

Old Bennington Village Plan
Draft – September 14, 2026

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Introduction

Old Bennington is a quiet, residential village of approximately 150 residents and is characterized by beautiful, historic homes, stately tree-lined streets, and a variety of historic sites ranging from simple bronze tablets to the 306-foot Bennington Battle Monument, a state historic site, that towers above the village from Monument Hill.

Old Bennington is a small, incorporated village located within the Town of Bennington in southwestern Vermont. It is situated on a height of land approximately one-half mile west of downtown Bennington, which lies in the Walloomsac River valley below. Looming over the village to the southwest is Mount Anthony. A ridge called Monument Hill elevates the northern third of the village, but along the eastern edge the land falls sharply away on a steep slope toward the river below. The remainder of the village is fairly level, with many large, well-spaced houses surrounded by lawns and gardens. Residents enjoy the luxury of some open land with beautiful vistas.

History of Old Bennington Village

Old Bennington represents the original center of Bennington. Samuel Robinson and a band of religious separatists from Connecticut and Massachusetts founded Old Bennington in 1761. During the past 250+ years the focus of industrial, commercial, and residential development has shifted to the valley below and Old Bennington has become a small, residential community.

At the northern terminus of Monument Avenue is Monument Circle, a 5-acre elliptical park on which the Battle Monument stands. Before the Monument's construction in 1887, Monument Avenue (then Main Street) extended through the center of what was Monument Circle and down the hill to the north. Over 20 structures, including a large inn, were razed to make room for the Monument. Today, the Bennington Monument is one of the largest tourist attractions in the state.

A second park area is located almost exactly in the center of the village at the intersection of Monument Avenue with Route 9. Three islands of grass and trees are the remains of the original Village Green, around which the original settlement centered. Surrounding this open space are some of the village's most significant structures including the Old First Congregational Church (1803–05), the Walloomsac Inn (1764), the Jedediah Dewey House (1764,) and the elegant urn- topped white fence, which borders the Old Burying Ground. It was on this green that the original Old First Church Meeting House (1764) stood, in which the wounded of the Battle of Bennington (1777) were cared for and where, in 1791, the Vermont Legislature met to accept the Constitution and join the Union as the 14th state.

Demographic Snapshot

The 2020 population of Old Bennington has increased approximately 12% from the 2010 Decennial Census (from 139 to 156). A selection of demographic statistics in Old Bennington and how they compare to the Town of Bennington and Bennington County can be found in Table 1 below.

The median age across all three jurisdictions is relatively similar, however Old Bennington has a larger proportion of older adults (65+), and youth (under 18) than either the Town of Bennington or the County.

Old Bennington is more affluent compared to the Town of Bennington and Bennington County. Over 84% are college educated. The median household income in Old Bennington is more than double the median

income for the Town of Bennington and the County, and there are zero people living below the poverty level.

Table 1: Old Bennington Selected Demographic Statistics: Comparison with Town of Bennington and Bennington County. 2024 ACS 5-Year Estimates			
	Old Bennington	Bennington Town	Bennington County
Median Age	45	44.7	46.9
Foreign-born population	3.3%	3.7%	2.7%
Population aged 65+	31%	25.2%	24.4%
Population under 18	22.5%	17.7%	18.7%
Median household income	\$168,750	\$59,446	\$73,325
Population below the poverty level	0.0%	13.2%	11.3%
Population with a disability	6.0%	22.5%	16.4%
Population that has received a bachelor's degree or higher	84.9%	36.9%	41.8%

Purpose of this Plan

Old Bennington first adopted a municipal plan under the Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act, Title 24 V.S.A. Chapter 117, in September 1972. While the state's and village's planning goals have evolved in the past fifty years, this document meets all state requirements for a municipal plan and provides a local-level framework for decisions that will guide the future of the Village of Old Bennington. The plan's scope includes planning for the development of land, provision of public services, operation of community facilities, and protection of historical and natural resources, among other subjects.

This plan inventories the village's existing needs and resources, provides goals, policies, and actions to guide Old Bennington's future, and establishes a basis for implementing village ordinances, zoning bylaws, and other appropriate municipal regulations. The village plan is intended to be implemented over the course of the coming years; it is not an abstract document that will sit on a shelf.

As part of the planning process, a structured survey was conducted to shape the Planning Commission's knowledge of important factors to consider. The village plan is intended to be implemented over the course of the coming years and provide a framework for governance, development, and planning issues in the village.

