



Town of Huntington, Vermont

OUTDOOR & FOREST-BASED RECREATION PLAN



Vermont Town Forest
Recreation Planning

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	4
Chapter 1: Introduction & Community Profile	5
Acknowledgements	5
Project Team	5
About the Vermont Town Forest Recreation Planning Community Assistance Program	6
Project Purpose and Scope	6
Project Process	7
How to Use This Plan	7
Community Benefits of Forest-Based Recreation	8
Conservation and Habitat Protection	8
Close to Home Recreational Opportunities	9
Economic Development	9
Health Benefits	10
Carbon and Climate	10
Chapter 2: Existing Conditions	11
Community Profile	11
Summary	11
Town Recreation Profile	13
Town Forest	13
Other Outdoor Recreation Areas and Opportunities	14
Chapter 3: Public Engagement Summary and Needs Assessment	16
Public Engagement	16
Kick-Off Summit	16
Steering Committee Process	16
Public Visioning Workshop	17
Community Survey	17
Strategies Workshop	18
Plan Presentation Workshop	18
Implementation Summit	18
Needs Assessment	19
Chapter 4: Town Vision Framework	20
Visioning	20

Vermont Town Forest Recreation Planning

Management Balance.....	22
Exploring Other Recreational Opportunities.....	24
Existing Trails and Recreation Venues	25
Unmet Recreation Needs	25
Key Attributes	25
Chapter 5: Action Plan	27
Introduction	27
Detailed Action Priority Pages	27
Acquire a New Town Forest	28
Partnerships for Recreation & Programming.....	29
Trails and Open Space Planning	30
Access Paths and Connections	31
Water Access	32
Conservation and Stewardship.....	33
Action Plan Table	34
Chapter 6: Implementation	44
Town Forest Recreation Planning Toolkit	44
Existing Conditions Pod	45
Public Engagement Pod.....	46
Natural Resources Pod	47
Plan Development Pod	49
Implementation Pod	50
Town Forest Story Pod	51
Grants and Funding Sources.....	52
Federal and State Grants and Programs.....	52
State Grants and Programs	54
State Organizations	56
National Organizations.....	57



Executive Summary

Over the past year, Huntington has worked with a consulting firm that specializes in community planning, SE Group, in a robust planning process to develop an action-based town outdoor recreation plan. The innovative planning model included a public visioning workshop, needs assessment, facilitated walks in the town and forest, a community survey, a public strategies workshop, and an engaged steering committee. The process has resulted in a plan that provides actionable strategies to assist the community in taking the next steps.

Through the planning process, the Huntington community identified the following priorities:

- Acquire a New Town Forest
- Partnerships for Recreation & Programming
- Trails and Open Space Planning
- Access Paths and Connections
- Water Access
- Conservation and Stewardship

This process, and the community conversations throughout, captured a strong desire among Huntington residents to have more town forest land and to have greater access to this land. Key steps to meet this need include identifying and purchasing a new town forest, mapping out current and future recreation opportunities, building access trails, and establishing partnerships with local groups. We refer to this strategy as “Buy, Map, and Build.”

Moving forward, the Steering Committee is committed to working with the Town of Huntington, the Conservation Commission, community groups and organizations, and dedicated volunteers to implement these key strategies and move towards the community’s vision for forest-based and outdoor recreation in Huntington

Chapter 1: Introduction & Community Profile

Acknowledgements

All community plans are the result of a collective effort. In the development of this Town Forest Recreation Plan many individuals provided considerable input and expertise to the outcome. The project team would like to thank them for their tremendous assistance.

Project Team

Steering Committee

- ❖ Jenna Koloski, Chairperson
- ❖ Joe Segale
- ❖ Breck Knauft
- ❖ Kelsey Francis-Fath
- ❖ Sheri Lynn
- ❖ Jennifer Esser

With support from the Huntington Conservation Commission

Interagency Working Group

- ❖ VT Urban and Community Forestry Program—Project Lead
- ❖ VT Agency of Natural Resources—Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation
- ❖ VT Agency of Commerce and Community Development

Consultant Team

- ❖ SE Group—Project Lead
- ❖ Arrowwood Environmental—Natural Resources Sub-Consultant

OUR PARTNERS

The Vermont Urban & Community Forestry Program is a joint initiative of Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation (FRP) and UVM Extension. Working group members include FPR's Recreation Program, Agency of Commerce and Community Development, and Extension's Tourism and Marketing Program. Partners include over 40 organizations and stakeholders who have helped shape the process and deliverables.

Vermont Town Forest

Recreation Planning

About the Vermont Town Forest Recreation Planning Community Assistance Program

In Vermont town-owned and managed forests provide watershed protection, wildlife habitat, forest products, outdoor classrooms, and neighborhood gathering places for local communities. Outdoor and forest-based recreation is a key element of these forests and both a great opportunity and a growing challenge. The economic and community benefits of forest-based recreation are tremendous and increasingly being recognized. Planning assistance for forest-based recreation is becoming increasingly vital with the growing interest in forest-based recreation and the need to balance that with health of the forests. In response, the Vermont Urban & Community Forestry Program and its partners received a grant from the US Forest Service to provide recreation planning assistance to ten diverse Vermont communities, and Huntington was one of those selected!

Project Purpose and Scope

At the broadest level, the Vermont Town Forest Recreation Planning Community Assistance Program is intended to empower communities to move forward with confidence on recreation projects in their town. This process has provided robust community involvement and comprehensive consideration of potential



projects, so the community can move forward with confidence knowing that it is addressing the needs and preferences of its residents and visitors, is protecting the forest resources in its charge, and is effectively managing its forest and other open spaces and recreational assets for the resources and activities it values.

The project encompasses four key areas:

1. Developing the Vermont Town Forest Recreation Planning Toolkit to enable planning in ALL Vermont communities
2. Developing a compelling and inspiring vision to help guide the future management of the town forest
3. Developing discrete, clear and action-oriented strategies for improvement of recreation and stewardship that achieves the vision
4. Fostering implementation with support for local plan adoption, guidance for implementation, and the project toolkit

While Huntington does have an existing town forest, it was recognized early in the process that the limited recreational access to the forest was too difficult to be reasonable for most residents (a winter-only 3-mile snowshoe or cross-country ski trek), so this project should also look at outdoor and forest-based recreation opportunities throughout the town. This is markedly different than the other towns working under the Urban & Community Forestry Grant Program.



Vermont Town Forest Recreation Planning

Project Process

Over the past year, Huntington has worked with a consulting firm that specializes in community planning, SE Group, in a robust planning process to develop an action-based town outdoor recreation plan. The innovative planning model included a public visioning workshop, needs assessment, facilitated walks in the town and forest, a community survey, a public strategies workshop, and an engaged steering committee. The process has resulted in a plan that provides actionable strategies to assist the community in taking the next steps. This process has led to a Vermont Town Forest Recreation Planning Toolkit to support sustainable, forest-based recreation in towns and town forests statewide.

How to Use This Plan

First and foremost, this plan is intended to document the community's desires for outdoor and forest-based recreation. Through robust public engagement, the planning process identified and solidified the comprehensive vision which encompasses all the primary uses of town forests and other open spaces: conservation, recreation, education, and timbering and forest products. When decisions are being made about the town forest or other open spaces, the vision outlined in this document should be referred to and should inform how the community might weigh in on the future direction of those places.

In addition to establishing a shared vision for outdoor and forest-based recreation, this planning process has also identified a series of concrete actions the town and its partners could take to implement the community's vision for recreation. Strategies for improvement of recreation could be physical enhancements—such as new trails, parking lots, or facilities—but strategies might also be non-physical improvements like enhanced maps and signage or policy-oriented strategies like creating a process for proposing and reviewing new trails or projects in the forest. Potential strategies were reviewed and prioritized by the steering committee and the public during the Draft Strategies Workshop. All strategies identified by the steering committee and project team are found within the action plan table, but the highest priority projects have also received enhanced detail in the action plan.

For each strategy, the action plans identify:

- Project description
- Action responsibility
- Timing (immediate, short, medium, long-term)
- Partners involved
- Action or planning dependencies
- Available toolkits & support resources
- Funding and grant opportunities
- Magnitude of costs (\$-\$-\$-\$-\$-\$-\$-\$-\$-\$)



Vermont Town Forest Recreation Planning

Some of the strategies can be implemented directly by the town, its volunteers, and partners without additional funding or resources – others may require additional planning and design or require grants to complete. If grants or additional planning and design steps are needed, likely funding sources and implementation partners are identified in this action plan.

The Vermont Town Forest Recreation Planning Toolkit—a companion to this plan—offers guidelines, designs, case studies, best practices, and standards for the town to pursue towards realizing its vision. Whether the next step involves recruiting volunteers, writing a grant application, or building a trail, the Toolkit can help the town and its partners move forward.

The Vermont Town Forest Recreation Planning Toolkit is available on Urban and Community Forestry’s website at: <https://vtcommunityforestry.org/>

Community Benefits of Forest-Based Recreation

Recreation in town forests and other open spaces provides many benefits for local residents, economies, and the natural communities of Vermont.

Conservation and Habitat Protection

A town forest, as a protected natural area, has intrinsic conservation value. They act as habitat for local species and help conserve the area’s natural resources. Town forests can connect existing forest blocks, providing a larger, safe habitat for species. Linked habitat blocks also allow species to travel and adapt to changing conditions. The forests also protect and buffer local streams, improving water quality and habitat for aquatic species. In absorbing and filtering water, the forests improve flood resiliency and water quality across the watershed. Forests also help protect soils and biodiversity and provide a buffer against pests and disease. As a municipally owned parcel, the forest can leverage additional funds for conservation through taxes and community development grants.

A town forest also provides humans with benefits from conservation by linking people to nature and allowing them to experience a wide range of natural environments. It is becoming clearer that contact with nature is an important element of a healthy life style. Providing convenient, local access to forests and natural areas can make it easier to connect with and experience nature,



which is particularly important for the youth in our communities. According to the Institute for Social Research, the average American boy or girl spends just four to seven minutes in unstructured outdoor play each day, and more than six hours each day in front of an electronic screen (National Wildlife Federation, 2016). This is startling data that has been causing a ripple effect across the country. Nearly every industry that works with young people across the nation



Vermont Town Forest Recreation Planning

has established initiatives to help change this statistic. From school districts and environmental education organizations to federal land managers, conservationists and the outdoor retail industry, new funding streams for outreach and programs have developed.

Close to Home Recreational Opportunities

Town forests provide trails for both residents and visitors to enjoy. Town forest trails allow walkers, bikers, runners, skiers, and snowshoers to combine exercise and a natural experience in a convenient location without having to travel far from their home. Studies have shown that close and convenient access to recreation and the outdoors can significantly increase an individual's physical activity levels (Schipperijn et al, 2017). Town forests may also connect surrounding trail systems, enhancing the community's overall trail network. Town forest recreational opportunities can also integrate recreation with outdoor education through interpretive signage and nature walks, promoting other community values of health and nature education.

