly/disabled service for Newfane residents. In 2006, a fixed-route bus began running along Route 30. Currently the bus leaves Townshend around 8:00 a.m. and returns from

Brattleboro around 3:00 p.m. There is no designated bus stop in Newfane so the public can either flag the bus down or call for a pick-up. The Town contributes towards CRT's operational costs through appropriations approved at the annual Town Meeting.

**FUTURE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM**

The following are the major elements of Newfane's vision for its transportation system (see also Projects to Enhance the Existing Transportation System Map):

***Road and Bridge Improvements***

Newfane must continue to maintain a safe and efficient road network. Table 9 illustrates several transportation improvement projects that need to be undertaken. Newfane's roads, whether public or private, will continue to be constructed or upgraded to meet Town-specified standards.

**Table 9: Summary of Substantial Transportation Improvements**

<b>Projects</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Schedule</b>
Bridge 14 – South Newfane Bridge	Bridge reconstruction with sidewalk	2009 tentative
Williamsville Covered Bridge	Bridge rehabilitation	2009 tentative
Grimes Hill Road	Bank Stabilization	
Depot Road	Bank Stabilization	

The Town is working on an infrastructure inventory that will include the condition of roads as well as bridges and culverts. A computer-based system, known as the Road Surface Management System (RSMS), is used to inventory and evaluate local road conditions. This will enable the Town to objectively "screen" all local roadways in order to assess their condition, and to subsequently develop a schedule of roadway maintenance needs. This maintenance schedule can be a critical element in adequately budgeting for the ongoing repair of the community's network of local roads in a manner which does not unreasonably burden taxpayers. In addition, the Town will maintain an electronic list of all bridges and culverts in Town, including condition, material, and dimension. By having up-to-date RSMS and a bridge and culvert inventory (meaning updated every 3 years), Newfane can potentially reduce the required local funding match on road projects by up to one half.

***Sidewalks, Paths, and Bicycle Accommodation***

Walking as a form of transportation should be enhanced in Newfane. The need to separate different modes of transportation within congested areas has long been discussed in Newfane. As noted above, sidewalk improvements have been made in Newfane Village, however, the desire for a pathway between the villages of South Newfane and Williamsville still exists. In all villages, where appropriate and feasible, sidewalks and crosswalks should be provided to accommodate pedestrian safety.

The need to identify biking routes throughout the Town is ongoing, especially where the shoulders are very narrow. On the most traveled road, Route 30, the shoulders nearly disappear at both entrances to Newfane Village.

### ***Traffic Calming/Speed Enforcement***

Speeding on Dover Road and Route 30 continues to be a serious problem and threat to the safety of residents. Traffic calming techniques designed to reduce speeds or redirect traffic flow have the potential to mitigate this problem and should be explored and implemented, when feasible. The Traffic Calming Committee should continue to work with the Selectboard to bring forth traffic calming solutions that deal with the speeding issues in Town. In addition, speed limits should continue to be enforced.

### ***Road Policies***

In order to preserve the rural character of Newfane, an evaluation and revision of the Town's road design standards should be undertaken. Street design should take into account not only function and efficiency but safety and aesthetics as well. Particularly in low density residential areas, this will require a delicate balancing of accommodating the typical and usual users of the road while at the same time allowing access by emergency vehicles and other trucks. The State of Vermont revised the Vermont State Design Standards in 1997 to provide clear technical direction to the designers of transportation projects in Vermont and to achieve roadway and bridge designs which provide access, mobility and safety for users, and which are also sensitive to the social and environmental context of Vermont (Vermont State Design Standards, 1997).

### ***Access Management***

The development of access management standards and guidelines will offer an additional and practical way to promote safe, efficient traffic operations and avoid undesirable development practices along highways. Access management standards might include requirements for minimum separation distance between driveways or between driveways and a corner or intersection; driveways that serve more than one lot; parking areas that serve more than one lot/business; circulation/access between two lots; and, where appropriate directing access onto secondary streets, rather than main arterials.

All access (curb cuts, driveway permits) are subject to the Town's "Access and Work in the Right-of-Way" Policy which requires the Selectboard to issue a permit. Newfane's present Zoning Bylaw requires the Development Review Board to consider certain traffic-related criteria during reviews. Nonetheless, the Newfane Zoning Bylaw could be updated to include best access management practices.

### ***Growth Considerations***

There is a strong link between transportation facilities and land use patterns. The capacity of Newfane's roads and bridges plays an important role in defining potential opportunities and limitations for growth throughout the community and therefore directly influences where development can and cannot feasibly be located. Local roads which are excessively narrow or steep or which have bridges with limited capacity have a significant impact on safe and efficient delivery of essential residential services, such as oil and gas for home heating, school bus transportation, and public safety services. Keeping development away from these areas has the dual advantage of helping the community control the high cost of road maintenance required in areas with steep topography and other physical limitation and preserves the character of the Town's rural areas.

### ***Public Transit***

A dedicated stop along the CRT bus route from Townshend to Brattleboro is desired. Having a predictable pick-up and drop-off location may enhance the service for Newfane residents. Given the need to accommodate long-term parking, the Town Office may be an appropriate location for a bus stop.

### **Transportation Policies**

1. Provide a convenient road system with service that is commensurate with need while respecting the natural environment, maintain the community's rural character and historic sites, and ensuring public safety.
2. Maintain Town roads, bridges, and sidewalks to safely accommodate vehicular traffic and pedestrian movement.
3. Require highway projects to be consistent with the Newfane Town Plan.
4. Maintain the Williamsville Covered Bridge as an historic structure in its current alignment if structurally feasible for school transportation, emergency vehicles and highway maintenance vehicles.
5. Encourage energy-efficient modes of transportation, such as a regional public transit, carpooling, bicycling, and walking.
6. Minimize strip development along Route 30 and other main thoroughfares.
7. Make Town roads that are now, or will be, reduced to legal trail status available for non-motorized recreational purposes.
8. No improvement of the main road from East Dover to Williamsville Station should be constructed for the specific purpose of expediting motor traffic flow to or from the Deerfield Valley recreation areas.