First and foremost, the plan will be a guiding document for many community members and institutions in the Village of Old Bennington, including the Board of Trustees, Planning Commission, other municipal bodies, non-profit organizations, community groups, and businesses that work to respond to community-wide priorities. They will use the goals articulated in this plan to guide decision-making and shape policies for the future of the village. Village leadership will consider the plan when preparing amendments to municipal bylaws and ordinances, pursuing grant opportunities, and considering any major purchases.

Additionally, the Village encourages other local, regional, and state officials and organizations to refer to this plan when embarking on actions that may affect Old Bennington, and to implement plans and projects compatible with the plan. This includes referencing this village plan in state regulatory proceedings such as Act 250 and Section 248 permitting processes to determine whether proposed development is consistent with Old Bennington's community goals and standards. Having a current, adopted plan is also required for Old Bennington to apply for grants, update zoning bylaws, and participate in other state-funded placemaking and improvement programs.

The document is organized into ten chapters. Each chapter includes goals, policies, and actions:

- **Goals** are attainable, action-oriented targets that work toward the Community Visions for Old Bennington
- **Actions** are next steps the Village of Old Bennington should take to achieve these goals. These are concrete activities, initiatives, and programs.
- **Policies** guide decision-making by elected and appointed officials in service of these goals.

The final chapter includes an implementation table, which provides details on the implementation of this plan's goals through specific action items, such as who will be involved in taking action, when, and what funding might be available to support their work.

Community Engagement Process

This plan is informed by input from community members gathered during an extensive public engagement process. With the support of the Bennington County Regional Commission (BCRC), the Village reached out to community members for their ideas and input throughout the fall of 2025, and it shared findings from that community engagement in February 2026.

The Village used a variety of methods to engage with community members about the municipal plan throughout the fall and winter of 2025. The primary engagement methods are listed and explained in more detail below. The Planning Commission mailed a postcard to all village households to notify them about the various engagement opportunities.

- Historic walking tours
- Community visioning meeting
- Student postcard activity
- Survey

Walking Tours

Working with the BCRC and Bennington Historical Society, the Village hosted a series of historic walking tours on Monument Avenue. The tours were held on a single day in October, with three time slots available. Volunteers from the Bennington Historical Society led the tours, highlighting Old Bennington's history as a mixed-use commercial and residential area and the many historic homes along Monument Avenue. All of the tours concluded at the historic home of a village resident where participants could learn about the village plan update and other ways to participate.

Community Visioning Meeting

In November 2025, BCRC facilitated a community visioning meeting at Monument Elementary School. Attendees were organized into small groups to discuss four topic areas:

1. Transportation
2. Community Connections
3. Land Use
4. Historic Character

At the end of each topic discussion, participants had to write down their top priority for Old Bennington in that specific topic area; at the end of the meeting, they had to rank their four priorities from 1 to 4. Transportation topics were the most common #1 and #2 priorities, specifically concerns about speeding and lack of enforcement.

Postcard Activity

The Village engaged local youth through a postcard activity in partnership with Monument Elementary School. Staff from the BCRC attended a school assembly to explain the project and distribute postcards. Students were asked to draw or write their wish for Old Bennington on the postcard. 96 completed postcards were received, representing a broad range of wishes for the Village's future. Some of the wishes were more fantastical in nature, but many students expressed wishes for the Walloomsac Inn to be restored, more bike paths, and apple trees at the school.

Survey

An online survey was available throughout the entire outreach period, with paper copies available in select locations and upon request. Members of the Planning Commission also went door-to-door distributing paper copies of the survey to residents. The survey received 64 responses, which were generally consistent with feedback received through the other engagement methods. There are 81 residences and approximately 150 individual residents in Old Bennington; 47 of the 64 respondents (73%) indicated that they live in Old Bennington.

All of the feedback gathered from the community was synthesized and distilled into key takeaways, themes, and values that the Planning Commission used to inform the structure and content of this plan.

The Village should also establish a mechanism for the ongoing collection and review of comments and questions about the plan. Such advice and critique can inform future amendments and updates and ensure community engagement as the planning process continues.

For detailed community engagement results, see **Appendix A**.