Economic Development

In Vermont, outdoor and forest-based recreation and the associated tourism are major drivers of the economy. Outdoor and forest-based recreation brings people into our communities. In the Mad River Valley, 78% of visitors have reported that trails and access to the outdoors was important in their decision to visit (MRV Moves, 2017). Trail users, both residents and visitors, will visit local restaurants and shops, bringing in tax revenue and creating jobs as well. Across our state, just four trail systems—the Catamount Trail, the Long Trail, the VAST system, and Kingdom Trails—have been found to generate over \$30.8 million annual economic activity, over \$2 million in annual tax revenues, and have supported over 365 jobs annually (VT Trails and Greenways, 2017). A single trail system in the Green Mountain National Forest—the Blueberry Lake Trails—has been found to generate \$1.8 million in annual sales, \$320,000 in annual tax revenues, and has supported 22 jobs annually (MRV Moves, 2017).



Many people when moving to Vermont will choose a location based on its natural features and recreational opportunities. Nationwide, the National Association of Realtors found that 80% of Americans consider having trails and places to take a walk one of their top priorities when deciding where they would like to live. This ranked higher than even “high quality public schools” in their Community Preference Survey, which was selected by 74% of survey respondents (National Realtors Association, 2015). Access to the outdoors is increasingly being seen as a cornerstone of quality of life, particularly in rural communities, and having this access allows communities to attract and retain their workforce, which in turn helps attract and retain businesses.



Vermont Town Forest

Recreation Planning

Therefore, an accessible town forest can be a key factor for strengthening the economic vitality of Vermont towns.

Health Benefits

Almost all hospitals and health providers encourage patients to include some form of physical activities in their daily lives to increase many aspects of their health. By providing convenient access to the outdoors, a town forest encourages community members to walk, bike, ski, snowshoe, or run in the forest regularly.



Obesity is one of the most significant health threats today. More than two-thirds (68.8 percent) of American adults are considered to be overweight or obese. More than one-third (35.7 percent) of American adults are considered to be obese (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2016). Vermont has slightly lower rates of overweight and obese adults at 57.7% overweight and 23.2% obese, but the issue is of critical importance in our state as well (CDC, 2012). Active lifestyles and physical activity help to combat obesity. Obesity exacerbates many other types of illnesses and reducing the levels of obesity leads to overall better health.

Studies have shown that trails and outdoor recreation contribute to healthy communities and lower healthcare costs for individuals and local governments. A 2004 cost-benefit analysis of using trails in Lincoln, Nebraska to reduce health care costs associated with inactivity found that for every \$1 invested in trails for physical activity, \$2.94 of public health benefits are produced (Wang et al, 2004).

Spending time in the forest's peaceful, natural setting is also proven to be beneficial to community members' mental health. In addition, the forest's trees improve the air quality of the surrounding area as well.

Carbon and Climate

Protected forests take up carbon dioxide (CO₂) and release oxygen (O₂) through photosynthesis, transferring the carbon (C) to their trunks, limbs, roots, and leaves as they grow. When leaves or branches fall and decompose, or trees die, the stored C will be released by respiration and/or combustion back to the atmosphere or transferred to the soil. Because of these processes, forests and forested landscapes can store considerable carbon and their growth can provide a carbon sink; landscapes that have been recently converted or reconverted to forests (from another land cover) can provide a carbon sink that is considerably larger than other land cover types. U.S. forests currently serve as a carbon 'sink', offsetting approximately 13% of U.S. emissions from burning fossil fuels in 2011, and from 10 to 20% of U.S. emissions each year (USFS, 2018).



Chapter 2: Existing Conditions

Community Profile

The community profile presents demographic, economic, and recreational information relevant to planning for Huntington.

Summary

Huntington is a small rural community on the edge of Chittenden County, with a relatively young population and a median income higher than the state average. Camel's Hump State Park is on the eastern edge of the town and the trails and other outdoor recreation opportunities are a key element of the town. Camel's Hump and the outdoor recreation offerings do attract many day visitors to the town, but Huntington does not have many second homeowners or overnight visitors.





Population: 1,875



Median Age: 42.5



of School Age Children: 338



52 % Male 48 % Female



Household Median Income: \$71,667



Residents Below Poverty Level: 4 %



3 % Residential Units in Seasonal/Recreational Use



15 % County Employment in Travel & Tourism



Grand List Assessed Value: \$8,839,300



Number of Parks and Open Spaces: 7



Miles of Trails: 46



of Playgrounds: 1



Town Recreation Profile

Town Forest

Overview

The Huntington Town Forest is a 100-acre parcel adjacent to Camel's Hump State Forest. On the other sides, the forest is surrounded by private parcels and there is no year-round public access. In the winter, the forest is accessible via ~3 mile from the Nordic Center on Bert White Road or a longer route along the Catamount Trail from the north. Within the forest, there are 0.9 miles of winter-only trails maintained by the Camel's Hump Nordic Ski Area and the Catamount Trail Association. The town has been exploring improving access to the forest for many years but has not found a solution. Therefore, this plan explores outdoor and forest-based recreation on this parcel and throughout Huntington.

Land Ownership and Conservation Background

The Town of Huntington acquired the forest in 1984. Previously, the land was owned by a woodworking company, then transferred to the Nature Conservancy in 1979. In 1984, the Nature Conservancy transferred the parcel to the State of Vermont, who then sold it to the town. The property was logged in 1991 but has not had forest management or harvesting since.



There is currently no public access in the summer. The Catamount Trail and the Camel's Hump Challenge Trail pass through the boundaries of the forest under a winter-only easement.

The Huntington Conservation Commission manages the forest primarily as wildlife habitat.

Other Outdoor Recreation Areas and Opportunities

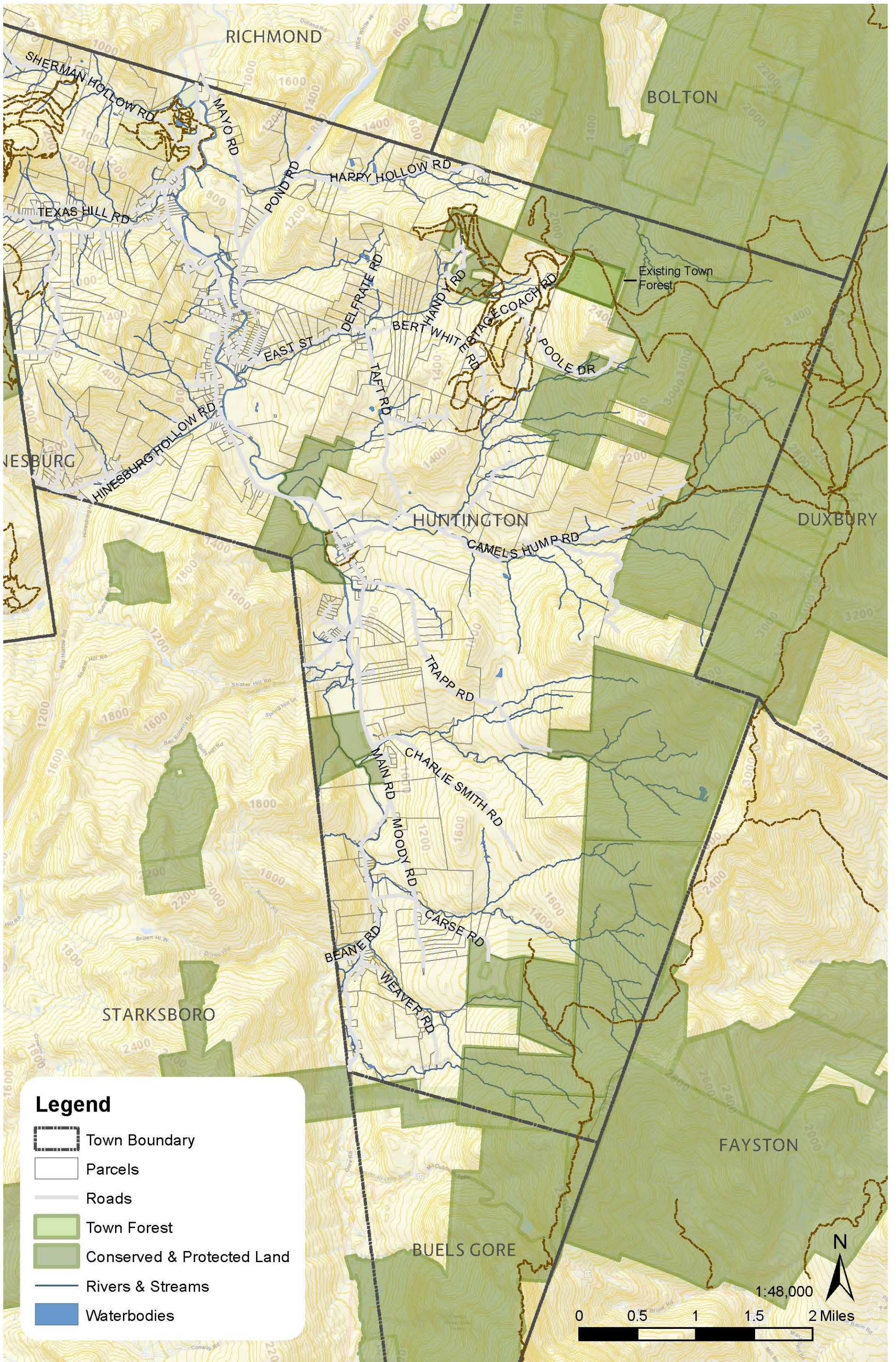
Huntington

There are many opportunities in Huntington for outdoor and forest-based recreation. The 20,000-acre Camel's Hump State Park is partially in Huntington. The trailhead for the Burrows Trail, the park's most popular trail to the Camel's Hump summit, is in Huntington. There are also opportunities for camping in the park. The Huntington Gap Wildlife Management Area and Camel's Hump State Forest are open to hunting, fishing, and hiking. The Huntington River and its many tributaries also provide opportunities for fishing, swimming, and boating. In addition, many private landowners in Huntington allow public recreational access to their property.

Three of the state's major trails, the Long Trail, the Catamount Trail, and the VAST trail all pass through Huntington. The local VAST Club—the "Iroquois Snow Beavers"—are an important resource to the community and have maintained trails in the area for over 40 years, working with private landowners and the State Forest to have access to groomed winter trails. The groomed trail corridor connects neighboring towns and counties, bringing recreation from across the state and creating groomed trails for skiers, snowshoes, fat bikers, and hikers, as well as snowmobilers.

Multiple private institutions offer recreational opportunities open to the public as well. The Camel's Hump Nordic Ski Area offers cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. Sleepy Hollow Inn offers cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and mountain biking. The Audubon Center has hiking trails and offers outdoor programs as well. The Birds of Vermont Museum also offers hiking trails and programming.





Chapter 3: Public Engagement Summary and Needs Assessment

To incorporate the community's views, a robust public engagement process was at the heart of this plan. There were multiple workshops open to the public, a community survey, and many steering committee meetings to guide the plan. Through this process, the public identified issues, needs, desired attributes, and strategies to enhance the forest. The public also offered feedback on the strategies and draft plans, to ensure a fit with the town's needs, interests, and capacity.