### **Transportation Recommendations**

1. Continue to pursue state and federal grants for the maintenance and improvements of the Town's street and highway system, bridges, sidewalks, and other improvements where feasible. (Selectboard, Village Trustees)
2. Review Vermont Agency of Transportation proposed construction projects to ensure consistency with the Newfane Town Plan. (Selectboard)
3. Encourage public participation in transportation project hearings to get feed-back from residents. (Selectboard)
4. Work on traffic calming measures for of Route 30 and Dover Road. (Selectboard, Traffic Calming Committee)

5. Continue to review sight distance when issuing access permits. (Selectboard)
6. Research the Town's ancient roads and make a list of those roads which should be retained. (Selectboard, Planning Commission)
7. Research and propose Access Management standards for appropriate roads in Town. (Planning Commission, Traffic Calming Committee)
8. Research, propose, and adopt updated road specifications. (Selectboard or designee)
9. Work to establish a permanent bus stop in Newfane Village. (Selectboard)

## HOUSING

Physically, socially, and economically, housing is one of the most important elements in the lives of most Newfane residents. In order to maintain a stable and demographically diverse community, an adequate supply of local housing is necessary. Maintaining an adequate supply means that sufficient numbers of housing units should be available at varied prices, sizes, and locations to meet the needs of Newfane's changing population.

### EXISTING CONDITIONS

#### *Housing Stock*

The Community Profile chapter of this Plan provides information on housing trends in Newfane. Table 10 provides a summary of Newfane's housing in 1990 and 2000. The conversion of second homes to year-round resident housing has also accompanied the recent increase in population. From 1990 to 2000, only 3 dwellings were added to the overall housing unit stock. In 2000, 88% of Newfane residents live in single family detached dwellings. Mobile homes account for 6% of all housing units and two-or-more-family dwellings (6%) are the next most prevalent accommodation types.

**Table 10: Newfane Housing Stock and Occupancy Status**

<b>Unit type</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1990 % of total</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2000 % of total</b>
total housing units	974		977	
occupied housing	605	62%	693	71%
owner occupied	477	49%	573	57%
renter occupied	128	13%	120	12%
seasonal	331	34%	255	26%
vacant	38	4%	29	3%
Average household size	2.64		2.42	
Number of households	616		693	

*Source: U.S. Census*

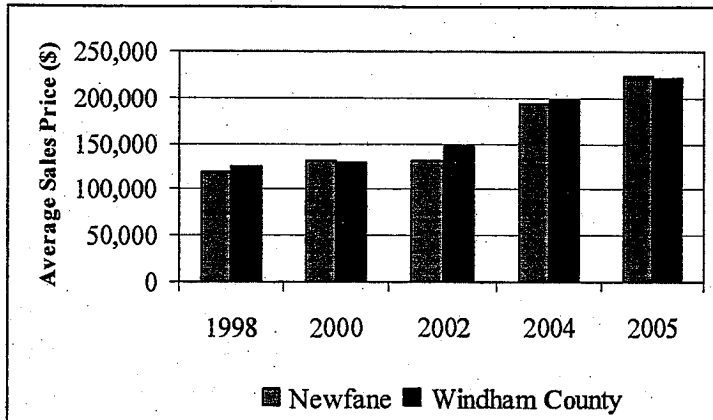
Information from the 2000 Census showed that there were 112 occupied rental housing units and 7 vacant rental units in Newfane. Therefore, rental units account for approximately 12% of all of Newfane's housing units. Based on a sample on the 112 occupied rental housing units, approximately 64% of the rental units were in single family homes while two-family structures accommodated approximately 19% of the rental units.

#### *Affordable Housing*

Meeting the housing needs of low and moderate income citizens in Newfane is a challenge. Housing prices continue to rise in Newfane (see Figure 5). The Town does not have a large supply of mobile homes or multi-family housing units which, by their very nature, are often most affordable to low and moderate income households. There are currently no subsidized housing units in Town.



**Figure 5: Housing Cost Trends of Primary Residences Sold, Newfane and Windham County**



Source: Vermont Department of Taxes

Affordable housing is housing that a family with an income at or below the median income for the area can afford without spending more than 30% of its income on monthly housing costs.<sup>7</sup> One way to determine if housing is affordable is to use household income to determine what a household can afford. Table 11 calculates typical house values that various households could afford. The median income is determined by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The monthly expense assumes that no more than 30% of total income is spent on housing costs. To calculate the typical house value the Vermont Housing Data mortgage calculator was used. This value assumed payments for mortgage, property tax and insurance on a house bought with a 5 percent down payment and a 30-year fixed mortgage at 6.5%.

**Table 11: Household Incomes, Monthly Expenditures, and House Value in 2005**

Household Size	2005 Median Income	Monthly Expense	Affordable House Value
One Person	\$40,000	\$1,000	\$110,000
Two Person	\$45,688	\$1,143	\$125,000
Three Person	\$51,375	\$1,284	\$140,000
Four Person	\$57,100	\$1,427	\$155,000

Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Vermont Housing Data

With the median sales price of houses in Newfane in 2005 at \$170,000 it is clear that even median income households have difficulty finding homes to buy in Newfane. It is important to note that “median” divides a group in half, meaning that half are above the median figure and half are below. For those that make less than the median income the housing situation is even more difficult. Therefore, a variety of housing types are needed to meet the needs within the affordable category.

Newfane has recognized the need to promote affordable housing. In accordance with state law, the Zoning Bylaw permits accessory units and treats them as single family uses. The zoning bylaw also allows more than one dwelling unit on a property without requiring a subdivision if adequate acreage and setbacks are available. Newfane and Dummerston operate a Housing Rehabilitation Program. The program is designed to improve and maintain housing of income-

<sup>7</sup> Monthly housing costs for renters includes rent and utilities while monthly housing costs for homeowners include mortgage payments, insurance and property taxes.

eligible residents by rehabilitating existing housing to meet or exceed HUD standards. It is a revolving low-interest loan program.

