Mixed Use Development
In the Bennington Region
April 2013

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Mixed Use Development in the Bennington Region

Mixed use development is a relatively new term for an old concept. It describes the type of development that blends residential, commercial, cultural, institutional, and in some cases industrial uses, in a way where those uses are physically and functionally integrated. The relatively close proximity of the uses encourages pedestrian connection and special pedestrian facilities often are part of the development. These patterns of development developed naturally in the past as the most convenient and efficient way to organize villages, towns, and cities. The result was the compact urban or village center, with a “downtown” or some concentration of public uses at its core, with upper floors and closely connected adjacent neighborhoods providing a resident population of people who lived, worked, attended school, and recreated in the immediate area. Outlying rural areas were largely agricultural or forested.

The most significant factor reducing the prevalence of this pattern of concentrated mixed uses was the arrival and ubiquitous spread of the personal automobile and the resulting investment in more and improved roadways. People began to move to suburban residential enclaves, others built homes in formerly agricultural countryside (as improved transportation systems and access to cheap energy made reliance on locally produced food less important), and single use retail malls and commercial strips began to proliferate outside of residential areas. This trend was in many ways reinforced by public policies and investments. One of the most significant was the widespread adoption of municipal land use plans and zoning regulations that tended to separate uses into “residential,” “commercial,” “industrial,” and similar zones. Although these zoning plans and designations still are common, in recent years an effort has been made, particularly in Vermont, to ensure that downtowns and village centers allow for a wide range of uses and that dedicated auto-oriented roadside commercial zones are discouraged. The legacy of the automobile and the post-war drive toward suburbanization remains in evidence, however, and public policies and investments are needed to help revitalize traditional mixed use areas and to develop new areas that provide similar benefits.

The renewed interest in, and support for, mixed use development is driven by a number of rather obvious benefits. Among them:

- greater housing variety and density, including more affordable housing;
- reduced distances between housing, workplaces, schools, stores, and other amenities and destinations;
- better access to fresh, healthy foods (as food stores and farmers markets can be accessed on foot/bike or by transit);
- synergy between land uses (e.g. residents provide customers for stores and restaurants, which provide amenities for residents);
- stronger neighborhood character, sense of place;
- enhanced access by walking, biking, and public transit, resulting in health benefits and reduced transportation costs;
- access to integrated recreational facilities enhanced for larger numbers of people.
In our region, the character of existing mixed use areas varies as do individual town and village land use plans and regulations. The factors that affect the success of those areas and the things that are needed to promote more mixed use development also varies across the region. In many of the region’s smaller towns, mixed use areas are limited to the areas in and around historic village centers. These areas generally support a fairly robust mix of uses, but density of development, including opportunities for infill development, upper floor retail, and the type of commercial and industrial uses that are possible are often limited by a lack of adequate infrastructure (especially public sewer and/or water systems). Arlington and East Arlington, for example are two important mixed use village centers, but the private water system serving those areas is facing financial challenges and the need for significant improvements. Those villages also have limited capacity for growth because there is no public wastewater disposal system and on-site disposal systems cannot support much new development.

South Shaftsbury is another historic mixed use village center. The local planning commission has been grappling with the question of how to meet the town plan’s stated objective of supporting additional growth in this area while the town lacks a wastewater disposal system. Efforts to expand the village center land use and zoning districts outward have met with some resistance, and such a spread into the surrounding rural areas is not entirely consistent with the objective of creating more density and activity in areas currently served by town roads, water, and sidewalk systems.

Larger communities such as Manchester and Bennington have public water and sewer infrastructure throughout their mixed use districts, but face other challenges. Bennington has an “Urban Mixed Use” (UMU) district lying along Benmont Avenue; while that district does contain a mix of residential and commercial/professional uses, it lacks a safe and convenient pedestrian system. The UMU District, and all of its residents, also lies between the downtown and a commercial area on Northside Drive where many services needed by local residents are located. Pedestrian and bicycle connections to the downtown area serve part of the UMU District, but are absent between the UMU District and Northside Drive. The Northside Drive commercial area presents a similar problem: it is primarily a commercial district, but lies adjacent to a high concentration of housing just to the north. A lack of good pedestrian connections between the two areas (and along Northside Drive) is preventing this area from developing into a viable mixed use area.

Manchester, on the other hand, has continuous sidewalks and attractive streetscapes throughout its central business district. There is a minimal amount of residential development in the area, however, and upper floors are either not present in many buildings or are vacant – the principal reason being that the high cost of real estate in this popular area favors ground floor retail development. In addition, retail stores (other than a grocery store) in this area have tended to serve primarily tourists so the attractiveness of the area for local residents is limited (except for its proximity to workplaces).