Public Engagement

Kick-Off Summit

A project kickoff summit with all 10 towns was held at the Bethel Town Hall on Friday, November 17, 2017. The summit introduced members of the town steering committee to the project and served as an initial opportunity to provide input. The project team provided a background of the project and an overview of the process. Through a working lunch, the committee members completed a SWOT worksheet (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) to begin thinking about and analyzing their community. A web survey was also available for other committee members who were not present to provide their thoughts. Facilitators led a community breakout session for the committee to speak to existing conditions, issues, and their vision for the town. From Huntington, two people were in attendance.



Steering Committee Process

The steering committee, made up of interested community members, was instrumental to the process. Members of the steering committee attended the kickoff summit, helped plan and spread the word about the public workshops, reviewed the draft strategies and draft plan, and met with the project team and on their own to provide ideas and feedback throughout the process.

Public Visioning Workshop

A Public Visioning Workshop for the town of Huntington was held at the Huntington Town Hall on January 30, 2018. The meeting was a drop-in anytime, open house format with questions about an overall vision for the town; the balance of recreation, education, conservation/natural resources, and forest products; the natural resources present on the site; and future activities in the town. Attendees wrote responses on boards, completed dot exercises, and drew their ideas and knowledge on maps. Members of the project team and local steering committee were available for one-on-one chats with attendees, and a general comment box was provided for open-ended feedback.

Background/baseline information about the project and the community, was also provided. 75 people signed in and an estimated 80-85 people were in attendance.

Overall, the process engaged over 200 residents from across the community, however the Steering Committee recognizes that there were voices in Huntington that were not heard. There is still work to be done as implementation begins to bring in as many voices from across the community as possible.



Please see Appendix 1 – Visioning Process Results, which combines the findings from this meeting and the community survey.

Community Survey

The Community Survey was launched at the public visioning workshop on January 30, 2018 and remained open through the Sunday after Town Meeting Day—March 11, 2018—where the Committee had a table offering the opportunity for community members to complete surveys. The community survey asked the same questions as the public visioning workshop, in order to give the people who could not attend the meeting an opportunity to provide input. Both online and hard copy surveys were made available. The community was made aware of the survey through flyers distributed around town, social media posts, and email blasts. In total, the survey received 105 responses—96 online and 9 hard copy.



Please see Appendix 1 for the Visioning Process Results, which combines the findings from the visioning workshop and the community survey.

Strategies Workshop

A Strategies Workshop for Huntington was held at the Huntington Town Hall on July 11, 2018. The meeting was a combination presentation and open house. First, the attendees learned about the project process, the toolkit, vision framework, and draft strategies. The meeting transitioned to an open house where attendees prioritized the draft strategies on boards and had the opportunity to have one-on-one discussions with members of the project team and steering committee. Attendees also indicated locations for the draft strategies on a large map. An estimated 35-40 people were in attendance.

After the workshop, the town opened an online survey asking the same questions as the workshop boards. The survey received 42 responses.

Please see Appendix 2 for the Strategies Workshop and Survey Results.



Plan Presentation Workshop

The steering committee presented the plan to the selectboard and members of the public on October 15, 2018. In the presentation, the steering committee explained the project purpose and process and shared the vision framework and top priority strategies they developed. Representatives from Urban and Community Forestry and/or the Department of Forests Parks and Recreation were present to show support for the plan.

Implementation Summit

Representatives from our town attended the Town Forest Implementation Summit held on November 9, 2018 at the VYCC West Monitor Barn in Richmond, VT. The summit included representatives from all 10 pilot communities and provided opportunities for networking and information sharing. Attendees learned about commonalities and major takeaways across all ten town forests, the action plans developed by each of the towns, grant opportunities, and interpretive signage. The attendees heard from a panel about management and public decision making, received a sneak preview of the



Vermont Town Forest Recreation Planning Toolkit, and took a walking tour of Richmond's town forest and the VYCC trail infrastructure.

Needs Assessment

Through the public engagement process, community members identified the issues and needs associated with outdoor recreation in the community that should be resolved in this planning process. Additional issues and needs were identified via site visits and natural resources assessments. The following issues and needs were identified:

1. Difficult/limited access to existing Town Forest and limited knowledge of its existence
2. Lack of public trails near the village
3. No non-winter trails in existing Town Forest
4. No designated space for dogs in town
5. Limited opportunities for forest recreation and education in town
6. Neighbors' concerns about increased use of the Town Forest or any future public land
7. Many trails on private land in town
8. People drive to other towns to walk or ride trails
9. Many in the community would like to see more options for mountain biking in Huntington
10. Challenge with funding, timing, and capacity to purchase new land
11. Walking in town requires walking on main roads with limited shoulder
12. Limited access and information about Camels Hump State Forest for visitors and residents



Chapter 4: Town Vision Framework

A vision framework is a critically important tool that informs the goals and direction of the town outdoor and forest-based recreation plan. The vision framework encompasses all forest uses—not just recreation—to understand how recreation should fit in with the community’s overall intent for the forests in town. The vision framework is directional, descriptive, and aspirational, communicating what the community believes are the ideal conditions for outdoor and forest-based recreation in Huntington—how things would look if all opportunities and issues were perfectly addressed.

The vision framework includes:

1. A discussion of the management balance of recreation and public land in Huntington; and
2. A list of key attributes that describe the community’s desired character for recreation and public land in Huntington

The vision framework is broad enough to encompass a variety of local perspectives. Unlike a simple one or two sentence vision statement, a vision framework allows for more complexity to be communicated and better illuminates the community’s desired character for town recreation—which is often multi-faceted.

The management balance discussion and list of key attributes work together to communicate the community’s overarching aspirations for outdoor and forest-based recreation in Huntington. Both aspects of the vision framework should align, without repeating each other. The management balance describes the community’s management priorities for recreation in Huntington, while key attributes are a list of words or short phrases that expand upon the management balance and describe the community’s desired future character for outdoor and forest-based recreation. These two pieces work together and support each other to communicate the multi-faceted values of the community.

Visioning

At the public visioning workshop and in the community survey, attendees/respondents were asked, “What word or phrase best describes your EXISTING experience with outdoor and forest-based recreation in your community?” and “What word or phrase best describes your DESIRED FUTURE experience with outdoor and forest-based recreation in your community?” The results of these exercises are demonstrated in the word clouds below. The size of the words in the word clouds corresponds to the number of times that word was used in the responses.

Desired Future Experience



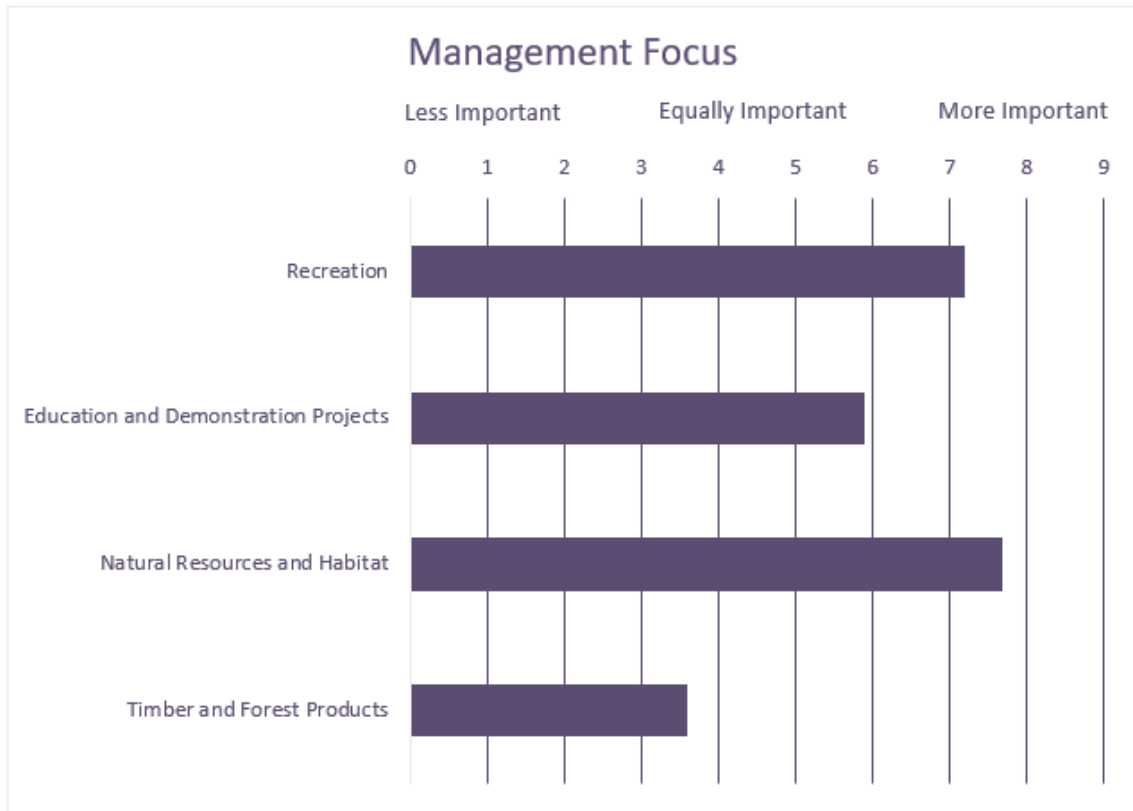
The community expressed a strong desire to utilize the forest for recreation. In that regard, the most frequently used words were “accessible”/“access,” “recreation,” “hiking,” and “walking.” Community members also want the forest to remain natural, using words like “wildlife,” “habitat,” and “natural.”

Management Balance

Forests can be managed to provide a wide range of activities and community values. Four common use areas include Recreation; Education & Land Use Demonstration Projects; Natural Resources & Habitat; and Timber & Forest Products. While most publicly accessible forests provide some measure of all four types of uses, they tend to “lean” in one management direction or another.

To understand the desired balance for Huntington forests, the project team probed the steering committee throughout the Visioning Process (kick-off summit, forest walk, first steering committee meeting) and asked survey and workshop participants “Where do you think the management focus SHOULD fall for the Town Forests and open spaces in your community? Should it lean towards Recreation, Education, Timber & Forest Products, or Natural Resources & Habitat?” Their responses are below:





What Should be the Management Focus for the Town Forest in Your Community?

Town Forests can be managed to provide a wide range of activities and community values. Four common use areas include Recreation, Education & Land Use Demonstration Projects, Natural Resources & Habitat, and Timber & Forest Products. While most publicly accessible forests provide some measure of all four types of uses, they tend to "lean" in one management direction or another. Where do you think the management focus should fall for the Town Forest in your community? Should it lean towards Recreation, Education, Timber & Forest Products, or Natural Resources & Habitat? **Place a dot** on the gradient line for each common use for where you think the management focus should fall in your Town Forest.

RECREATION

LESS IMPORTANT EQUALLY IMPORTANT MORE IMPORTANT

EDUCATION & DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS

LESS IMPORTANT EQUALLY IMPORTANT MORE IMPORTANT

NATURAL RESOURCES & HABITAT

LESS IMPORTANT EQUALLY IMPORTANT MORE IMPORTANT

TIMBER & FOREST PRODUCTS

LESS IMPORTANT EQUALLY IMPORTANT MORE IMPORTANT

Vermont Town Forest
Recreation Planning

Use a Dot!