Several regional programs also address housing affordability. The Brattleboro Area Community Land Trust provides affordable rental housing to low and moderate income households, including families and individuals, persons with disabilities or special needs, and the elderly. The Land Trust can also provide income-eligible homebuyers with a subsidy towards the purchase of a qualifying home. In addition, homebuyers under this program have access to below market rate mortgages as well as financial assistance with closing costs. The Land Trust is committed to preserving the affordability of housing in perpetuity by conveying parcels of land to individual homeowners through long-term land leases. Southeastern Vermont Community Action Agency (SEVCA) provides referrals to area shelters, landlord lists, and assists individuals in completing applications for affordable housing possibilities.

## **FUTURE HOUSING**

Rural housing development trends in Newfane raise land use issues and concerns that make it important to have clear regulatory tools in place to mitigate the costs of dispersed, large lot development on the cost and effective delivery of municipal and community services, the cost of local housing, the impact of parcelization, and the impact to Newfane's rural character and natural resource base.

Newfane will continue to work to address the need for affordable housing in the Town. Working with the private sector, nonprofit organizations, and other agencies, Newfane will support housing programs and services that will enable the community to meet basic needs for decent, safe, and affordable housing, including that needed by families, low-income households, and special needs populations.

Newfane should explore various strategies for encouraging the construction of housing to meet the needs of median, moderate and low income households. Strategies that the Town should consider include density bonuses, permitting cluster housing developments, working with the Brattleboro Area Community Land Trust, and investigating centralized water and/or sewer in the villages.

### **Housing Policies**

1. Promote the development of a diversity of safe and affordable housing to meet the range of needs of all Vermont residents, including those of low and moderate incomes.
2. Promote housing development within the historic settlement areas of Newfane, South Newfane and Williamsville villages.
3. Encourage collaboration with non-profit housing organizations, government agencies, private lenders, developers and builders in pursuing options to meet the housing needs of local residents.

4. Preserve the rural qualities of Newfane by siting new housing so as to respect the existing natural environment and preserve the greatest amount of open space.
5. Support housing locations that are in close proximity to village centers.

### **Housing Recommendations**

1. Continue to promote the Housing Rehabilitation Program and other options for owners to rehabilitate housing structures so that they are safe and sanitary and can remain active in the Town's housing stock. (Selectboard)
2. Make available information on opportunities for homeowners to add an accessory dwelling unit. (Zoning Administrator)
3. Review, and revise as necessary, the Zoning Bylaws to facilitate affordable housing. (Planning Commission)
4. Address possible changes in lot size to accommodate better clustering. (Planning Commission)

## **NATURAL RESOURCE USE & CONSERVATION**

### **WETLANDS**

Wetlands are a unique and valuable natural resource in Vermont. Wetlands are generally defined as permanently or seasonally wet areas which have saturated soils at least part of the year, support wetland plant species and contain aquatic life. Marshes, swamps, bogs and seasonally flooded fields are examples. Primary wetland values include fish and wildlife habitat, flood and erosion protection, nutrient and pollution filtration, ground water recharge, aesthetic diversity, and sites for educational and recreational activities. Several state and federal laws provide protection for wetlands including the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers permits, Act 250, and the Vermont Significant Wetlands Regulations. In conjunction with these laws, local planning and regulation measures are essential to the long- term protection of wetland areas.

"National Wetlands Inventory Maps" have been provided to the Town of Newfane to assist the community in identifying "Significant Wetland" sites. Significant wetlands are categorized as Class I and II wetlands. These maps delineate the location of known wetlands in the Town; wetlands information is shown on the Natural Resources Map. Newfane has many wetland areas consisting of upland forested wetlands, small ponds, stream wetlands, shrub swamps, and emergent marshes.

### **Wetlands Policies**

1. Plan and implement development around Significant Wetlands in a manner which maintains the functions of the wetland and does not result in runoff or direct discharge into them.
2. Protect Significant Wetlands from development by maintaining an undisturbed, naturally vegetated buffer strip around the wetland edge sufficient to ensure the integrity of the wetland.

### **Wetlands Recommendations**

1. Amend the zoning bylaw to require a minimum of a vegetated buffer strip around the edge of a mapped or otherwise documented wetland. (Planning Commission)

### **GROUNDWATER RESOURCES**

Groundwater is an extremely valuable natural resource in the Town of Newfane because it provides the primary source of potable drinking water for residents. Groundwater is water that has infiltrated into the soil through sand, gravel, or rock. The area where groundwater is stored is called an aquifer. Aquifer recharge areas for the Town of Newfane are not currently mapped.

The greatest threats to groundwater resources are created by human activity. Failed or inadequately designed septic systems are potential sources of groundwater pollution. Of particular concern is the water quality in Newfane's villages, where lot sizes are small and development is dense. Failed septic systems can affect the quality of life, threaten public health and the environment. Septic system failures are not easily remedied due to the density of existing

on-site septic and water systems.

Other potential sources of groundwater contamination include landfills, abandoned dumps, leaking underground petroleum storage tanks, salt and treated sand storage piles, manure storage areas, fertilizer and pesticide applications, and uncontrolled dumping of waste, homeowner products and petroleum. Federal and state regulations exist to help protect groundwater quality. However, research, planning and regulation measures, and sound land use practices carried out at the local level are also needed to protect Newfane's groundwater supplies.

### **Groundwater Policies**

1. Protect areas that are identified as having high groundwater potential by limiting development
2. Prohibit development in areas where the topography and soil conditions are likely to cause contamination of surface or subsurface waters or the failure of waste disposal systems.
3. Require that all new or modified on-site septic systems are properly designed and permitted in accordance with state rules and regulations.
4. The underground and above ground storage of fuels, chemical substances and other toxic or hazardous materials shall only be permitted in full compliance with all applicable state regulations (Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation and Department of Labor and Industry) and local zoning.
5. Require that businesses comply with all applicable state regulations pertaining to the storage and management of chemical and toxic substances and hazardous waste.
6. Prohibit road salt storage areas from locating within the 100-year flood hazard area, well head protection areas, or shoreland areas of surface waters and wetlands.
7. Store road salt and salted sand on impervious surfaces and undercover.