Many towns and villages in the region include provisions for planned residential developments, “PRDs,” (and the closely related “cluster subdivisions”) and planned unit developments, “PUDs.” These innovative land use tools allow developers to modify lot dimensional requirements, and sometimes allowed uses, to create more compact and integrated developments. PRDs and cluster subdivisions are primarily intended to create more compact residential developments than would be permissible under traditional zoning and subdivision regulations.
They offer the advantage of using land more efficiently, reducing infrastructure construction and maintenance costs, and making the
development more bicycle and pedestrian friendly, and importantly, providing significant amounts of conserved open space. The open space is
particularly important because it is available to residents of the development (and/or the town, depending on how the development is
structured) for recreation, agriculture, and other outdoor-based activities and uses.

Planned Unit Developments typically utilize similar tools to create more compact and efficient developments, but generally include more
of a mix of land uses (e.g., residential along with retail, restaurant, professional, or other uses). They can be located within
commercial/industrial or mixed use districts, or can even form the basis for a small new mixed use area outside of those districts. Municipalities
with existing downtown and village center mixed use areas are understandably reluctant to authorize such developments outside those areas
because they fear that would divert focus from the most important and historic centers while also pulling secondary development into nearby
rural areas. In any case, key characteristics of a PUD include a planned integration of land uses and a convenient pedestrian network.
Ultimately, the challenges associated with development of PRDs, cluster subdivisions, and PUDs can be similar to developments in village centers
and downtowns – density and diversity requires adequate infrastructure.

Information on the location and regulatory framework of mixed use development in each of the towns and villages in the Bennington
Region is presented in the following table and maps. This information is intended to provide municipalities and other interested parties a basis
for considering and pursuing healthy community design through enhanced mixed use development. More detail on mixed use development
practices can be obtained by contacting the Bennington County Regional Commission or by reviewing online planning resources such as those
available through the Vermont Natural Resources Council, for example:  http://vnrc.org/resources/community-planning-toolbox/tools/mixed-
use-development/.
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<td>Arlington</td>
<td>Arlington does not have any planned-unit development (PUD) regulations that allow for mixed uses within a planned development, but their plan recommends, and the bylaws enable, “clustering” of residential development. The cluster subdivision regulations allow for reduced individual lot sizes, provide a density bonus of 10% if such a design is used, and require dedication of 50% of the land area of the development for open space that is available for common use – including recreational uses, gardening, or other activities.</td>
<td>The Village and CR/CRR Districts contain relatively dense residential development, retail stores, inns, gas stations, and restaurants, as well as a variety of other important land uses: the town hall, the local elementary school and high school (and associated recreational facilities), a large child care facility, two post offices, churches, and the public library. The expansive town recreation center is located immediately adjacent to the Village District. Several years ago, a sidewalk was built to connect the village centers and many of the public/institutional land uses. Two sidewalk extensions in Arlington Village have been added more recently. These districts have room for additional growth, but are constrained by a lack of public infrastructure (especially the lack of a public sewer system). <strong>Recommendation:</strong> focus on the local water system and possible wastewater solutions to allow for increased residential densities in the village/mixed use area.</td>
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<td>Bennington</td>
<td>The town’s land use regulations provide for both Planned Residential and Planned Unit Development (PUD) options. An extensive sidewalk system links all streets in the downtown and adjacent residential neighborhoods.</td>
<td><strong>Bennington</strong> The town has an officially designated downtown and growth center. A wide variety of uses are permitted in and around the center. An extensive sidewalk system links all streets in the downtown and adjacent residential neighborhoods.</td>
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around the downtown (Central Business District). Residential densities are not constrained by lot size and municipal infrastructure is available to allow for high density development. Major employers are found in adjacent institutional and industrial districts.

An “Urban Mixed Use” (UMU) District extends along Benmont Avenue north from the downtown area toward Northside Drive and the “Planned Commercial” (PC) District. The intent of this district is to support a mix of residential and commercial uses, emphasizing the re-use of historic buildings.

The town’s land use regulations specifically allow general stores in residential districts, providing opportunities for convenience shopping within walking distance of many residential neighborhoods.

The PC District contains a wide variety of commercial uses – grocery stores, retail and specialty services, restaurants, and recreation and entertainment venues – but limited residential uses. Although allowed in the district, land values have favored commercial uses. However, some of the highest density housing in Developments (PRDs) and Planned Unit Developments (PUDs). Both sets of regulations allow for modification of dimensional standards to create a more efficient and pedestrian-friendly environment. The PRDs are permitted in any residential district and density bonuses are enabled for developments that include 75% of the project area as open space.

PUDs allow for a mix of land uses, including residential land uses, and flexibility in the application of dimensional requirements. An emphasis is placed on pedestrian facilities and ensuring that the various uses within the PUD are connected by such systems in a safe and convenient manner.