● Visioning Focus

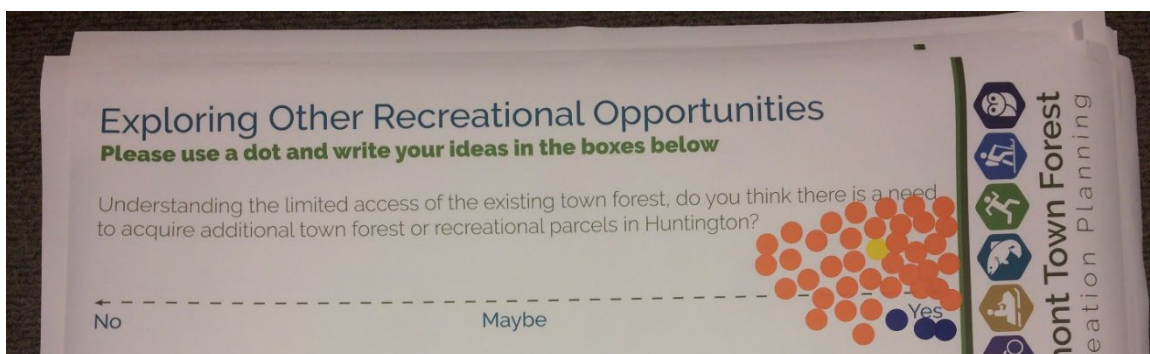
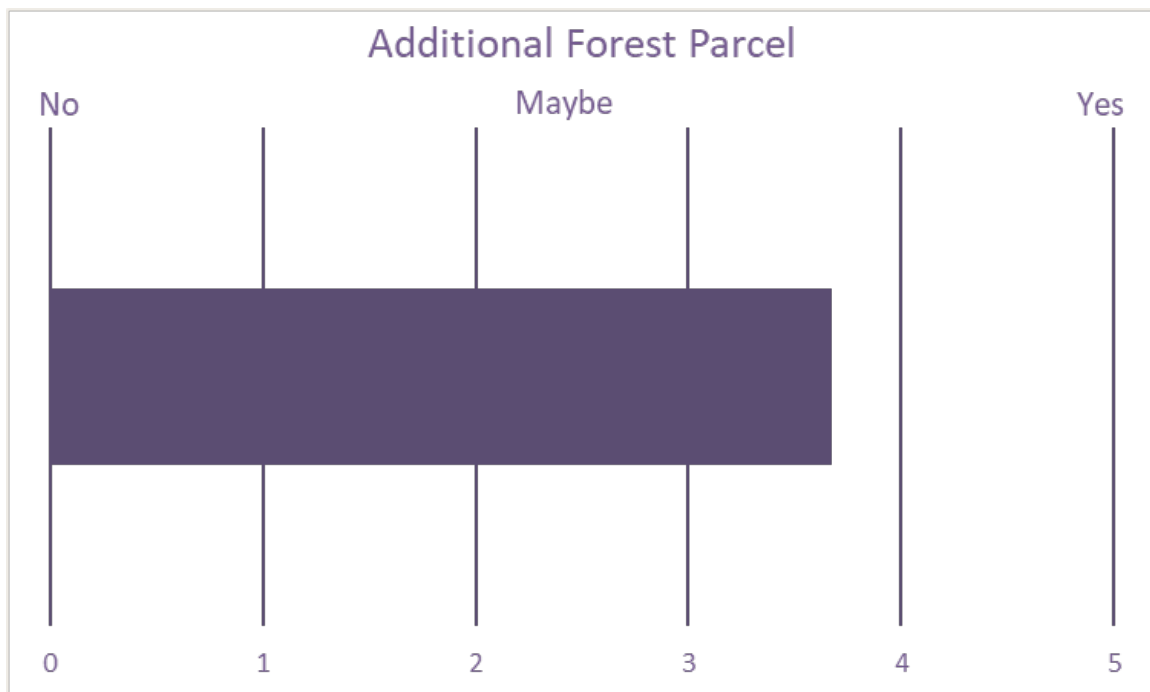
Huntington, VT
January 2018



Through these interactions, the Huntington community expressed that Recreation, Education & Demonstration Projects, and Natural Resources & Habitat are very important. Recreation and Natural Resources & Habitat are the top priorities for both workshop participants and survey respondents. Neither group felt that Timber & Forest Products was as important of a use. There was also consensus that the existing town forest should maintain more of a conservation and habitat orientation, while new parcels might lean more towards recreation opportunities.

Exploring Other Recreational Opportunities

When asked “Understanding the limited access of the existing town forest, do you think there is a need to acquire additional town forest or recreation parcels in Huntington?” residents were strongly in favor of acquiring new lands. The workshop participants were entirely in favor of acquiring an additional parcel—not one sticker was placed near “No” or “Maybe.” The survey respondents were similarly supportive, but not to the same extent. Their responses are below:



Existing Trails and Recreation Venues

When asked “What trails, parks, or recreation areas do you typically use to walk or recreate in the forest?” survey respondents’ answers seems to coalesce around a few themes: Camels Hump State Park and Forest, surrounding towns (Hinesburg, Duxbury, Richmond, etc.), private lands and neighbors’ properties, and private trail systems such as Sleepy Hollow or Cochrans. Responses are demonstrated in the word cloud below. The size of the words in the word clouds corresponds to the number of times that word was used in the responses.

Unmet Recreation Needs

When asked “Is there an unmet need in our community for parks, open spaces, and natural areas?” survey respondents answered “YES” was the most common response. Themes within these responses centered around trails, access and accessibility, town/public, walking/hiking, and biking. Responses are demonstrated in the word cloud below. The size of the words in the word clouds corresponds to the number of times that word was used in the responses.

Key Attributes

The following list of key attributes are the words or short phrases that communicate what the community believes are the ideal conditions for outdoor and forest-based recreation in the community – how things would look if all opportunities and issues were perfectly addressed, which may be the same or different from how things currently look. This list is based on the analysis of public and committee input received through the visioning process, as well as the review of the community’s demographics, profile, forest information, and surveys.

1. Year-round diverse recreation opportunities (snowshoeing, skiing, snowmobiling, biking, hiking, swimming, etc.)
2. Peaceful and quiet opportunities
3. Sustainable and well-maintained trail system, trailheads, access, and parking
4. Protection of wildlife habitat
5. Protection of vernal pools, wetlands, and other water resources
6. Connected forest blocks and wildlife habitat
7. Partnerships with the state forest/park, VYCC, trail and land conservation organizations, and others to provide forest recreation for Huntington residents
8. Existing forest preserved for conservation
9. Opportunities for hunting in forested parcels
10. Connected, robust trail network
11. Accessible mountain biking trails



12. Maintain healthy balance between stewardship and human uses
13. Public trails and forests accessible from villages
14. Quieter, uncrowded hiking options
15. Collaboration and partnerships with private landowners
16. Community volunteers engaged in maintaining and constructing trails and recreation infrastructure
17. Multi-dimensional
18. Multi-generational
19. Kids in the outdoors
20. Solitude, rest, and rejuvenation
21. Accessible outdoor opportunities for all ages and abilities
22. Many outdoor recreation opportunities on both town and state land
23. Opportunities for learning about stewardship, ecology, and local history
24. Villages connected by a safe recreation path
25. Connectivity to the Long Trail
26. Protected and accessible swimming holes
27. Collaboration with Camel's Hump Nordic Ski Area
28. Town Forest portfolio that combines recreationally focused properties and conservation focused properties
29. Well-known community assets
30. Outdoor gathering spaces
31. Well-marked trail and recreation opportunities with signage
32. Gentle, easy walking trails



Chapter 5: Action Plan

Introduction

The Action Plan is a set of recommended strategies and projects to achieve the town's vision. These strategies and projects were developed based on the key attributes, needs assessment, forest walks, and input from the steering committee and community. From a larger initial list of strategies, the community participants and the steering committee has selected the strategies to craft an action plan well-suited to the community's interest, needs, and capacity.

The Action Plan includes "detailed action priority pages" for the highest priority strategies as well as an Action Plan Table.

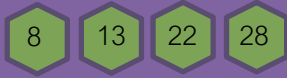
Detailed Action Priority Pages

The following pages provide more detail on the implementation of strategies that were prioritized by the community and the Steering Committee as those most likely to achieve Huntington's vision for outdoor and forest-based and that have been identified by community members and the steering committee as top priorities. These project pages include the key attributes and needs assessment items that the strategy responds to, a more detailed description of the rationale and process to carry out the strategy, and the other items included in the action table.

Vermont Town Forest Recreation Planning

Acquire a New Town Forest

Key Attribute #:



Need #:



Estimated Cost:

\$\$\$\$

Timing:

Medium-Term

At present, there is no year-round access to the Huntington Town Forest. The forest is only accessible via a long cross-country ski in the winter, precluding most Huntington residents from enjoying their town forest. During the visioning process, Huntington residents were asked whether they thought the town should acquire a new town forest. All public visioning workshop attendees were in support and the survey respondents were largely supportive as well. Given this level of interest, the town should explore acquiring a new town forest.

However, acquiring a new town forest cannot and should not happen overnight. As a forest parcel becomes available, the town should ensure that there is proper road access with available parking. Ideally, the new town forest would be easily accessible from all areas of town. Given the community's interest in expanding outdoor recreational opportunities, the new forest should be suitable for a multi-use trail network and should provide connectivity opportunities. Recreation and education programming and events should also be feasible in the new forest.

Grant funds should be pursued to fund the new forest purchase. In neighboring Richmond, grants and private donations covered about 80% of the cost to purchase the new town forest, leaving the town's conservation fund with a reasonable sum to complete the purchase.

The town should retain the current town forest for habitat and conservation. The new town forest's management balance should focus more on recreation and education.

Responsibility:

Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers

Partners Involved:

Land Conservation Partners (Vermont Land Trust, Trust for Public Land, etc.)

Planning Required:

Due diligence and land planning

Funding Opportunities:

LWCF, RD, VHCP

Toolkit Resources

Land Conservation and Recreational Access Toolkit

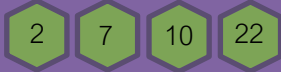
Vermont Town Forest Stewardship Guide



Vermont Town Forest Recreation Planning

Partnerships for Recreation & Programming

Key Attribute #:



Need #:



Estimated Cost:

\$

Timing:

Short-Term

While Huntington's existing town forest may present few recreational opportunities, there are many public lands, organizations, and recreation providers in the area who can help meet the outdoor recreation needs of Huntington residents. The Town of Huntington should form partnerships to create these opportunities for residents.

With the nearby state-managed lands, Huntington should go to FPR and spearhead a planning process to incorporate some of Huntington's recreational needs at Camel's Hump State Park, Camel's Hump State Forest, and Huntington Gap WMA. While the town plays host to the Camel's Hump and the popular Burrows Trail, the state park and forest could also provide more local-serving recreation opportunities in those areas, such as dog walking and mountain biking trails, perhaps at a new trailhead.