### **Groundwater Recommendations**

1. Evaluate the need for future community water and/or sewage systems in Newfane's village areas. (Selectboard, Planning Commission)
2. Make information available to landowners on the proper maintenance and care of wells and septic systems. (Town Health Officer)

### **SURFACE WATER RESOURCES**

Surface waters (rivers, streams, brooks, ponds and some wetlands) and their surrounding shorelands are prominent landscape features in Newfane. They provide important fish and wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities for local residents and visitors, and contribute significantly to the rural character and scenic beauty of the community.

Newfane's major surface waters, depicted on the Natural Resources Map and the Existing Land Use Map, include the following rivers, brooks and ponds: West River, Rock River, Baker Brook, Smith Brook, Hunter Brook, Wardsboro Brook, Adams Brook, Joy Brook, Marlboro Branch, and Kenney Pond. There are a number of smaller privately developed ponds in the Town as well, some of which provide water for fire fighting. The majority of the local rivers, brooks and streams are classified by the State of Vermont as Class B Waters. This classification means that the water quality is suitable for bathing and recreation, irrigation and agricultural uses, has good fish habitat and aesthetic value, and is acceptable for public water supply with filtration and disinfection. There are some streams in the southeastern portion of Town near Lost Mile Road that are classified by the State of Vermont as A waters because they feed into the drinking water supply for the Town of Brattleboro.

The Rock River, Baker Brook, Joy Brook, Adams Brook and Smith Brook contain significant populations of game fish, including brook trout, brown trout, Atlantic salmon, and small-mouth bass. Local brooks and rivers also contain limited, yet important, threatened and endangered species and wildlife habitat (see section on Wildlife) and have been identified as having unique landscape features, including rock outcrops along the Rock River and Adams Brook, and historic resources along the Rock River and Smith Brook.

Two important issues associated with the protection of Newfane's surface waters are water quality and wildlife habitat. By protecting these values, the Town will also protect many other values and uses associated with surface waters and their adjacent shorelands. Protecting water quality and wildlife habitat will, to a great extent, depend upon maintaining the integrity of local shorelands. Removal of vegetation along the stream banks and adjacent shorelands can raise stream temperatures and, in turn, lead to deterioration of cold-water fisheries. Poor streambank management can cause stream sedimentation which eliminates fish spawning and nursery areas and stresses adult fish. In addition, the removal of vegetation along the shoreland areas can destroy habitat which is important for waterfowl reproduction and winter deer movements. Property owners should also be aware that streambank erosion can result in lost land and lowered property values.

Newfane falls entirely within the West River Watershed. In 1999, the West River Watershed Alliance (WRWA) created an action plan which included a Riparian Forested Ecosystem Inventory of the Rock River sub-basin which was funded by the Federal Clean Water Act (604b). The project, completed largely by Newfane residents, surveyed the condition of the banks of the Rock River from its headwaters in Dover to the West River.

The West River Watershed Alliance has become the Basin 11 Council (Basin 11 includes the watersheds of the Saxtons, West and Williams rivers) as part of Vermont's over-all basin planning initiative. The water quality monitoring service of the West River, conducted most recently by the Bonnyvale Environmental Education Center, was taken over and expanded by WRWA. Additional services to Newfane and other Basin 11 towns include an ongoing multi-phase stream geomorphic assessment of the entire West River Basin, structural enhancements for public access sites along the West River, riparian buffer inventories of the West River and its tributaries, and a continuing long-term water quality monitoring and runoff evaluation.

Newfane's current zoning bylaw provides some measure of surface water protection. Construction of dams is not permitted on many local brooks, structures must be setback from streams a minimum distance of 75 feet, and special pollution controls address surface water contamination from heat, liquid and solid waste.

### **Surface Water Policies**

1. Maintain Newfane's surface waters and shorelands in their natural state and maintain or enhance the chemical, physical and biological quality of Newfane's surface waters.
2. Prohibit the removal of mature trees and activities which kill or injure vegetation so as to cause destabilization and/or erosion of stream banks.
3. Require that new development within or adjacent to shoreland areas be designed to result in stable river and stream banks and cause minimal disturbance to the riparian environment.
4. Require that development or construction activity not result in increased rates of storm water runoff to Newfane's surface waters or cause surface waters to become silted, contaminated or otherwise degraded.
5. Prohibit the construction of private in-stream ponds and dams.

### **Surface Water Recommendations**

1. Establish zoning techniques such as vegetated buffers and overlay districts to protect surface waters and propose amendments to the Zoning Bylaw where appropriate. (Planning Commission)

### **FLOOD HAZARD AREAS**

Areas in Newfane which are subject to periodic flooding have been mapped by the federal government on the National Flood Insurance Rate Maps, incorporated herein by reference. These areas constitute the 100-year floodplain whereby there is a 1% chance of flooding in any given year. They include the West River, portions of Smith Brook, the Rock River, and the Marlboro Branch (also see mapped flood plain areas on the Existing Land Use Map).

The National Flood Insurance Program, in which Newfane participates, requires the Town to adopt strict flood hazard area regulations. Any development within these flood hazard areas must either be flood-proofed or elevated above the base flood elevation. Development is restricted from the central portion of the flood hazard area, known as the floodway, in order to allow the unrestricted flow of flood waters downstream.

### **Flood Hazard Area Policies**

1. Devote lands within flood-hazard areas to agricultural and open space uses whenever feasible. Structures and fill shall not be allowed in the flood way.

2. Minimize disturbance of soil in flood hazard areas from earth removal, soil compaction and paving activities.
3. Require all development within flood hazard areas to be carried out in a manner which is consistent with prevailing local, state and federal flood hazard regulations.

### **Flood Hazard Area Recommendations**

1. As necessary, review and update the flood hazard area section in the Zoning Bylaw to maintain full compliance with the National Flood Insurance Program. (Planning Commission)

### **WILDLIFE RESOURCES & SPECIAL NATURAL FEATURES**

The presence of abundant and diversified plant and animal species enhances the overall quality of life in Newfane by serving important ecological, educational, scenic and recreational functions. Fish, wildlife, and many plant populations also provide a practical barometer to the quality of Newfane's environment. Wildlife habitat and natural areas which support unique plant and animal populations require special protection from development activity.