Pedestrian/bicycle and public transit access to the medical center/offices and local public schools from the downtown area is good. The UMU District along Benmont Avenue suffers from poor bicycle/pedestrian connections south toward the downtown, schools, and medical center, and north toward the Planned Commercial and Industrial Districts. There is a similar lack of safe and convenient pedestrian connectivity between the PC District and the adjacent MF Districts and the large number of residences in that area.

**Recommendations:** Maintain existing land use and zoning designations in the center of town and encourage more residential development in the downtown area.

Develop a plan for Benmont Avenue that extends some type of safe bike/ped facility both north and south to connect the Urban Mixed Use District with the Downtown and Northside Drive commercial areas.

Create bicycle and pedestrian friendly connections from Northside Drive north to the Applegate and WillowBrook residential areas.
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<th>Recommendation</th>
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<td>Bennington</td>
<td>Bennington lies in the Multi-Family Residential District just to the north of the PC District.</td>
<td>Publicize and encourage developers to use PRD and PUD provisions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dorset</td>
<td>Three Village areas provide mixed use development opportunities: Dorset Village, East Dorset, and South Dorset. Each of these compact centers includes adjacent Village Residential (VR) and village Commercial (VC) land use districts. The VR Districts provide for residential development at moderate densities as well as certain light commercial uses. The adjacent VC Districts allow a variety of commercial uses – retail, offices, restaurants, banks, recreation and entertainment venues – in addition to residential uses. A special “mixed use” provision allows for permitted and “conditionally permitted” uses to be located on the same lot and/or in the same building.</td>
<td>Dorset’s mixed use areas are distributed on both the east and west side of town. There is at least one general store in each of the village areas. Dorset Village also contains homes, inns, a post office, restaurants, a theater, church, and a golf course. South Dorset includes homes and small professional offices, and East Dorset has homes, a post office, the town hall, an inn, and a church. The local elementary school is located between South Dorset and East Dorset and bicycle/pedestrian access is limited. Recommendation: Provide improved bicycle/pedestrian connections between mixed use village areas in Dorset, to the local school, and to the large recreation area located just south of Dorset in the town of Manchester (a feasibility study for this project exists and should be updated).</td>
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<td>Glastenbury</td>
<td>Glastenbury is an unorganized town with fewer than ten residents. Because of its remote location and preponderance of public (National Forest) land, there is little potential for mixed use development.</td>
<td>Cluster subdivision is allowed in Glastenbury’s residential districts – in these areas, dedicated open space is available for use of residents. The town’s residents have access to extensive natural resource based recreation in the Green Mountain National Forest.</td>
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<td>Landgrove</td>
<td>Landgrove has a Village (V) District around the town’s historic center and a The town’s PUD regulations allow for</td>
<td>Landgrove is a small and rural community with limited potential for</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>Manchester has several mixed use zoning districts. At the center of the &quot;downtown&quot; area is the Commercial-1 (C1) District and the Historic Main Street planning area. This area allows for a wide diversity of uses and generous dimensional and parking requirements intended to encourage non-retail, and especially residential, uses in the upper stories of buildings. Also, site planning encourages development of pedestrian facilities and landscaping. Incentives for mixed use development also are included in the portion of the C-1 District located within the Planned Unit Development (PUD) regulations. The town’s zoning regulations provide for Planned Residential Developments in all residential land use districts. Lot sizes may be reduced and the resulting 50%+ reserved open space is available for recreation and other outdoor activities of the residents. Although the town does not have Planned Unit Development regulations, Manchester clearly has developed its land use plan and zoning bylaws with an eye toward promoting mixed use development in the center of the community. Current land uses in the historic downtown and adjacent commercially zoned areas are primarily retail and hospitality related uses, however. There are significant residential neighborhoods in adjacent General and Single Residential zones, with relatively easy access to the commercial uses. One reason that residential uses have not been highly integrated into the commercially zoned areas is the lack of water/sewer infrastructure.</td>
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| Commercial (C) District along Route 11. Each of these districts allows for relatively dense residential development (although limited by a lack of water/sewer infrastructure) and the C District allows for a wide variety of additional commercial and related uses. Of particular significance in Landgrove are the “home business” and “home occupation” standards which allow residents throughout the town to use a portion of their property for limited commercial use. | flexible application of dimensional standards throughout the town, but most notable are the provisions in the V and C Districts where a mix of residential and non-residential uses are allowed in the context of an approved PUD. | dense mixed use development. The existing PUD regulations provide significant opportunities for mixed use development, especially in the historic village area where significant residential development exists at this time. Landgrove residents make extensive use of the natural environment, public lands, and roads for outdoor recreation. The Town Plan also strongly urges maintenance of access to open lands and trails. Recommendation: Encourage interested developers in the V and C Districts to utilize the mixed use PUD provisions. |
south of the Historic Main Street along Route 7A.