The town should also work with nearby communities with robust town forests. The Hinesburg Town Forest is on the towns' border and Richmond's new town forest is also nearby. Huntington should be involved in existing planning processes for those forests, presenting Huntington's community interests. Huntington should also be involved in the planning of programming and maintenance for the forest to help support efforts there.

The town should also work with other recreational providers in the area, such as the Green Mountain Audubon, Sleepy Hollow Inn, and Camel's Hump Nordic Ski Association to ensure their recreation opportunities are known and accessible to Huntington residents to the extent possible.

Responsibility:

Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers

Partners Involved:

FPR; Hinesburg; Richmond; Bolton, others

Planning Required:

--

Funding

Opportunities:

--

Toolkit Resources

Land Conservation and Recreational Access Toolkit

Vermont Town Forest Stewardship Guide

Programming Partnerships Toolkit



Vermont Town Forest Recreation Planning

Trails and Open Space Planning

Key Attribute #:

3 10 21 22

Need #:

3 8 9

Estimated Cost:

\$\$

Timing:

Short-Term

This process has helped establish a vision for outdoor recreation in Huntington, but has only scratched the surface of assessing town-wide recreational needs and opportunities. As the community seeks to enhance its recreational opportunities, a full Trails and Open Space Master Plan would serve the town well.

Such a plan should first examine the existing conditions of the trail system, as both individual trails and as a network. *What trails need maintenance, rerouting, or better signage? What types of trails are available and what types not? What parts of town have easy access to a trail network and which do not?* All recreational opportunities in town should also be assessed, looking at the strength and gaps of the offering.

The plan should look at the many trails open to the public on private land, considering how to maintain access and increase community utilization. The trails planning should also be done in the context of all trails in the region, to accurately determine Huntington's needs.

With the assessment complete, this plan should lay out new trails, taking the community's input into account. For both existing and proposed trails, a comprehensive trail map should be developed for residents and visitors to know about all the trails in the town and the region.

Another section of this plan should focus on open space in Huntington – looking at the possibilities for acquiring new land and the use of other conserved land in Huntington. Enhancing existing town owned open space and recreation parcels through new facilities and access should also be a focus.

Responsibility:

Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers

Partners Involved:

All

Planning Required:

--

Funding Opportunities:
BCP, MPG

Toolkit Resources

Land Conservation and Recreational Access Toolkit

Vermont Town Forest Stewardship Guide

Programming Partnerships Toolkit



Vermont Town Forest Recreation Planning

Access Paths and Connections

Key Attribute #:

13

24

Need #:

2

12

Estimated Cost:

\$\$-\$\$\$\$

Timing:

Medium-Term

Throughout the visioning process, community members expressed a strong desire to connect the village and residential areas to outdoor recreation opportunities. The community envisioned being able to safely and enjoyably walk or ride their bikes to nearby trails.

At present, despite the proximity of the village to trails, people rarely walk or bike. Many commented that the roadways are narrow with limited shoulders, making them feel unsafe.

The town should work to create safe walking/biking routes to town trails, whether by expanding the shoulder, adding sidewalks, multi-use paths, or parallel natural surface trails in the woods.

A first priority could be a route between Huntington Village and the Green Mountain Audubon Center along Main Road. This route would encourage people to walk/bike to Audubon's trail system, visitors to head down to Huntington Village, and the many residents who live in between to walk/bike as well.

Planning for such connections could also be combined with trails and open space planning for comprehensive "active transportation" planning.

Responsibility:

Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers

Partners Involved:

--

Planning Required:

Trails/Active Trans Plan

Funding Opportunities:

RTP, RD, TAP, BPP, VCDP, RFG, VCF, LF,



Toolkit Resources

Sustainable Trail Standards



Vermont Town Forest Recreation Planning

Water Access

Key Attribute #:

21 22 30

Need #:

5

Estimated Cost:

\$\$

Timing:

Medium-Term

The Huntington River and its tributaries provide many water-based recreation opportunities for Huntington. However, the current Huntington River access points are difficult to reach and not well established. The community identified improving the access points as a top priority. Given that interest, the town should work to improve access through any of the following approaches:

- 1) Receive access from the state on their land and work with FPR to create a formalized access point. Cobb Brook is a popular swimming hole and the community was interested in securing access.
- 2) Buy a private parcel and develop a river access area with some amenities.
- 3) Work with a private landowner for access through their property, making sure parking is still close by.

In fact, the town may want to pursue all these approaches, as having multiple access points disperses users to create a more pleasant experience. For example, one spot may be for swimming, while another may be a boat put-in. For a boat put-in, the parking area should be very close by with an easy walking path to the river. The parking area should have room for trailers to park and turn around. At the swimming access, the parking can be a little further away but the site should have more amenities for people looking to spend an afternoon swimming in the river (i.e., picnic tables, shade structures, and other facilities). All river access points should minimize adverse impacts to adjacent landowners and the natural area.

Responsibility:

Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers

Partners Involved:

Recreation committee, FPR

Planning Required:

Open Space Master Plan

Funding

Opportunities:
LWCF, RD, RFG



Toolkit Resources

Natural Resource
Guidance Toolkit

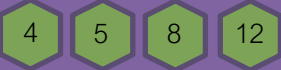
Sustainable Facility
Standards



Vermont Town Forest Recreation Planning

Conservation and Stewardship

Key Attribute #:



Need #:



Estimated Cost:

\$\$

Timing:

Short-Term

Although this plan is aimed at outdoor and forest-based recreation, conservation must be a top priority as this plan is being implemented. Each strategy should be implemented in such a way that minimizes impacts to natural resources and protects the forest as habitat and for future use (including recreation). For example, newly built trails must be built sustainably and avoid sensitive habitat areas.

The town should also continue stewardship activities on the existing town forest. The Conservation Commission should update the 2009 Management Plan to ensure that current activities are maximizing habitat conservation and incorporating best practices and strategies. This update should be in light of the fact that there are no plans to increase the recreational access to the property and it is being set aside primarily for conservation.

The Conservation Commission should continue their work conserving existing natural areas in town and determining a proper balance of recreation and conservation in each parcel.

In natural areas in Huntington, invasive species are a serious issue. They threaten the native species and the ecosystem as a whole. Efforts should be made to remove invasive species to the extent possible.

Responsibility:

Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers

Partners Involved:

VLT, TPL, etc.

Planning Required:

Due diligence and land planning

Funding Opportunities:

CCG, MPG, ERG, VCF.



Toolkit Resources

Natural Resource Guidance Toolkit

Land Conservation and Recreational Access Toolkit

Sustainable Trail Standards

Sustainable Facility Standards



Vermont Town Forest Recreation Planning

Action Plan Table

The Action Plan Table on the following pages includes all the strategies for the town and additional information to help with implementation. The strategies were categorized under Parking & Access; Trails; Other Facilities & Structures; Education & Programs; Events; Maps, Outreach, and Promotion; and Administrative Actions. Each strategy has the following additional information:

- A detailed strategy description
- Responsibility – who the responsible parties are to pursue this strategy (e.g., Town, Conservation Commission)
- Timing (ongoing, short, medium, long-term) – when the responsible party should begin pursuing this strategy
- Partners involved – possible partners to be involved in this project (e.g., Vermont Land Trust, Vtrans, local trails groups, local schools)
- Planning required – planning, designs, assessments, or studies that needs to happen before this strategy can be pursued (e.g., trail system design, wildlife habitat assessments)
- Relative Cost (\$,\$\$,,\$\$\$,\$\$\$\$\$) – a ballpark estimate of what the project will cost. One dollar sign is little to no cost, two dollar signs is moderate, three dollar signs is more expensive, four dollar signs is very expensive. \$-\$\$ indicates the relative cost is between those two levels. \$/\$\$ indicates that the project can be either \$ or \$\$, depending on the chosen route (e.g., volunteer trail counts vs. electronic trail counter)
- Funding Opportunities – potential sources of funding for the project. These could be grants, local business sponsorships, or fundraising events
- Toolkit and Support Resources – the toolkit elements that provide guidance on pursuing this strategy. Guidance from Vtrans, the Vermont Town Forest Stewardship Guide, or other support resources can also be useful to pursue this strategy



Vermont Town Forest Recreation Planning

Strategy or Action	Description	Responsibility	Timing (Ongoing, short, medium, and long-term)	Partners Involved	Planning required	Relative Cost (\$-\$-\$-\$-\$-\$-\$-\$-\$-\$)	Funding Opportunities	Toolkit & Support Resources
1. Access								
Acquire a new town forest	Identify and move forward with the purchase of a new town forest in Huntington that will provide more opportunities for access, recreation, and education. Retain the current Town Forest property for conservation.	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Medium-Term	Land Conservation Partners (Vermont Land Trust, Trust for Public Land, etc.)	Due diligence and land planning	\$\$\$	LWCF, RD, VHCP	-Land Conservation and Recreational Access Toolkit
Build and maintain parking access	Build and maintain parking access for current and future public land and recreation	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Long-Term	FPR, Camel's Hump Nordic Ski Area	Parking lot design	\$\$\$	LWCF, RD, RFG	-Land Conservation and Recreational Access Toolkit
Partner with state parks, forest, and nearby towns	Partner with state parks, forest, and nearby towns to provide accessible forest-based outdoor recreation opportunities for Huntington residents.	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Short-Term	Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation; Hinesburg; Richmond; Bolton	--	\$	--	-Land Conservation and Recreational Access Toolkit
State Forest and Park Access	Work with Camel's Hump State Forest & Park to improve access to recreational opportunities on their land.	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Short-Term	Camel's Hump State Forest and Park	--	\$	--	-Land Conservation and Recreational Access Toolkit
Access paths and connections	Develop access path between town trails and town center.	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Medium/Long-Term	--	Trails Master Plan	\$\$\$	RTP, RD, TAP, BPP, VCDP, RFG, VCF, LF, PBCG, RWJF, TCPN	- Sustainable Trail Standards



Vehicle wayfinding signage	Add vehicle wayfinding signage from town to the trails and recreation areas.	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Medium/Long-Term	--	--	\$\$	BPP, Vtrans Signage Program	-Vtrans signage program
2. Trails								
Existing trail conditions assessment and review	Study the trails and logging roads that currently exist in town and consider needs for future trail building.	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Short-Term	FPR, Camel's Hump Nordic Ski Area, Snow Beavers, other trail managers	Part of Trails Master Plan	\$	BCP, MPG	-Trail assessment forms -Natural Resource Guidance Toolkit -Sustainable Trail Standards
New rugged multi-use paths	Develop multi-use non-motorized natural surface trails that are optimized for hiking and foot traffic but designed to accommodate multiple user groups	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Medium/Long-Term	VYCC, other trail builders	Trails Master Plan	\$\$-\$\$\$	RTP, RD, VCDP, RFG, VCF, LF, PBCG, RWJF, TCPN	-Sustainable Trail Standards
New mountain bike trails	Build "bike-optimized" multi-use natural surface trails to ensure desired experiences for all user groups	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Medium/Long-Term	VYCC, Fellowship of the Wheel, other trail builders	Trails Master Plan	\$\$-\$\$\$	RTP, RD, VCDP, RFG, VCF, LF, PBCG, RWJF, TCPN	-Sustainable Trail Standards
New ADA accessible path	Develop a graded, ADA accessible path to connect the villages of Huntington. Such paths typically provide ample opportunities for rest and education with stations or stops next to points of natural or cultural interest. Coordinate with educational programming.	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Medium/Long-Term	VYCC, other trail builders	Trails Master Plan	\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$	RTP, RD, TAP, BPP, VCDP, RFG, VCF, LF, PBCG, RWJF, TCPN	-Sustainable Trail Standards
Trails Master Plan	Develop a Recreational Trails Master Plan to define the what, where, and how for all the trail related strategies listed.	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Short-Term	All	Part of Trails Master Plan	\$\$	BCP, MPG	-Sustainable Trail Standards