Perhaps the greatest threat to Newfane's significant upland wildlife species is the gradual process of "parcelization" caused by dividing larger holdings into small lots. As land becomes fragmented, populations of large predators and herbivores, such as bear, coyotes, deer, moose, bobcat, fisher, and many valued songbirds that are normally found in wooded habitats characterized by less intense human use, are diminished.

Planning so that large portions of a town (and adjoining communities) are left forested minimizes many of the detrimental effects of parcelization on wildlife without sacrificing all the benefits to people that development often brings. Forests do not have to be untouched wilderness and are often better if they are not. Low density development, clustering of land uses which leave large expansions of connected wooded habitat, and buffer strips along waterways, will help to protect important wildlife habitat and corridors.

#### ***Deer Wintering Areas***

Deer wintering areas provide relief from harsh climatic conditions. Wintering areas can be utilized by generations of deer over many decades if appropriate habitat conditions are maintained. Residential, commercial and industrial development within or adjacent to a deer wintering area decreases the amount of land available to deer and erodes a town's deer population, eventually decreasing the number of deer within the town.

The Natural Resources Map identifies deer wintering areas within the Town of Newfane as inventoried by the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife. Approximately 25% of Newfane's land area is designated as important deer wintering range, with the greatest concentration of lands located in the central western and northeastern areas of the community.



### ***Bear Habitat***

The black bear is a sensitive environmental indicator of the quality of Vermont's remote forestland. According to the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department, Newfane contains substantial bear production habitat. This area encompasses the most westerly one-third of Newfane's geographic area and serves as a gateway from the east to the corridor of bear habitat which runs throughout the entire central portion of Vermont.

### ***Rare Species and Exemplary Natural Communities***

There are some animal and plant species in Newfane that are considered rare and/or endangered by state and federal guidelines (see Table 12). Rare plants and animals contribute to the natural heritage and character of the local and regional communities. The Vermont Nongame and Natural Heritage Program (NNHP) has identified and mapped rare plants and animals in Newfane (see Natural Resources Map). Protection of these areas and species should be a high priority when consideration of new development and access is proposed.

**Table 12: Special Natural Features: Exemplary Natural Communities & Rare Plant and Animal Habitat**

<b>Species/Community</b>	<b>Recommendations/Protection Needed</b>
High diversity bivalve community of brook floater ( <i>Alasmidonta varicosa</i> ), threatened status in Vermont	Erosion and siltation resulting from brook land clearing, grading and construction of bridges, roads, and other structures can bury and kill these bivalves. A lower water quality would potentially eliminate the bivalves.
Brook floater, Rivershore grassland Tubercled orchis, ( <i>Plantanthera flava</i> var. <i>hebiola</i> ), state threatened Riverweed ( <i>Podosstemum ceratophyllum</i> )	See above. Erosion is also a threat to the rare plants and the community at the site.
Brook floater; Tubercled orchis	See above.
Leafy-bracted aster ( <i>Aster foliaceus</i> )	Location is only very approximate; this species is found along the river bank.
Brook floater	See above.
Large-leaved sandwort ( <i>Moehringia macrophylla</i> ); grows in roadcut	No herbicide spraying.
Canada burnet ( <i>Sanguisorba Canadensis</i> )	Is scattered along the banks of the West River in 3 towns, including Newfane. This is known only from the West River in Vermont.
Barbed-bristle bulrush ( <i>Scirpus ancistrochaetus</i> )	Newfane

*Source: Nongame and Natural Heritage Program, Department of Fish and Wildlife*

### **Wildlife Resources & Natural Features Policies**

1. Avoid fragmentation of large blocks of significant wildlife habitat and maintain connectivity between habitat blocks as corridors for wildlife migration. Encourage cluster development where it can accomplish these objectives.

2. Protect bear habitat and deer wintering areas from development and other uses that may threaten the ability of the habitat to support these animals.
3. Protect and preserve rare and endangered plants, animals and natural communities.
4. Minimize stream crossing that will impact aquatic life.

### **Wildlife Resources & Natural Features Recommendations**

1. Obtain information on matters relative to the protection of forest resources, fish and wildlife areas, and areas of special natural features. (Conservation Commission)
2. Protect wildlife habitat through the development of land use regulations that are sensitive to valuable habitat areas. Such measures could include performance standards, buffer strip requirements, additional streambank setbacks, requirements for low density development, and cluster development. (Planning Commission)

### **AIR QUALITY**

With little industrial development and a limited number of commercial farms, Newfane's air quality is generally good. The greatest concern to Newfane's air quality is from wood stove smoke and automobile exhaust. This is particularly so within the higher density residential areas of the community through which Newfane's network of major roads pass. Other potential sources of air pollution include local sand and gravel extraction activity.

Newfane's air quality is also affected by pollutants from distant sources, including acid rain precipitation originating in other states. These pollutants include heavy metals, the acid products of sulfates and nitrogen oxides, and ozone, all of which can damage Newfane's poorly buffered soils and water, and plant and animal life.

Clean air is an essential component of Newfane's environment. While protecting Newfane from long-distance airborne pollutants is extremely difficult at the local level, local measures can be implemented to minimize the potential impact of certain types of development and the cumulative effects of development on Newfane's overall air quality. For example, Newfane's existing zoning bylaw provides performance standards for all existing and potential development in Newfane. Air pollution in the form of odors, smoke, fly ash, fumes and gases is regulated by specific standards against which development activity is measured.

### **Air Quality Policies**

1. Require that all development or land use activity comply with state and federal air quality standards and regulations.

### **Air Quality Recommendations**

1. Review the air quality standards outlined in the Newfane Zoning Bylaw. (Planning Commission)

## **FOREST RESOURCES**

Like most communities throughout the West River Valley, Newfane's forests represent a major asset to the Town. Forests provide wood products, maple syrup, recreational areas, wildlife habitat, scenic areas and serve as a vital component in the natural water cycle. As noted in the Community Facilities and Services section of this Plan, there are two Town-owned parcels of forested land - the Newfane Town Forest and land along the east bank of the Rock River near the old dam.