The Commercial-2 and Commercial-3 Districts, located east of the C-1 District along Route 11/30 (Depot Street), also provide for mixed uses, with similar incentives for integration of residential and other non-retail uses provided through criteria in the Depot Street Corridor planning area. In all three commercial areas, a mix of residential, retail, restaurants, professional offices and services, and some recreational uses and parks are permitted.

The town’s land use plan and zoning regulations also include three General Residential Districts (GR-1, 2, and 3). These areas are located adjacent to the commercially zoned areas. The GR-1 District, in particular, offers opportunities for mixed use development in areas north (along Route 30 – Bonnet Street) and west of the downtown area.

its detailed regulations and descriptions of desired development patterns and site and building designs throughout its commercial districts have many of the same effects for these areas.

areas may be that most of the commercial uses provide services primarily to tourists. The town is working to encourage more locally oriented businesses in these areas. Of course, housing for people who work in the central business district would be beneficial regardless of the nature of those businesses.

The General Residential Districts support more residential development mixed with office, light industrial, and some service businesses (such as the post office).

The local elementary and middle school is located within these mixed use areas.

Extensive sidewalk networks connect all of the commercial and adjacent residential areas. A multi-use path runs from the school to the town’s recreation center and then on to a large indoor recreational facility.

Recommendations: The town’s land use regulations and infrastructure support and encourage mixed use development and bicycle/pedestrian access. The town should continue to support compatible development, especially businesses that provide goods and services for local residents and workforce housing in the center of
Peru has two areas where mixed use development is enabled through its land use plan and regulations. It is unique in the region in having a large Ski Area planning district (the Commercial Recreation – “CR” District). The CR District is specifically intended to provide a mix of uses to serve the Bromley Mountain Ski Area. Residential, commercial, recreational, and entertainment uses are permitted and provisions are made to ensure that infrastructure is adequate for any growth.

The town’s “Peru Village” (PV) planning and zoning district is a mixed use district intended to primarily serve the needs of local residents. Residential buildings, retail stores, restaurants, offices, and a variety of other uses are permitted or conditionally permitted in this compact historic center. The minimum lot size per dwelling unit or nonresidential use is two acres and building coverage is limited to 15% of the total lot area.

Peru

| Peru | The town has both Planned Residential Development and Planned Unit Development regulations. PRDs are allowed in Rural Residential (RR) and CR Districts. They allow more concentrated development and reservation of open space for outdoor recreational, agricultural, or other similar uses. PUDs are permitted in the CR District to facilitate mixed use development by enabling greater flexibility in design and co-location of different land uses. PUDs and PRDs that provide for a specified amount of affordable workforce housing qualify for density bonuses. | The town’s CR land use/zoning districts and related PUD regulations have worked to effectively enable a mixed use district for visitors at the base of Bromley Mountain. The PV District, set in the historic village area, allows for mixed uses in a relatively compact center. A village center economic revitalization study and plan has just been completed for this area. The vacant JJ Hapgood Store has been purchased and the owners have plans to reconstruct the store on the site – seen as critical by townspeople. The area also includes a post office, the town hall, a park, church, and other important community meeting places. Current zoning (and physical conditions) limit density to levels that discourage the type of “village” scale development that would bring more people and activity to the area. Recommendation: Maintain existing regulations, but pursue infrastructure improvements that would enable some infill housing and additional small scale commercial development. |
| **Pownal** | Pownal’s land use plan and development regulations include three substantial mixed use districts, located in the historic Pownal, Pownal Center, and North Pownal village centers. A “Village” (V) zoning district covers each of those areas, the limits of the districts being associated with the extent of the town’s municipal sewer service areas.  

Each of the Village areas contain a range of land uses, with the town’s library and various meeting places and small commercial uses located in Pownal, the town hall, fire station, school, and stores in Pownal Center, and a cluster of homes, a park, church, and a commercial business in North Pownal.  

A wide variety of uses are permitted or conditionally permitted in the V Districts, including single and multi-family housing, retail stores, restaurants, lodging establishments, offices and other service businesses, and some light industrial uses.  

Relatively dense development of 4 units/acre is permitted in the V Districts where public water and sewer systems are available. The town also allows for the “transfer of development rights” from rural/conservation areas to the Village Districts; in these “TDR

| **Pownal** | The town allows for cluster subdivision in all residentially zoned areas. This development technique allows for greater density of residential development and facilitates pedestrian access between properties.  

The town’s innovative TDR regulations support mixed use development by enabling a very high density of housing in Village areas where the greatest diversity of land uses is permitted.  

Pownal is fortunate to be one of the few small towns in the area with a public sewer system. This infrastructure allows for a great deal of flexibility in the uses and density of development that can be accommodated in Village mixed use areas. The sewer system was completed several years ago, and was planned specifically to limit connections to the well-defined village areas. The town has included just this form of mixed use planning in its comprehensive plan and zoning regulations.  