Private land trails	Explore opportunities for partnerships with private owners to increase trail access	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Short-Term	All	Part of Trails Master Plan	\$\$	BCP, MPG	-Land Conservation and Recreational Access Toolkit
Groom trails for cross-country skiing and fat biking	Groom wider trails for public cross-country skiing, fat biking, and snowmobiles.	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Short-Term	Camel's Hump Nordic Ski Area, Sleepy Hollow, Snow Beavers	--	\$\$	RTP, VCF	-Sustainable Trail Standards
Trail markers and signage (wayfinding)	Develop a robust wayfinding signage system to make the system accessible.	Huntington Trails Collaborative	Medium/Long-Term	All	Trails Master Plan	\$\$	RTP	-Trail Markers and Wayfinding Toolkit
New backcountry/glade skiing opportunities	Explore opportunities for expanding backcountry/glade skiing in combination with sustainable forest management activities.	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Medium/Long-Term	FPR, Camel's Hump Nordic Ski Area, VT Huts	--	\$\$	RTP, LF	-Silviculture with Skiing in Mind Toolkit
Huntington Trails Collaborative	Convene mountain bikers, hikers, snowmobilers and other user groups to begin an ongoing dialogue around trails and to establish a framework for collaboration in the future.	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Short-Term	Fellowship of the Wheel, FPR, Snow Beavers, others	Meeting facilitation	\$	RTP, NPCB	-Volunteer Development and Recruitment Toolkit
Trail connections	Create connections between existing trails to develop a connected, accessible network of trails in the town	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Medium/Long-Term	Fellowship of the Wheel, FPR, Snow Beavers, others	Trails Master Plan	\$\$\$	RTP, RD, TAP, BPP, VCDP, RFG, VCF, LF, PBCG, RWJF, TCPN	- Sustainable Trail Standards



3. Other Facilities and Structures

Pause Places	Develop a series of "Pause Places" along the town trail system. These may be a rest stop, an informational stop, or both. All pause places should include a bench or appropriate rocks/boulders for seating and should capitalize on locations with the potential for views, wildlife observation, sunsets, rest, and rejuvenation. Opportunities for natural and historical interpretation should also be explored. Larger ones may include a picnic table. Some could also include public art or a 'little free library.'	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Medium-Term	Birds of VT Museum, VT Audubon, FPR, Snow Beavers	Historical and natural resource research, pause place design	\$\$	LWCF, RTC, RTP, RFG, AIG	- Pause Places Toolkit -Bench Volunteer Designs '-Interpretation Guidance Toolkit
Utilize existing town-owned parcels	Disperse new recreational facilities (outdoor classroom, natural playground, dog park, etc.) amongst existing town-owned recreation parcels if possible.	Town	Medium-Term	Recreation committee	--	\$	LWCF, RD, RFG	- Sustainable Facility Standards
Outdoor Classroom/ Learning Lab	Partner with the school to better utilize the outdoor classroom for community use and educational opportunities.	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Short-Term	Brewster-Pierce Memorial School	--	\$	--	- Sustainable Facility Standards -Land Conservation and Recreational Access Toolkit
Natural Playground	Explore opportunities to develop a natural playground in town. Natural playgrounds are play environments that blend natural materials, features, and indigenous vegetation with creative landforms to challenge and fascinate children and teach them about the wonders of the natural world.	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Medium/Long-Term	Recreation committee	--	\$\$	LWCF, RD, RFG	- Sustainable Facility Standards



Designate areas for off leash trails for dogs and their owners	Explore locations to develop areas to provide a more "wild" off-leash trail experience for dogs and their owners.	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Short-Term	All	Part of Trails Master Plan	\$\$\$	--	- Sustainable Facility Standards
Sledding	Designate a slope for a sledding hill	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Medium/Long-Term	Recreation committee	--	\$	LWCF, RD, RFG	- Sustainable Facility Standards
Ice Skating	Create a protected and accessible opportunity for ice skating at Gillett Pond. Work with Richmond on access to the pond.	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Medium/Long-Term	Recreation committee, Richmond, Friends of Gillet Pond	--	\$	LWCF, RD, RFG	- Sustainable Facility Standards
Swimming Hole	Consider conserving a swimming hole on Cobb Brook and creating access.	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Medium/Long-Term	Camel's Hump State Forest	--	\$	LWCF, RD, RFG	- Sustainable Facility Standards
Fitness Trail	Build a fitness trail in an existing park or forest in Huntington. Fitness trails are paths with stations set up for physical fitness training.	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Medium/Long-Term	Recreation committee	--	\$\$	LWCF, RD, RFG	- Sustainable Facility Standards
Art	Design and construct natural art pieces for parks, open spaces, and forests, in the area. Encourage artistic activities in forest and outdoor recreation areas such as natural painting and fairy houses.	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Medium/Long-Term	Huntington Valley Arts, Vermont Arts Council, Recreation committee	--	\$	AIG, VCF	-Programming Partnerships Toolkit



River access	Create river access points for paddle/watersports, swimming, and fishing in the Huntington River.	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Medium/Long-Term	Recreation committee	--	\$\$	LWCF, RD, RFG	-Natural resource guidance Toolkit
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4. Education & Programs

Partnerships with local schools	Hold field trips about forest ecology and local history at nearby forest areas. Consider use by these groups in new acquisitions or partnership opportunities.	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Short-Term	Brewster-Pierce Memorial School, Mount Mansfield	--	\$	--	-Programming Partnerships Toolkit
Partnerships with state/local groups, camps, etc.	Hold kids camps, retreats, or educational activities at nearby forest areas. Consider use by these groups in new acquisitions or partnership opportunities.	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Short-Term	VT Audubon, Birds of VT Museum	--	\$	--	-Programming Partnerships Toolkit
Lessons, Skills Camps, and Clinics	Hold lessons, skills camps, and clinics at area trails on mountain biking, trail running, or orienteering. Consider use by these groups in new acquisitions or partnership opportunities.	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Short-Term	VT Audubon, Birds of VT Museum	--	\$	--	-Programming Partnerships Toolkit
Health and Wellness	Hold health and wellness programming (i.e., yoga, fitness) at parks, trails, and open space in town. Consider use by these groups in new acquisitions or partnership opportunities.	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Short-Term	Recreation committee	--	\$	--	-Programming Partnerships Toolkit



Adult Ecology Programs	Hold adult ecology programs (i.e., birding, plant identification, mycology) at forested areas in town.	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Short-Term	VT Audubon, Birds of VT Museum	--	\$	--	-Programming Partnerships Toolkit
Interpretive signage	Develop interpretive signage that support educational programs and self-guided learning. Coordinate with development of pause places.	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Medium/Long-Term	VT Audubon, Birds of VT Museum	Historical and natural resource research	\$\$	LWCF, RTP, RTC, CCG	-Interpretation Guidance Toolkit
Species identification lists	Bird, plant and mammal species identification checklists could be developed and made available at trailhead kiosks in town. Should also be utilized in education experiences.	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Medium-Term	VT Audubon, Birds of VT Museum	--	\$	VCF, VHCB, LF, BJB	-Programming Partnerships Toolkit
Story Walk	A StoryWalk is an innovative and delightful way for children — and adults! — to enjoy reading and the outdoors at the same time. Laminated pages from a children's book are attached to wooden stakes, which are installed along an outdoor path. As you stroll down the trail, you're directed to the next page in the story.	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Medium-Term	Huntington Public Library	--	\$	VCF	- Story Walk Toolkit
5. Events								
Races in the town	Hold small-scale mountain bike or trail running races in the town. Consider race series or local-serving adventure race (Tough Mudder, Warrior Dash, etc.) as well. Consider potential for such events in new acquisitions or partnership opportunities.	Green Mountain Adventure Racing, Fellowship of the Wheel, other event and program partners	Medium-Term	Town/Conservation Commission	Event and parking plan	\$	VCF, VHCB, LF, BJB	-Programming Partnerships Toolkit



Host community events	Host community events at existing parks and open spaces in town. Consider potential for such events in new acquisitions or partnership opportunities. Examples include cider festivals, haunted forest walk, or winter carnivals.	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Medium-Term	Recreation committee	Event and parking plan	\$	--	-Programming Partnerships Toolkit
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6. Maps, Outreach, & Promotion

Develop and disseminate trail maps	Create maps that show all trails in the town and make these maps readily available both online and in print. Explore opportunities to engage local businesses in sponsoring map printing (businesses in neighboring towns too!). Ads from local businesses can not only fund map printing, but can also help connect forest use with economic activity in the region.	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Medium-Term	Fellowship of the Wheel, FPR, Snow Beavers, others	Graphic Design	\$-\$\$	RTP	-Mapping and Promotion Toolkit
Assessment of current recreational opportunities	Assess and map current recreational opportunities in Huntington.	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Short-Term	All	Part of Trails Master Plan	\$\$	BCP, MPG	-Land Conservation and Recreational Access Toolkit
Outdoor Recreation Business Roundtable	Host an Outdoor Recreation Business Roundtable to share "trail friendly business" ideas that can help support trail use in the community, connect forest visitors with local businesses, and help support Town Forest efforts.	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Long-Term	Local business, Chamber of Commerce	--	\$	VCF	-Trail Friendly Business Toolkit

7. Administrative Actions



Adopt formal process for proposing and reviewing new trails and facilities	Process will include ecological concerns and will provide all stakeholders and user groups an opportunity to propose new trails and facilities.	Town, Conservation Commission, and/or a committee of local volunteers	Short-Term	Huntington Trails Collaborative	Review, adjustment and adoption of model process	\$	--	-Model Proposal Process -Natural Resource Guidance Toolkit
8. Stewardship								
Remove invasives	Remove invasive plants that are growing in the forest.	Conservation Commission	Short-Term	--	--	\$	LF, VHCP, BJB	-Natural Resource Guidance Toolkit
Continue stewardship activities on existing town forest	Update the 2009 Management Plan to ensure that current activities are maximizing habitat conservation and incorporate best practices and strategies.	Conservation Commission	Ongoing	--	--	\$\$	CCG, MPG, ERG, VCF, VHCP, BJB	-Land Conservation and Recreational Access Toolkit -Natural Resource Guidance Toolkit
Conserve natural areas	Conserve existing natural areas in town as designated open space. Seek conservation easements that provide for public recreational access if possible	Conservation Commission	Medium-Term	Land Conservation Partners (Vermont Land Trust, Trust for Public Land, etc.)	Due diligence and land planning	\$\$	CCG, MPG, ERG, VCF, VHCP, BJB	-Land Conservation and Recreational Access Toolkit