As Newfane continues to grow, the community's forested areas may become increasingly fragmented, resulting in smaller parcels of forest land and diminished opportunities for economically viable timber management. One important statewide effort to stem the loss of productive forest land is the Use Value Appraisal Program whereby local landowners pay taxes based on the use value of their land, rather than the fair market value. The state reimburses the community for a portion of the difference between the taxes assessed at these two values. In exchange for a reduction in property taxes, landowners develop and implement long-term forest management plans. According to the Newfane Grand List, in 2005 there were 10,540 acres of forest land in Newfane enrolled in the Use Value Appraisal Program, approximately 43% of the Town's total area.

The Village Tree Committee continues to survey, plant, and supervise the location of additional shade trees within Williamsville.

### **Forest Resource Policies**

1. Direct growth to locations that will not negatively impact Newfane's valuable forest resources.
2. Protect the ecologic and economic viability of Newfane's forests.
3. Encourage the sale or gift of land rights to land trusts or private conservation groups to maximize forest land and contiguous forest tracts.
4. Encourage the local manufacture and marketing of value-added forest products.

### **Forest Resource Recommendations**

1. Implement land use regulations that allow for the clustering development in order to prevent the fragmentation of large tracts of forest land and to protect locally significant forest lands within those tracts. (Planning Commission)
2. Consider appropriate steps to encourage the voluntary protection of agricultural and forest lands. (Conservation Commission)
3. Encourage landowners to seek technical forestry expertise to develop a forest management plan and institute proper timber management techniques. (Selectboard, County Forester)

## **AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES**

Although much of Newfane's valleys and lower hills were once cleared for subsistence farming, primary agricultural soils are limited to a few localized areas within the community and many old farms have been abandoned and allowed to revert to forest. Many local residents are involved in farming activity, including small-scale truck farming, nursery and greenhouse production, haying, and the raising of livestock for meat and fiber production. These operations offer job opportunities and access to fresh, locally-grown goods, and help to retain the open, rural character of the Town.

Newfane's agricultural resources, although marginal on a regional scale, are nevertheless valuable. The long term preservation of locally important farmlands and the productive capacity of primary agricultural soils will ensure that future generations have adequate opportunities for food and fiber production. Farmland protection can be part of a larger effort to retain natural systems and processes such as wetlands, watersheds, aquifer recharge areas, flood plains, and wildlife habitat. In addition, the presence of working farms and the open space provided between fields and wooded hillsides enhance Newfane's scenic quality which, in turn, directly contributes to local tourism.

The Newfane Conservation Commission compiled a local agricultural product guide to raise awareness about local agriculture. The guide highlights 29 area farms and provides contact information and direction.

### **Agricultural Resources Policies**

1. Devote primary agricultural soils, as defined by Act 250, to agricultural uses or to uses that do not diminish their potential for agriculture.
2. Direct growth to locations that will not negatively impact Newfane's valuable agricultural resources which include primary agricultural soils and active farms.
3. Support local, regional and state efforts to protect agricultural resources so long as landowners are ensured a reasonable use of their property.
4. Encourage the local manufacture and marketing of value-added agricultural products.
5. Support the sale or gift of land rights to land trusts or private conservation groups to maximize prime agricultural soils and the preservation of locally important farmlands.

### **Agricultural Resources Recommendations**

1. Explore various agricultural resource protection strategies which may be applicable to Newfane, including but not limited to, incentive programs, land use controls, and a transfer of development rights program. (Planning Commission)

## EARTH AND MINERAL RESOURCES

Newfane contains relatively rich supplies of mineral resources compared to many of its neighboring communities. There are abundant sand and gravel deposits along the West River, Rock River, Marlboro Branch, Smith Brook, Baker Brook, and along Route 30. Deposits of ultramafics (talc, soapstone and serpentine) are located in the western most sections of the community, particularly along the Newfane/Dover border.

Extensive land development activity in Windham County over the past decade has increased the need for sand and gravel resources for road construction, building foundations, septic systems and driveways, as well as regular maintenance of these, facilities. Resistance to sand and gravel extraction operations in neighboring communities, however, has placed a disproportionate burden on Newfane to meet increased regional demand for mineral resources. This demand has had a major impact on the natural and social environments of localized areas of Newfane.

While Newfane's sand and gravel operations are economically important to the Town and the region, they clearly present special land use problems which must be adequately addressed in order to protect the health, safety and welfare of the general public. By their very nature, sand and gravel pits can be one of the most visibly destructive intrusions on the landscape of any local land use regularly practiced in Newfane. Of particular local concern are the following issues: 1) degradation of surface and groundwater quality through site erosion and discharges of: contaminants into exposed surface areas; 2) destruction of important wildlife habitat; 3) deterioration of scenic beauty; 4) localized air and noise pollution; 5) property devaluation; 6) structural deterioration of the Town's local bridges and roads (and the associated cost of repairs) through repeated transporting of heavy loads of sand and gravel; 7) traffic and pedestrian hazards caused by increased truck traffic on local roads; and 8) lack of adequate enforcement by the state to ensure compliance with state permit requirements. While Newfane has had many sand and gravel pits over the years, there are an estimated five active sand and gravel pits (Table 13) as of June 2006. Local commercial sand and gravel pit operators sell their products to area contractors and to the towns of Wilmington, Dover, Marlboro, Readsboro and Newfane.

**Table 13: Sand and Gravel Pits in Newfane, 2006**

<b>Name of Pit</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Size</b>
Jeness-Berrie	Route 30	13 acres
Dessaint	Depot Road	70 acres
Clark	River Road	8 acres
Fitzpatrick (NJM Realty)	River Road	6 acres
Holcomb	Dover Road	not available

Part of the difficulty in mitigating the negative impacts of local sand and gravel extraction is the fact that state and local permits are not required for many smaller operations in Newfane that have been in operation for many years. This is a result of the provisions of "grandfathering" which exist in both local zoning regulations and in Act 250 law. In both cases, a substantial change in use (including increased rates of extraction or the use of new equipment within the pit) will trigger local and state permit review requirements. The burden of alerting local and state officials of substantial changes often falls upon concerned neighbors and citizens.

As development pressures continue within the region, the siting of new earth and mineral extraction operations and the expansion of existing operations in Newfane will clearly be proposed. It is in the interest of both the Town and developers to know, in advance of beginning new extraction activity, whether or not a specific site is "appropriate" for the extraction of earth and mineral resources. Information regarding the location of deposits and guidelines for identifying the suitability of sites for extraction operations are critical elements in local land use planning. Clearly, contractors, landowners, development interests, and local planners face the dual challenge of providing access to the resource while maintaining a healthy natural and social environment.