The former Pownal Race Track, located just south of the historic Pownal Village area, contains significant vacant or underutilized land that has been the subject of various development proposals in recent years.  

Recommendations: Development on the race track property should provide good jobs for local residents and/or include a carefully planned mix of land uses, with supporting bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, to complement the adjacent historic village center.  

Property owners and developers should be encouraged to take

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Receiving Zones,” density can be increased to up to 8 units per acre. The town also has a “Commercial” (C) District that extends short distance southward from the Pownal Village District along Route 7. A similar mix of uses is allowed in this area, but minimum lot sizes and building coverage requirements are much more restrictive than in the Village Districts.

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<th>Rupert</th>
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<td>Rupert is a rural community with a strong agricultural heritage – and a very sophisticated land use plan and implementing regulations. The town has identified four historic village or hamlet areas and has established mixed use land use districts appropriate for each. East Rupert and North Rupert are located in the Mettawee Valley where agricultural land uses – and an abundance of conserved land – predominate. These small hamlets contain concentrations of residential development and have thus been designated as “Village Residential” (VR) Districts. The VR Districts allow for a mix of residential types and limited commercial uses in compact centers. Rupert has a PUD section in the zoning bylaws that can be applied in any land use district. Mandatory open space set-asides vary from 10% in VC and VR Districts to 30% in VN Districts to 50% in outlying rural residential and agricultural districts. Mixed uses within a PUD are strongly encouraged in Village Districts. A density bonus is provided for development of housing in mixed use Village areas for projects that include a certain amount of housing that meets specified needs.</td>
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The minimum lot size is 1 acre per dwelling unit. More extensive mixed use areas are located at the south end of the valley in Dorset and at the north end of the valley in Pawlet.

“Village Center” (VC) Districts have been established around the important historic centers of Rupert and West Rupert. Both of these areas sit at important road junctions and each contains a cluster of houses, a post office, and a church. The town hall and a busy general store are located in West Rupert. The VC Districts allow for a broad range of residential and appropriately scaled commercial land uses (retail stores, restaurants, offices, service businesses, etc.) at a density of 4 units per acre.

The “Village Neighborhood” Districts are located immediately adjacent to the historic “Village Center” Districts and provide for a mix of residential and some light commercial uses at a slightly lower density (2 units per acre). These areas allow for some additional growth around historic compact centers, but retain a sharp distinction from the surrounding rural countryside and agricultural landscape.

Sandgate

Sandgate is a remote rural community situated among some of the most

Sandgate’s land use regulations allow for

The small “village” area near the intersection of Sandgate Road and

Seek opportunities for development of small public water/sewer system(s) in village areas, especially in West Rupert where there is considerable potential for infill mixed use development.
rugged terrain in the Taconic Mountain Range. Most permanent development is located along the Green River Valley, with some additional development in West Sandgate’s Camden Valley. Because of its remote location and small size, Sandgate’s land use plan provides for only low-density residential development and limited commercial uses (including home occupations), with extensive areas planned for forestry, recreation, agriculture, and other open space uses.

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<td>Shaftsbury has defined a significant mixed use area in and around the historic village center of South Shaftsbury. This area currently includes numerous homes, two general stores, offices, a church, the local elementary school, town hall and town garage, and the fire department. The “Village Commercial” Districts (VC 1 and VC 2), located at the center of this area, allows for residential uses as well as a wide variety of commercial uses. Allowable density is approximately 2 units per acre and building coverage is limited to 15% of the lot area. Most of the VC District properties lie along Route 7A, the main street in the village. Adjacent side streets provide Open space subdivision is encouraged by the Town Plan and provided for in the zoning and subdivision regulations. The town recently added a density bonus for any developer using this technique to encourage greater utilization of this approach. A requirement of open space subdivision is dedication of undeveloped land for common recreational, agricultural, or conservation uses. South Shaftsbury is located relatively close to busy commercial areas in Bennington, and that fact has contributed to a relatively low number of commercial uses relative to the resident population. Building coverage limitations in both the VC and VR Districts are fairly restrictive, but the real limiting factor for growth in the mixed use village area is the lack of any public sewer system. It is difficult or impossible to build to the allowable density in either district because of this lack of infrastructure. The public water supply, fortunately, is good and has some capacity for growth. The town recently completed an extensive sidewalk project connecting West Sandgate Road includes the town hall, a church, an historic schoolhouse building, and a former inn, now a multi-family residential building. Recommendation: If the town were to consider a “mixed use” district, it would most appropriately be located in this central area. Although soil conditions and a lack of infrastructure limit development density, some incentives might be provided for a mixed use development. In general, however, Sandgate is expected to remain a low-density rural community.</td>
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access to most of the surrounding “Village Residential” (VR) District, where residential and residential accessory uses are permitted. Development density of up to 4 units per acre is permitted in the VR District if the property is served by the public water system; maximum building coverage is 20% of the lot area. (South Shaftsbury is not served by any public sewer system.) The town currently is considering a slight expansion in the area of the VR District.