Chapter 6: Implementation

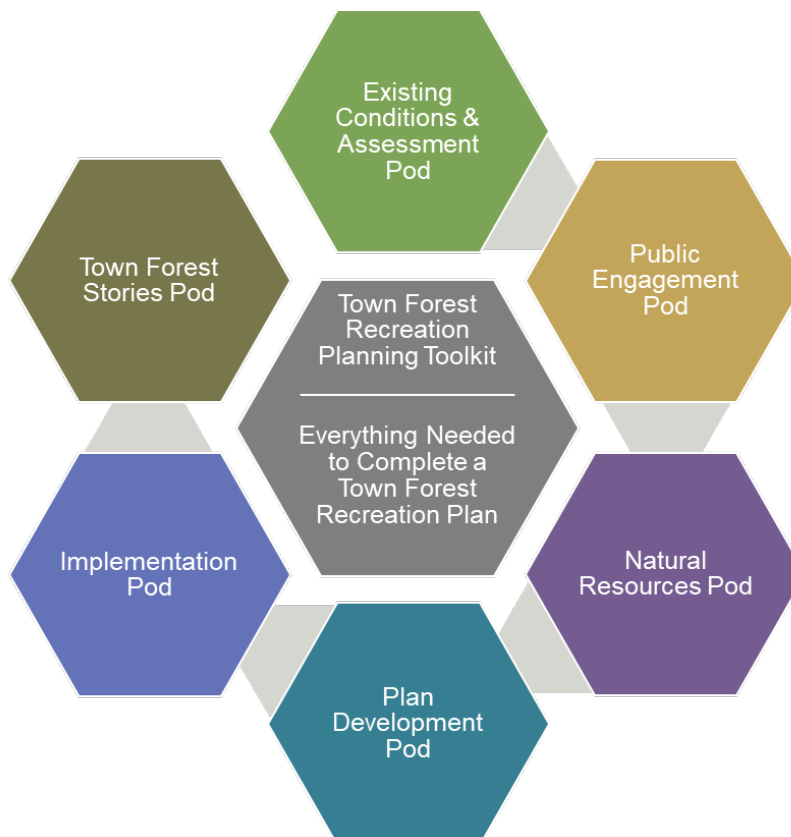
Town Forest Recreation Planning Toolkit

The Vermont Town Forest Recreation Planning Toolkit has been developed in concert with this plan and the nine other town forest recreation plans currently underway through the overall US Forest Service grant. The intent behind the toolkit was to build up a replicable process and a set of tools that could be used for both the professionally-facilitated process with the first ten communities, of which Huntington is one, and for other towns to do their own recreation plans after this project has ended.

Perhaps more importantly for Huntington, the toolkit includes a number of guidance documents, designs, case studies, best practices, and standards the Town can use to implement strategies identified in this plan. The action plan table and detailed project pages identifies the most relevant toolkit resources for each strategy. In addition, the full list of toolkit resources is described below.

The toolkit is organized through six (6) specific “pods.” These include an existing conditions and assessment pod, a public engagement pod, a natural resource pod, a plan development pod, an implementation pod, and a stories pod. Each are described below.

The Vermont Town Forest Recreation Planning Toolkit is available on Urban and Community Forestry’s website at: <https://vtcommunityforestry.org/>



Existing Conditions Pod

The existing conditions and assessment pod provides a checklist to communities to identify background information and municipal plans that should be considered in developing their plan. This pod also includes trail counting forms and extrapolation sheets modified for Vermont from the National Bike and Pedestrian Documentation Project materials. Trail and facility assessment checklists are also included, so the baseline conditions of the town forest can be well understood. Information about available resources such as VT UCF and the county foresters are also provided. Instructions on how to use the VT Center for Geographic Information (VCGI) interactive map viewer to produce basic maps is also included in this pod.



Public Engagement Pod

The public engagement pod provides a series of promotional material templates, such as flyers and press releases, and public meeting materials, like informational boards and handouts, that communities can use to explore concepts and constraints with the public. Informational board templates provide opportunities to both present information and gather feedback through write in questions, dot exercises and similar interactions. Survey's and visioning materials that allow towns to identify their priorities for use of their forests are an integral part of this pod. Finally, guidance and best practices on how to facilitate steering committee and public meetings round out the range of materials available in this pod.



Natural Resources Pod

The natural resources pod, developed by Arrowwood Environmental includes guidance for using ANR's Natural Resource Atlas for general resource mapping, a process for inventorying natural resources in the forest, workshop and survey questions for natural resources, and a model process for proposing and evaluating new trails or facilities. Most importantly, the natural resources pod also includes the Natural Resources Guidebook and associated activities and resources matrix. The guidebook includes information and links to relevant regulatory documents and contact information at both the State and Federal level for each of the following natural resource areas: Vernal Pools, Deer Wintering Areas (DWA), Ledges/Cliffs/Talus, Mast Stands, Interior Forest, Significant Natural Communities, Wetlands, Rare, Threatened or Endangered Species, Floodplain Forests, Streams/Rivers, Early Succession Forests, and Lakes and Ponds. The guidebook also includes an activities matrix for each of these resources that provides compatibility, management information and recommended buffers for a range of activities and facilities, including: Hiking Trails, Biking Trails, X-C Ski Trails, ATV trails, Snowmobile Trails, New Access Roads, Structures/Buildings, Parking Lots, Forestry/Logging, Camping, Sugaring, and Extraction (gravel, sand).



Example Content from the Natural Resources Guidebook

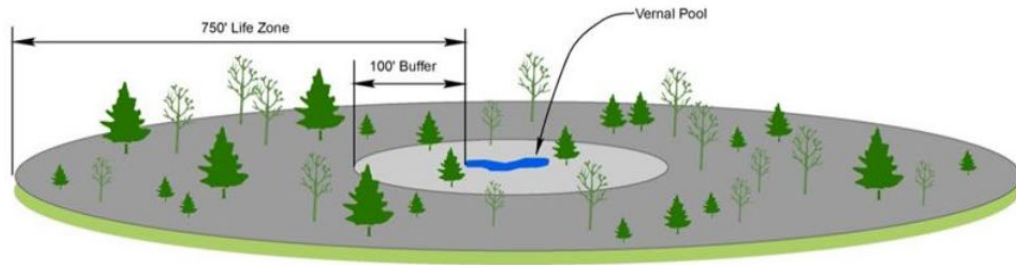


Figure 1. Vernal Pool management zones

Vernal Pool Management Matrix

Activity	Compatibility in Pool*	Compatibility in 100' Buffer*	Compatibility in 750' Buffer*	Comments (seasonal restrictions, buffers, mgmt.)
Hiking Trails	N	Y	Y	Avoid creating ruts or standing water
Biking Trails	N	Y	Y	Avoid creating ruts or standing water
Ski Trails	N	Y	Y	Avoid creating ruts or standing water
ATV trails	N	N	Y	Avoid trails through wet areas. Avoid creating ruts or standing water. Close trails during spring migration period.
Snowmobile Trails	N	Y	Y	Avoid trails through wet areas. Avoid creating ruts or standing water. Close trails during spring migration period.
New Access Roads	N	N	Y	Avoid roads through wet areas. Avoid creating ruts or standing water. Close roads during spring migration period.
Structures/ Buildings	N	N	Y	See guidelines in text and links provided. Only appropriate if most of buffer remains forested.
Parking Lots	N	N	Y	See guidelines in text and link provided. Only appropriate if most of buffer remains forested. Runoff needs to be managed.
Forestry /Logging	N	N	Y	Some forestry activity compatible with vernal pools, see text and links provided.
Camping	N	N	Y	Camping may be compatible in larger buffer zone. See general guidelines in text.
Sugaring	N	Y	Y	Refer to forestry guidelines in text and links provided.
Extraction (gravel, sand)	N	N	N	Extraction can disrupt local hydrology and negatively impact nearby pool. See development guideline in text and links provided.

* In many cases, an activity is deemed compatible only if the management recommendations listed in the comments, text and links provided are adhered to.



Plan Development Pod

The plan development pod can help facilitate the development of a Town Forest Recreation Plan by other interested communities or update this existing recreation plan. The pod includes templates and guidance on crafting a vision statement for a town forest as well as case studies of each of the 10 selected communities and their plans highlighting the process they undertook. The plan development pod also includes a recreational improvements strategy database that allows communities to search sample implementation actions based on resources, topics or activities. This database includes all strategies contained in the 10 established plans, and their relative cost. Template action plan tables and bubble diagram map guidance is also included.



Implementation Pod

The implementation pod contains a number of tools to aid in implementation of this plan. In addition to a list of available grant, funding and support resources relevant to town forests, the pod also includes grant writing best practices to help make sure you get the necessary funds to move forward. Design guidance and standards for building sustainable trails and facilities for a wide range of user types is also provided. Guidance on acquiring additional lands or easements is also included. Volunteer designs, materials lists, and construction instructions are also provided in this pod.



Town Forest Story Pod

The town forest story pod includes personal narratives and how-to webinars from participants in the 10 town forest process on what it actually takes to be a volunteer managing a town forest in your community. The stories share tips, tricks, and pitfalls to help keep you on course, as told by others in the same role!



Grants and Funding Sources

For most of the strategies and projects in this plan, moving them forward will require financial resources. Luckily, Huntington and the town budget do not have to go after it alone. There are many grants and alternative funding sources that can help provide the necessary funding. Perhaps the best approach to move a project forward is to select a project with strong community support, secure grant funding, and leverage local resources and volunteers.

The description of each grant below suggests the types of projects the grant funds, the required match from the town if necessary, and a link for more information. Some grants have been identified in the Implementation Matrix using their respective abbreviation.

Federal and State Grants and Programs

Land and Water Conservation Fund State and Local Assistance Program (LWCF)

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) state assistance program provides matching grants to help local communities enhance the outdoor recreation resources on public land. LWCF funding has benefited nearly every county in America, supporting over 40,000 projects. The grants create parks and open spaces, protect wilderness and forests, and provide outdoor recreation opportunities. Eligible projects are acquisition of land for parks and public outdoor recreation or development and/or renovation of existing facilities for outdoor recreation. This 50:50 matching program is the primary federal investment tool to ensure that families have easy access to public, open spaces. In Vermont, LWCF is administered by Vermont Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation.

<http://fpr.vermont.gov/recreation/grants/lwcf>

Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG)

The State Surface Transportation Program (STP) is the main program of Federal Transportation Funds, managed by VTrans, for transportation improvements on state highways. Possible projects include recreational trails, pedestrian and biking enhancements, sidewalks, and signed routes.