### **Earth & Mineral Resources Policies**

1. Protect earth and mineral deposits which provide aquifer recharge or are located in other environmentally-sensitive areas from development.
2. Require that plans for earth and mineral resource extraction include measures to minimize noise and adverse impacts on aesthetics, ground and surface waters, air quality, adjacent prosperities, traffic on local roads and bridges, wildlife habitat, adjacent properties, and the character of the area.
2. Require that all proposals for earth and mineral extraction include a site rehabilitation plan that ensures the possibility of future use of the land.

### **Earth & Mineral Resources Recommendations**

1. Amend the Newfane Zoning Bylaw to include conditional use review of all proposed mineral extraction operations, and require such operations to meet strict health, safety and environmental performance standards. Under conditional use approval, submission of an excavation plan and a site restoration plan should be required. (Planning Commission)
2. Continue coordination with appropriate law enforcement agencies to enforce restrictions on local roads and bridges. (Selectboard)

### **SCENIC RESOURCES**

Newfane's landscape is one of the community's most valuable assets. Local back roads and trails, open lands, water bodies, wetlands, forested hilltops, and historic village areas all contribute to the quality of life for the community's residents and visitors.

Scenic resource protection measures available to the Town include such measures as outright purchase of scenic lands, scenic easements or development rights, review of the scenic impact of public investment activities, designation of scenic roads, public education, and regulation through zoning and subdivision regulations. Maintaining scenic quality requires coordination of these, and other, techniques.

### **Scenic Resources Policies**

1. Protect and preserve areas of high scenic value including river corridors, scenic travel ways, scenic vistas, and other landscapes and sites.
2. Minimize visual impacts of communication towers and other high-elevation structures through co-location, design, siting, and color choice.

### **Scenic Resources Recommendations**

1. Identify, define and map significant scenic resources in Newfane. (Planning Commission, Conservation Commission)
2. Consider appropriate measures to protect scenic vistas. (Planning Commission)

## **ENERGY**

Energy resources are necessary for transportation, heating, and electricity generation. Sufficient and affordable energy supplies are important to a town's growth and economic development. Currently Newfane's energy needs are being met although affordability is increasingly problematic.

### **LOCAL ENERGY CONSUMPTION**

Newfane has a variety of energy resources available including electricity from public utilities, fuel oil, gasoline, and propane from local suppliers. Per the 2000 Census, Newfane residents heat their homes primarily with fuel oil (57.3%). The remaining homes are primarily heated with wood (26.1%); propane (14.7%), electricity (1.2%), and other fuels (<1%). Solar, hydro, wind and photovoltaic energy sources are beginning to be used locally at a residential scale

A major electrical distribution line crosses Newfane. The Central Vermont Public Service Company (CVPS) operates the line. The electricity supplied locally by CVPS's line is distributed within Newfane by both CVPS and the Vermont Electric Co-op.

### **ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SOURCES**

Increasing energy costs from traditional sources may result in an increased the use of alternative energy sources to supplement home heating and electrical generation. Currently, burning fuel wood is common. Other sources that Newfane residents could take advantage of could include wind and solar.

The Town encourages landowners to manage their forest resources in a manner that can provide a sustainable resource for home heating. Outdoor wood furnaces or boilers are gaining popularity as a home heating method. These are free-standing combustion units located outside the home or structure that is to be heated. When used properly these systems can be a clean and economical way to heat a house and water. The State of Vermont does have regulations pertaining to these systems. Towns are permitted to have their own ordinances regulating outdoor wood furnaces.

Small, home based wind energy systems can be used to augment or replace other energy supplies. The feasibility of using one of these facilities is dependent on elevation and wind speeds. Homeowners with a home based wind system do have the opportunity to connect to the power grid and sell excess electricity generated to the power company under a system called net-metering. Under Vermont law, municipalities can only regulate wind systems that are not tied into the power grid. Newfane does not currently regulate small, home based wind systems, however, for safety purposes, it should be considered.

The Town encourages site design to take advantage of siting and design measures that will result in passive solar energy for heating and lighting. The conversion of solar energy into electricity is also encouraged.



## **ENERGY CONSERVATION**

Newfane is dependent upon energy generated or imported from outside its borders. Energy conservation is one way to reduce this dependency and develop more efficient use of energy. Recent significant increases in the cost of energy (e.g., gasoline, heating fuels) are expected to increase local interest in conservation measures. Newfane should, as a community, help to encourage the efficient use of energy and the development of renewable energy resources. This can be accomplished through local land use planning and solid waste management activities.

Energy savings can be realized by retrofitting existing buildings with insulation, more efficient doors and windows, weather-stripping, compact fluorescent lights, and more efficient appliances. The Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA) offers a Weatherization Program that can help income-eligible homeowners and renters. SEVCA can also provide assistance in the event of a heating emergency. Efficiency Vermont, a state program, offers rebates on Energy Star lighting and appliances.

Newfane residents are encouraged to continue recycling solid waste materials. Recycling can help reduce air and water pollution as well as environmental degradation resulting from the extraction of virgin resources.

Effective land use planning can promote energy conservation. Targeting new development towards areas located close to the community's major roads and existing settlements will minimize the energy consumed by residents commuting and will reduce the energy required to deliver essential services to residents and businesses. Decisions concerning capital expenditures on roads and other municipal infrastructure should be mindful of energy conservation.

Newfane continues to support land use activity which promotes the production and use of renewable resources, such as forest management practices. The siting, design, and construction of buildings strongly influences the amount of energy needed for heating as well as the amount of electricity needed for lighting. Proper subdivision design, building orientation, construction and landscaping provide opportunities for energy conservation such as less vehicular travel, and by designs incorporating passive solar space and domestic hot water heating, natural lighting and photovoltaic electricity production.

As noted in the Community Profile, 72% of Newfane's residents who work travel out of town for work. The Town can participate in various regional efforts to develop energy-efficient modes of transportation, including public transit, carpooling and bicycling. The Town can also work with neighboring communities to share public facilities and services, where possible.