Although Shaftsbury has one other designated village area in historic Center Shaftsbury, that area is now primarily residential. Most of Center Shaftsbury is in a rural residential zoning district, but a small area also is located in a “Roadside Commercial” (RC) District, where several commercial uses are conditionally permitted.

Stamford

Stamford is a rural town, mostly covered in deep forest, and somewhat isolated from the rest of the region by roadless mountain areas. The closest and most direct access to a commercial center is via Route 8 along the Hoosic River Valley to North Adams, Massachusetts.

Limited provision is made for planned or clustered residential development. Home occupations are allowed in all residential districts – as are a limited number of commercial uses.

A state-funded sidewalk project located along Route 8 near the town center is expected to be constructed in the near future.

Recommendation: The town planning commission should consider preparing proposed bylaw amendments to implement the Town Plan.
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<td>Stamford</td>
<td>Stamford has one well-established mixed use area near the local school (which also houses the town hall). That area also includes a general store, churches, and relatively dense residential neighborhoods. The zoning regulations allow for a mix of residential and some commercial uses in this “Residential” District, but that land use district currently extends well beyond the historic center up and down Route 8. The new Town Plan recommends consideration of a “Village” or “Village Residential” District in and around the historic town center, where allowable building density would be at least twice that currently allowed in the current Residential District and where commercial building density could be increased as well.</td>
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<td>Sunderland</td>
<td>Approximately three-fourths of the Town of Sunderland is owned by the US Forest Service as part of the Green Mountain National Forest. Low density residential development and open space predominates in the remaining (western) part of the town. The most significant mixed use area is in the northwest corner of the town, where Route 7A traverses the town on its way from Arlington to Manchester. This short corridor includes a number of residences, several retail stores, lodging establishments, a large office building, Planned Residential Developments are permitted in the RCR District. A density bonus of 25% is authorized for providing a PRD that meets the plan and bylaw objectives and reserves 50% of the land for open space. The bylaw limits PRDs to lots between 8 and 16 acres and allows only residential uses within the development. Although not centrally located to the town itself, Sunderland’s mixed use “RCR” District is centrally located between Arlington and Manchester, and includes the historic settlement area near the intersection with Hill Farm Road. There are a number of residences in the area, although most are on secondary roads off Route 7A. Existing commercial establishments in the area primarily serve tourists, although quite a number of jobs for local residents are available at the area’s businesses.</td>
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a church, service businesses, and the entrance to the Mount Equinox Syline Drive. This area is included in a “Rural Commercial Residential” (RCR) land use district. The RCR District allows for a mix of residential uses together with retail stores, offices, restaurants, lodging establishments, recreation and entertainment facilities, service businesses, and similar uses. Minimum lot size in the RCR District is 2 acres; interestingly, building coverage allowances are greater (higher percentage of lot coverage allowed) for larger lot sizes.

Another small, but important, mixed use area is the residential area located immediately adjacent to East Arlington Village (located in Arlington). Although residential in Sunderland, the adjacent village area in Arlington includes a post office used by many Sunderland residents, retail stores, a church, and a sidewalk providing a connection to the Arlington library, schools, and town center.

**Woodford**

Over 90% of the Town of Woodford is owned by the US Forest Service as part of the Green Mountain National Forest. Most of the development in town is

Recommendations: Consider loosening requirements for PRDs by allowing them on lots of any size and by permitting integrated mixed use development within them (PUDs). Also, review building coverage requirement and consider allowing higher coverage allowances for smaller lots to encourage more dense development on the smaller lots near the main road.

Vehicle speeds and a lack of pedestrian facilities are concerns in Sunderland’s mixed use area along Route 7A. A corridor study recommended traffic calming measures at the entrance to the most densely developed area and sidewalk connections along and across Route 7A. The town should update this study and consider implementation steps for some of the recommendations.

In the East Arlington Village area, the town should consider creating a small sidewalk or pathway to connect homes as far east as North Road with the village center.