Community Visions for Old Bennington

What we learned from the community was distilled into the following vision statements:

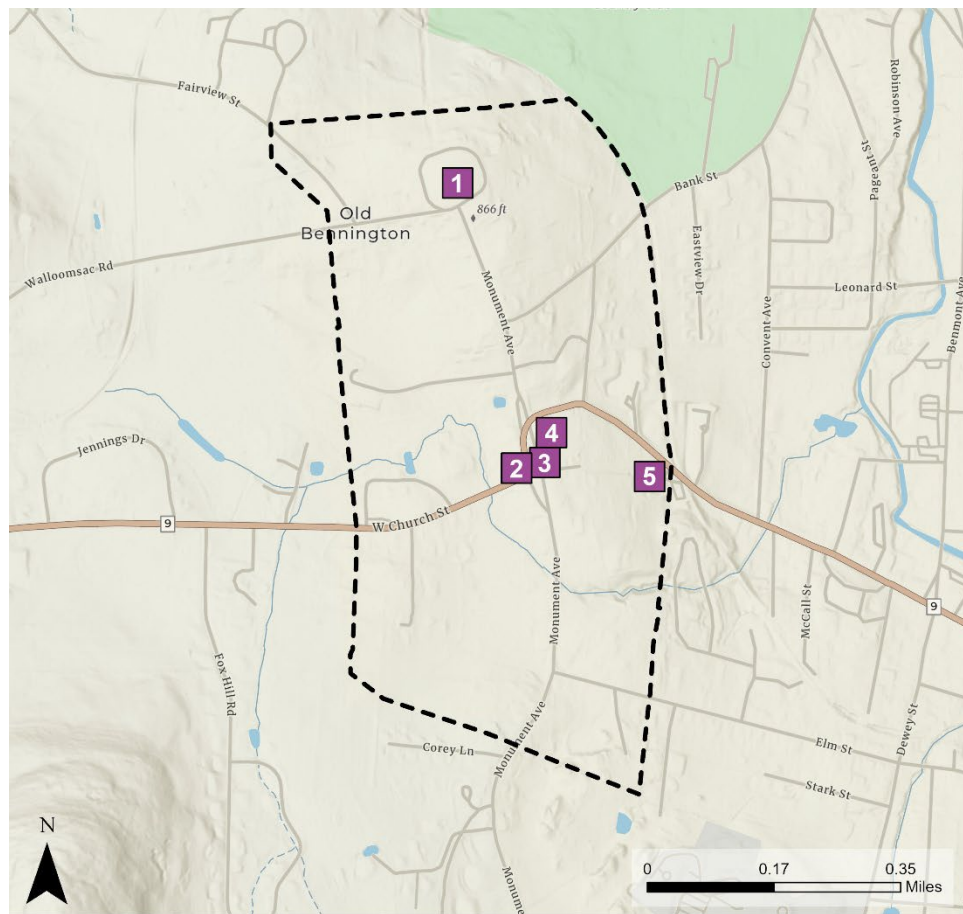
- Historic sites and resources that are well maintained and preserved for all to learn from
- Quiet, close-knit residential neighborhoods
- Safe, beautiful, and comfortably walkable streets
- A community that is evolving with state standards while maintaining historical character

This plan works toward implementing these visions through the establishment of goals, policies and actions that will guide the direction of the village for next eight years.

Historic & Natural Resources

Historic Resources + Protections

Map 1. Key Historic Resources



**Village of Old Bennington, Vermont
Key Historic Resources**

 Historic Resources

1. Bennington Battle Monument
2. Walloomsac Inn
3. Old First Congregational Church
4. Bennington Centre Cemetery
5. Bennington Museum

 Village of Old Bennington

This map should be used for general reference and planning purposes only.

Source: BCRC

Prepared by Bennington County
Regional Commission, September



Old Bennington's abundance of historic resources is one of its defining attributes and a point of community pride. A brief history of Old Bennington and its historic structures are included in the Introduction to this plan, but this chapter will explore the village's historic assets and methods of regulation and protection in more detail.

Old Bennington is home to several iconic, historic structures. These include the Bennington Battle Monument, the Old First Congregational Church, and the Walloomsac Inn. Alongside these iconic

structures are the many historic homes lining Monument Avenue and surrounding streets. The entire Village of Old Bennington is in the National Register of Historic Places as a historic district.

Old Bennington consists of approximately 130 structures, most of which were built between 1763 and the early twentieth century. Georgian, Federal, Greek Revival, Shingle, and Colonial Revival styles are extensively represented. Nestled along a fine tree-lined avenue that ascends a slight hill to the Bennington Battle Monument, most of the structures are 2-1/2 story, wood-frame clapboard residences, and rich in historic detail. The well-preserved buildings of the village constitute one of the oldest and finest collections of historic houses in Vermont.

The history of Old Bennington's buildings is thoroughly documented in *An Updated History of Buildings in Old Bennington: 1761–2023*, a meticulously researched account written by Old Bennington resident Thomas Scheetz. The Bennington Historical Society (BHS) regularly offers special events and programs about the history of the Bennington area, and maintains an extensive library of historic records. The BHS also produced an [Old Bennington walking tour guide](#) which can be used to take a self-guided tour of the historic buildings along Monument Avenue.