<https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/specialfunding/stp/>

USDA Rural Development Loan and Grant Assistance (RD)

USDA Rural Development (RD) forges partnerships with rural communities (defined as towns and villages with less than 20,000 inhabitants), funding projects that bring housing, community facilities (including trails and active transportation facilities), business guarantees, utilities and other services to rural America. This program provides funding to develop essential community facilities in rural areas. An essential community facility is defined as a facility that provides an essential service to the local community for the orderly development of the community. Relevant to this plan, possible projects include transportation facilities, parks, and community gardens



<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/community-facilities-direct-loan-grant-program>

National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program (RTC)

The National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTC) program supports community-led natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation projects across the nation. Their national network of conservation and recreation planning professionals can partner with community groups, nonprofits, tribes, and state and local governments to design trails and parks, conserve and improve access to rivers, protect special places, and create recreation opportunities. Current projects include trail rehabilitation, interpretive trails, connector trails, trail master plans, trails collaboratives, and rail trail connectors. No monetary grants are made.

<https://www.nps.gov/orgs/rtca/index.htm>

FHWA Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) provides funds to communities for development and maintaining recreational trail projects. Grants are awarded to well-planned projects that help to develop, protect, and maintain trails and trail systems that improve connections in the community, livability, user-ability, and are maintained for public recreational use. RTP funds support a wide range of trail activities including hiking, mountain biking, walking, running, cross-country and backcountry skiing, nature-based interpretive trail use, equestrian, snowmobiling, and off-road motorized recreation. Funds can be used for the following types of projects: construction of new trails or trail connections; construction of new trailhead areas/parking facilities; construction of trailside facilities; maintenance, renovation, or restoration of trails; improvements to signage or trail structures along the trail; assessments of existing trail conditions for accessibility and improvements; equipment; and trail-related educational projects (i.e., information about trail safety, appropriate trail use, environmental protection, etc.). The program is administered by the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation in the Agency of Natural Resources, in cooperation with the Vermont Agency of Transportation.

<http://fpr.vermont.gov/recreation/grants/rtp>

Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) is a grant program administered by VTTrans that provides funding for programs and projects defined as transportation alternatives, including on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, sidewalks, and bicycle infrastructure. These funds will cover a maximum of 80% of the project with the remaining portions most likely coming from the project-sponsoring organization or town. The FY 2019 funds are reserved for environmental mitigation projects.

<http://vtrans.vermont.gov/highway/local-projects/transport-alt>



VTrans Bicycle and Pedestrian Program (BPP)

The Vermont Bicycle and Pedestrian Program (BPP) provides funds managed by VTrans for scoping, design, and construction of bike and pedestrian facilities, sidewalks, shared-use paths, and bike lanes. A local match is required but varies based on the type of project.

<http://vtrans.vermont.gov/highway/local-projects/bike-ped>

Vermont Community Development Program (VCDP)

The Vermont Community Development Program provides Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) to all Vermont towns and cities, aside from Burlington. The grant provides financial and technical assistance to identify and address local needs in housing, economic development, public facilities, public services, and handicapped accessibility modifications. The four types of grants are Accessibility Modification Grants (AM), Implementation Grants (IG), Planning Grants (PG), Scattered Site Grants (SS). These grants must primarily benefit persons of low and moderate incomes.

http://accd.vermont.gov/strong_communities/opportunities/funding/vcdp

Better Connections Program (BCP)

The Better Connections Program seeks to align state and local investments to increase transportation options, build resilience, and strengthen economic vitality in Vermont's community centers, through an annual grant program administered by Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans), in partnership with the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD). Municipalities annually compete for approximately \$200,000 in projects funds. A 10% local cash match is required. The program supports implementation-focused, municipal planning initiatives that: provide safe, multi-modal and resilient transportation systems that supports the Vermont economy; support downtown and village economic development and revitalization efforts; and lead directly to project implementation. The program has been used for trails and active transportation master plans, village connection planning and other multi-modal planning efforts.

<http://vtrans.vermont.gov/planning/projects-programs/better-connections>

State Grants and Programs

Vermont Community and Urban Forestry Council Grants (Caring for Canopies Grants, CCG)

These Caring for Canopies Grants (CCG) are awarded to municipalities to aid in taking the necessary actions to developing and sustaining a community-wide tree program, including tree plantings, inventories, maintenance, and planning. There are two grant categories, Caring for the Canopy and Canopy Mini. Caring for Canopy is for projects that help move a community's tree management program towards a sustained level while Canopy Mini is for smaller projects to help



move a tree management program forward. The grants range in size from \$500 to \$5,000 and require a 50% match.

<https://vtcommunityforestry.org/programs-0/financial-assistance/caring-canopy-grants>

Municipal Planning Grant Program (MPG)

The Municipal Planning Grants (MPG) are Vermont State grants for a wide range of municipal planning projects including land use plans, zoning and subdivision bylaws, trail networks and walking and biking improvements, resiliency planning, economic plans, and village and neighborhood planning. The range of the grants is from \$2,500 to \$20,000 with a required 10% match.

<http://accd.vermont.gov/community-development/funding-incentives/municipal-planning-grant>

Recreational Facilities Grants Program (RFG)

The Recreational Facilities Grants (RFG) program provides matching state grants for capital costs associated with the development and creation of community recreational opportunities. This program provides last gap funding for shovel ready projects and does not support any ongoing fundraising initiatives. The program requires a 100% match and awards are capped at \$25,000.

<https://bgs.vermont.gov/commissioner/building-communities-grants>

ANR Ecosystem Restoration Grant Program (ERG)

The ANR Ecosystem Restoration grant program gives grants for design and construction projects that target nonpoint sources of pollution that cause or contribute to the state's surface waters.

<http://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/cwi/grants#Ecosystem%20Restoration>

Northern Border Regional Commission Grants (NBRCG)

The Northern Border Regional Commission invests in community and economic development projects in economically distressed counties in Vermont, Maine, New Hampshire, New York. In Vermont, the eligible counties are Essex, Orleans, Caledonia, Lamoille, Franklin, and Grand Isle. Projects must focus on the following program areas: transportation infrastructure, basic public infrastructure, telecommunications infrastructure, workforce develop, entrepreneurship and business and technology development, resources and open space conservation, recreation and tourism, and renewable and alternative energy.

<http://accd.vermont.gov/economic-development/funding-incentives/Northern-Boarder-Regional-Commission>



VOREC Community Grant Program

The Vermont Outdoor Recreation Collaborative (VOREC) is launching a community grant program for outdoor recreation in Vermont municipalities. The grant is designed to help communities leverage their local outdoor recreation assets and applying communities must have completed some prior planning or mapping of outdoor recreation assets, have identified outdoor recreation as a component of their local economy through previous plans, and have a dedicated staff and/or volunteers to ensure long-term success of the project. The funds can be used for consultants, small scale outdoor recreation infrastructure improvements, materials or equipment to support outdoor recreation programs, marketing relating expenses, community based outdoor recreation planning, and securing public access through acquisition of land, easements, or rights-of-way. Communities are also responsible for making products and deliverables that could be adapted and reproduced by other communities in the state. The program is administered by FPR in partnership with ACCD and VOREC and offers grants between \$10,000 and \$100,000.

https://fpr.vermont.gov/VOREC_Community_Grant

State Organizations

Vermont Community Foundation – General Grants (VCF)

A variety of grants are available to support projects to improve environmental sustainability, cultural heritage, social justice, historic preservation, and vitality of Vermont communities. The different types of grants offered include: Place-Based Grants, Arts Endowment Fund, Special and Urgent Needs, and Nonprofit Capacity Building (see below). Each place-based grant is only available to a specific region of the state. For information about which grants are available for your community, please see the website below.

<http://www.vermontcf.org/Nonprofits/AvailableGrants.aspx>

Vermont Community Foundation – Nonprofit Capacity Building (NPCB)

The Nonprofit Capacity Building program is small grants to support the cost of consultants to facilitate discussions related to strategic planning, financial sustainability funding, or facilitating a merger. These grants are meant to supplement other funding. This grant is available to both nonprofits and municipalities.

<https://www.vermontcf.org/NonprofitsGrants/AvailableGrants/NonprofitCapacityBuilding.aspx>

VHCB Local Conservation Projects (VHCP)

The Vermont Housing and Conservation Board provides funding to conserve natural areas, recreation lands, and historic properties. For public outdoor recreation projects, VHCB provides loans to enable the project to leverage other funds or grants in cases where local efforts to obtain sources of funding have been exhausted. The available funds vary based on whether the parcel has



statewide significance. For conserving locally-significant land, other sources must provide 1/3 of the project funding. VHCB also provides funding for feasibility analysis, project-specific capacity (i.e, engineering work, historic preservation analysis, and hazardous materials analysis).

<https://vhcb.org/our-programs/conservation/apply-for-funding>

Lintilhac Foundation (LF)

The foundation's central purpose is to support organizations that are making sustainable, positive change for Vermont's environment and its people. Grants are available in three core giving areas, water quality, energy, and conservation. The conservation giving is primarily to backcountry recreational access to lands and integrative land use planning.

<http://www.lintilhacfoundation.org/application-guidelines/>

Vermont Arts Council Animating Infrastructure Grant (AIG)

The Animating Infrastructure Grant (AIG) funds projects that integrate public art into existing or proposed infrastructure improvements, which could include buildings, recreational paths, parks, bridges, small-scale renewable energy projects, and water treatment facilities.

<http://www.vermontartscouncil.org/grants-and-services/organizations/animating-infrastructure>

Ben & Jerry's Foundation (BJF)

The Ben & Jerry's Foundation funds multiple grants programs to help communities in Vermont. The Vermont Economic Justice Program gives grants to non-profits working to address the economic, social, and environmental impacts of poverty. The Vermont Community Action Team Grant is a small grant awarded to non-profits, schools, and municipalities. The Community Action Teams provide general or project support. The CATs fund the following types of community programs: social services organizations, cultural, recreational, arts programs, and community celebrations.

<https://benandjerrysfoundation.org/vermont-grant-programs.html>

National Organizations

PeopleforBikes Community Fund (PBCG)

The PeopleforBikes Community Grant Program (PBCG) provides funding for important and influential projects that build momentum for bicycling in communities across the U.S. These projects include bike paths and rail trails, as well as mountain bike trails, bike parks, and large-scale bicycle advocacy initiatives. PeopleforBikes will fund engineering and design work, construction costs, and reasonable volunteer support costs. The maximum grant award is \$10,000 and the grant cannot make up more than 50% of the total project budget.

<http://www.peopleforbikes.org/pages/community-grants>



Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Grants (RWJF)

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) provides grant funds to improve the health and health care of all Americans. For town forest projects, RWJF awards grants for projects creating healthier communities. This funding has gone towards walking and bicycling facilities and upgrading underutilized green space.

<https://www.rwjf.org/en/how-we-work/grants-and-grant-programs.html>

Trails Connecting People with Nature: A program of the Sierra Club's Nearby Nature Initiative (TCPN)

Trails Connecting People with Nature is a Sierra Club initiative that works to ensure that access to the outdoors is increasingly equitable and available to all communities. The Sierra Club Foundation awards one year trail grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$20,000 towards trail creation or maintenance projects that engage new leaders and provide opportunities for communities to connect with nature.

<https://content.sierraclub.org/ourwildamerica/nearby-nature>