The several pockets of residential and commercial development along Route 9 offer some possibilities for limited mixed use development.
concentrated in Woodford Hollow at the base of the Green Mountains, where the local elementary school and town hall also are found, and along Route 9 and in the Woodford Lake Estates development, located at a high elevation near the town’s center. Because of the town’s low population and limited amount of land for development, mixed use areas are quite limited. There is a general store, motels, a popular Nordic ski center, church, and a campground and lodge occupying a relatively small area just after Route 9 finishes its steep ascent from Woodford Hollow. Commercial uses are interspersed with residential districts with commercial zoning districts based on existing uses. Most such areas are not easily accessible to most residents except by auto.

| North Bennington Village | North Bennington is a diverse and busy community with a vibrant and historic village center. Its mixed use areas include a good portion of the village, but are concentrated in and around the historic village center around “Lincoln Square.” This center of activity includes many houses and apartments, a general store/deli, convenience store, restaurants and pubs, gas station, laundry, library, village offices, post office, an arts/entertainment center, schools, historic sites/museum, walking... | The Village is quite compact so no part of the community is beyond a 10 or 15 minute walk to commercial activity. | North Bennington is a dynamic mixed use village with some potential for new infill development in the historic center. Of particular interest, however, is the potential for new development and redevelopment in residential, mixed residential-professional, and industrial districts along Water Street (Route 67A) immediately south of the center. Recommendation: Encourage mixed use development along Water Street, |
trails, and manufacturing businesses. The village center is also within walking distance of the sprawling campus of Bennington College, with its faculty and student housing plus a wide array of regularly scheduled educational and cultural events and exhibits. The center of the village is covered by “Village Commercial” (VC) and “Village Residential” (VR) land use and zoning districts. These districts allow for a diverse array of residential and commercial uses at a relatively high density; possible because of the availability of public water and sewer in the village area. Zoning dimensional standards for these districts were recently revised so that new construction can be more dense, reflecting the historic village settlement pattern.

South of the village center along Water Street are “Industrial” and “Village Residential-Professional” (VRP) Districts. Both of these areas allow for a mix of uses, but particularly important is the Industrial District which allows for a mix of light industrial, commercial, and residential uses within historic manufacturing buildings. One of those buildings has recently been renovated to include approximately 20 apartments in including high density housing on the west side of the street (the Regional Affordable Housing Corporation has been considering developing a 16-unit housing development in this area) and a mix of residential apartments and light commercial/manufacturing in the historic mill buildings adjacent to Paran Creek. The potential for developing businesses that include light manufacturing with retail display areas should be considered – possibly in combination with space for local artists, craftspeople, and specialty food producers.

There is potential for significant new housing demand in the village center associated with the college. Ensure that such housing is developed consistent with Village character and that convenient access is provided to local businesses and parks.
addition to existing small manufacturing uses. The remaining buildings, some of which include vacant space, can be developed with mixed uses at densities that are limited only by the size of the buildings and available parking.

| Old Bennington Village | Old Bennington is a small historic community located near the center of the Town of Bennington. It includes the Bennington Battle Monument, Bennington Museum, a retail complex that primarily serves tourists, an inn and restaurant, a public elementary school, a music school, an historic church and cemetery, and numerous stately homes. The entire village covers a small area, includes approximately 130 buildings, and 250 residents. There is limited potential for new development, especially given the historic character of the village that is protected by strict historic and design guidelines. The Village is located within walking distance of downtown Bennington, and sidewalks connect these areas along Route 9 and Elm Street. | There is limited potential for new development that could take the form of a PUD. An attractive and convenient pedestrian connection between the Village and Bennington’s downtown could be established along the corridor of the old “Corkscrew Rail Line” which passes by the Bennington Museum and just below the Battle Monument. Unfortunately, several portions of the corridor have been acquired by adjacent property owners and it has been difficult to obtain easements or rights of way for public use of this route. Some Village residents recently have started to pursue the project again and local officials should explore options together with the Town of Bennington. |

| Manchester Village | Manchester Village is a historic section of Manchester centered around the Northshire County Courthouse, an historic church, the Equinox Resort, and | The Village allows cluster subdivision in lower density residential zones, primarily to preserve Manchester Village contains a rich mix of historic structures and newer buildings that contain a variety of land uses, especially in the center of the |
Burr and Burton Academy. The Village includes a mixed use corridor running from the Equinox Hotel area north along Route 7A to the Manchester Town line, beyond which lies the town’s commercial district. In addition to the features noted above, Manchester Village includes many attractive homes, a private primary school, senior living facilities, two golf courses, an art center, retail stores, restaurants, and inns; a large grocery store on the village/town line, the Hildene estate (buildings and expansive grounds), and recreational trail networks.

Land use/zoning districts in the mixed use areas of the village include “Village Residential” (VR) (three density levels depending on the availability of public water and sewer), “Business” (B) and the “Equinox Historic District” (EHD). Permitted uses include single and two-family residences plus certain multi-unit residential buildings, including group care homes, retail stores of a specified size, and defined office, service, restaurant, lodging, and related uses. Residential densities of up to four units per acre are possible; commercial uses are limited to one acre per unit and 30% building coverage.