### **Energy Conservation Policies**

1. Encourage energy conservation by promoting patterns of development that concentrate growth near the village centers, allow for the clustering, site buildings for solar gains, and minimize road construction.
2. Make Town-owned buildings as energy efficient as possible.

3. Encourage the use of onsite or locally-obtainable renewable energy resources as long as its implementation is consistent with resource conservation policies outlined in this Plan.
4. Support energy conservation and energy-efficiency programs of SEVCA, Efficiency Vermont, and Energy Star Homes.
5. Promote strategies that reduce transportation energy use such as carpooling, public transit, and infrastructure that can support telecommuting.

### **Energy Conservation Recommendations**

1. Monitor municipal energy use and, where feasible, implement energy conservation measures and the use of renewable energy sources. (Selectboard)
3. Make information available regarding local and state organizations and programs that can provide consumers with information on how to become more energy efficient as well as how to manage resources to ensure sustainable use. (Selectboard)
4. Evaluate and propose methods to allow for clustered development. (Planning Commission)
5. Evaluate and propose regulations for residential wind energy systems and an ordinance for outdoor wood furnaces. (Planning Commission, Selectboard)

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **NEWFANE'S ECONOMY**

As a rural community the Town of Newfane has a local economy based primarily on local services, small businesses, tourist hospitality, sand and gravel extraction, forestry, education and home occupations. The Community Profile chapter identifies income and wage data as well as commuting patterns of local residents. This information should be reviewed by the reader in conjunction with the information presented in this chapter.

According to the 2000 Census, most Newfane residents, age 16 and older, worked in the following industries: education, health, and social services (23%); retail trade (12%); and other professional services (12%).<sup>8</sup> Almost three-quarters of the workforce population commuted out of Town for work.

The state publishes an annual report on employment and wages on a town by town basis. In 2004, there was a reported 375 jobs in 54 reporting units in Newfane, up from 290 reported jobs from 48 reporting units in 1999.<sup>9</sup> A reporting unit is defined as an establishment such as a farm, factory, or store, which produces goods or provides services at a single physical worksite and engaged, predominantly, in one type of economic activity.

Newfane's limited businesses are primarily located on paved roads in and around Newfane Village and, to a lesser extent, in South Newfane and Williamsville. Local businesses include a lumber yard, several small general stores, gift shops, nurseries and produce markets, antique dealers, repair shops, a seasonal flea market, eating and lodging establishments, and professional services. Residents travel to nearby Brattleboro for most of their major goods, including groceries and pharmacy needs.

Home occupations and resource industries (agriculture, forestry, and sand and gravel operations) are located throughout the Town. Home occupations continue to serve an important role in Newfane by allowing for local economic development, encouraging the creation of new businesses, and providing flexible or accessible working conditions for residents. The Town recognizes the need of some residences to use their place of residence for limited non-residential activities. However, this must be balanced with the need to protect the character of its residential areas and to protect the neighborhoods from nuisance. Many home occupations that were once traditional or customary have evolved into commercial enterprises which are no longer compatible with residential areas.

### **FACTORS EFFECTING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Newfane supports economic development that meets the social and economic needs of its residents while preserving the environment's ability to support it. As Newfane plans for its economic growth, the following factors must be considered:

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<sup>8</sup> This data does not imply that the jobs were in Newfane.

<sup>9</sup> *1999 and 2004 State of Vermont Covered Employment and Wages*, VT Department of Employment and Training

- **Infrastructure:** Adequate infrastructure is essential to support economic activities. Newfane does not have a public water or sewer system anywhere in Town. This limits the scale and type of businesses which can locate in Town.
- **Land Use:** An area of concern is the spread of commercial development along Route 30 north and south of Newfane Village. Consideration must be given the future needs of these areas by maintaining flexibility to allow the expansion of existing operations while preventing expansion of commercial growth that is out of scale with existing development along the Route 30 corridor.
- **Regulatory Environment:** In 2004, the Selectboard voted to form a Development Review Board (DRB). The DRB is responsible for all local development review functions that were previously overseen by the Zoning Board of Adjustment and Planning Commission. Having one board for local development review reduces the number of hearings required by an applicant and establishes consistency in the conditions attached to the permit

Newfane has adopted zoning but does not have subdivision regulation. This fact makes the entire Town a "1-acre town" in the Act 250 process. This means the state has jurisdiction over all commercial projects effecting one acre or more, as opposed to projects 10-acres or more in size if the Town also had subdivision regulations. This is important as Act 250 permits can take considerable time and expense.

### **Economic Development Policies**

1. Promote economic development that provides for the wise and sustainable use of Newfane's natural resources and preserves overall environmental quality.
2. Encourage the development of home-based work and entrepreneurial ventures which preserve and revitalize Newfane's rural character and have no adverse impact on the community's environment or infrastructure.
3. Prevent scattered commercial development.
4. Encourage local manufacturing and marketing of value-added agricultural and forestry products.

### **Economic Development Recommendations**

1. Propose and adopt regulations that provide flexibility in allowing various types of non-residential activity at residences in order to adequately provide for the needs and protection of residents. (Planning Commission/Selectboard)
2. Provide for the adaptive re-use of buildings in the Zoning Bylaw. (Planning Commission)

3. Participate in economic development planning with neighboring towns through the lead efforts of the Windham Regional Commission, Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation and the Brattleboro Area Chamber of Commerce. (Planning Commission/Selectboard)

## TOWN PLAN MAPS

A series of maps has been prepared to assist the Planning Commission, public officials and citizens understand Newfane. These maps are for planning purposes only. Together with Town Plan policies, these maps will be used by the Planning Commission as a guide for appropriate bylaws and other measures necessary to implement the Town Plan. They should not be depended upon as the only basis for investment and development decision. The Town of Newfane disclaims any liability for losses incurred through inappropriate or improper use of these maps.

- Map 1. Existing Land Use
- Map 2. Proposed Land Use
- Map 3. Community Resources
- Map 4. Transportation System Map
- Map 5. Projects to Enhance the Existing Transportation System
- Map 6. Natural Resources Map