Important open space areas. Planned Residential Developments are allowed for most residential subdivisions, enabling greater flexibility in lot layout and infrastructure design. Planned Unit Developments are permitted on 18+ acre parcels in the center of the village (areas with water and sewer availability) and on larger parcels in outlying areas. Uses in PUDs are limited to those in the underlying district(s), but can be integrated in a mixed use setting and tied together with infrastructure including pedestrian connections.

Community and along Route 7A north. Residential uses are located primarily at the periphery of the mixed use areas and along rural roadways and subdivisions. It is likely that property values in the Business District limits residential development there, but there are some residential uses along that corridor and potential for infill and mixed use development in PUDs.

Commercial uses in the Village rely on tourism, but offer goods and services for residents as well; the grocery store is particularly important to residents.

Recommendations: Encourage mixed use development in the Business District and high density residential development in available places in the VR District areas close to the Village center. Consider allowing more building coverage in the heart of the village to allow for a more dense village-scale character. Support development of businesses that cater to local residents to encourage more residential development in the center.

Support efforts to save and restore the former Music Hall on Union Street as a potentially important entertainment venue for residents and visitors in the center of the village.
ARLINGTON

The mixed use development area is focused around the historic village centers of Arlington and East Arlington. Preservation of the local water system (including possible acquisition by the town) and some type of public sewer system are priority needs to allow for more infill development and diversity.
Northside Drive mixed use area: requires improved pedestrian connections along the roadway and connections between the commercial and adjacent high density residential area.

Urban Mixed Use zone: needs improved streetscape, bike-ped facilities, and better pedestrian connections to downtown and Northside Drive.

Historic downtown mixed use area: encourage more residential development in the downtown and surrounding urban neighborhoods.
DORSET

Dorset Village mixed use area

South Dorset mixed use area

East Dorset Village mixed use area. Improve safety of pedestrian crossing at US Route 7.

Improve bicycle-pedestrian connections between village centers, Dorset School, and Manchester.
Nearly all of the town of Glastenbury is located within the Green Mountain National Forest. The few residents living on the west side of town have access to extensive outdoor recreation opportunities. Cluster subdivision is permitted in the residential zone.
Mixed use districts with PUD development potential: Village and Commercial zones.
Manchester’s mixed use zoning districts. Support locally-oriented business and workforce housing. Encourage developers to use incentives or provide standards that allow for greater density of use with fewer requirements.
Pursue infrastructure improvements to enable some additional density and infill development.

Commercial Recreation (Bromley Mountain) mixed use district – designed for vacation/recreation mixed use development.
Village districts are mixed use areas. Maintain sewer service area policies to concentrate development in these areas. Encourage use of Transferable Development Rights zoning provision to increase density in Village areas.

Development on the race track property offers significant mixed use development possibilities; ensure that development is carefully planned to integrate with the adjacent village center and includes pedestrian connectivity.
RUPERT

Rupert Village mixed use area. Encourage PUD developments.

West Rupert Village mixed use area. Public water/sewer system would allow for infill to desired density levels and a greater variety of uses.

East Rupert mixed use area.
Sandgate town center. Encourage new residential development to be clustered in all rural areas.
Support bike-pedestrian connections with North Bennington Village.

South Shaftsbury Village mixed use area. Pursue public sewer system to enable higher density and greater diversity of uses without horizontal expansion of village zoning districts.
STAMFORD

Stamford village center. Consider creating a “Village Residential” zone with higher density. Support the new land use designation by conducting a study of the potential for development of a small public water system.
SUNDERLAND

Sunderland mixed use area along Route 7A. Consider allowing mixed use PUDs in addition to PRDs and increasing building coverage allowances on smaller lots along the main road. Review past proposals for traffic calming and pedestrian amenities.

East Arlington Village mixed use area. Improve pedestrian connections to the center of the village in Arlington.
Consider allowing and encouraging mixed use PUDs in defined areas of existing development.
NORTH BENNINGTON VILLAGE

The historic North Bennington Village mixed use area contains a diversity of housing types at a relatively high density integrated with a variety of commercial, professional, civic, and institutional uses. Ensure that any college housing is consistent with village character and includes pedestrian connections.

Water Street historic industrial-mixed use area. Encourage high density housing including affordable housing developed by RAHC. Support mixed residential/commercial/light industrial uses in historic factory buildings along Paran Creek.
OLD BENNINGTON VILLAGE

Historic Old Bennington Village is located adjacent to Bennington’s mixed use downtown and growth center areas. It is a small, primarily residential, village, but does contain a diversity of land uses.

Former “corkscrew” rail line – potential pedestrian connection to cultural sites and downtown Bennington.
MANCHESTER VILLAGE

Historic village center – continue to promote compatible development at relatively high density.

Mixed use business district – encourage some business oriented to local residents and encourage infill residential development.