Old Bennington Village is fortunate to have not only structures of cultural, architectural, and historical merit, but also a pleasing visual character and architectural integrity that extends through most of its dwellings and two hundred acres. Compatibility of architectural styles and color, the numerous buildings of architectural merit, the special relationships of land and buildings, the relative lack of commercial elements, and the reminder of life in a by-gone era, are some of the more important factors that comprise the village's character. Views to the west and south of Mount Anthony, and to the east and north across the Town of Bennington, as well as open meadows and ornamental gardens, are also integral parts of the village character.

Design Review and National Historic District Registration

In 1968, the Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act (24 V.S.A., Chapter 117) authorized municipalities to establish design control districts.

“A design control district can be created for an area containing structures of historical, architectural or cultural merit, and other areas in which there is a concentration of community interest and participation, such as a central business district, civic center or similar grouping or focus of activities. Such areas may include townscape areas which resemble, in important aspects, the earliest permanent settlements, including a concentrated urban settlement with striking vistas, views extending across open fields, and up to the forest edge, a central focal point and town green, and buildings of high architectural quality, including styles of the early nineteenth century.”

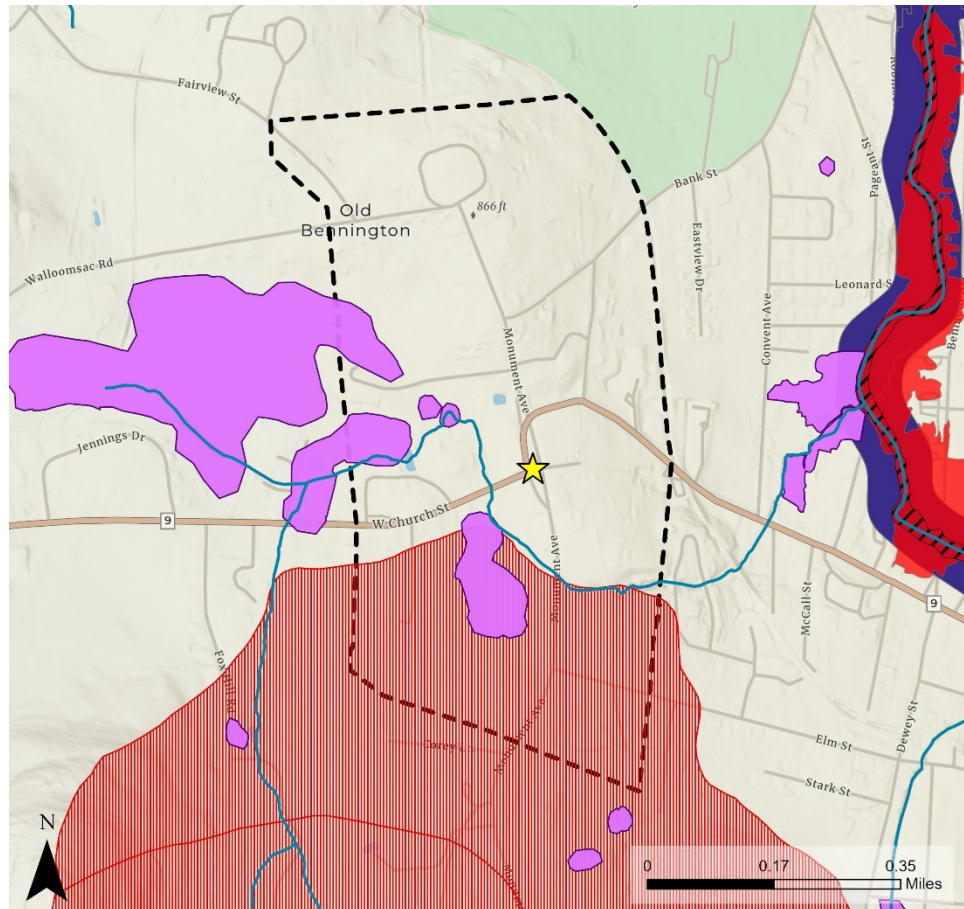
In 1973, Old Bennington was one of the first Villages in Vermont to adopt a system for Design Review, and the entire village was designated a Design Review District.

According to state law, within such a designated design review district, no structure may be erected, reconstructed, substantially altered, restored, moved, demolished, or changed in use or type of occupancy, without approval of the plans by the Planning Commission.

On August 24, 1984, Old Bennington, in its entirety, was made a National Historic District, and every house in the village has been recorded on the National Register of Historic Places. A listing on the National Register of Historic Places is primarily an honorific designation that recognizes the historic significance of a property.

Natural Resources + Protections

Map 2. Water Resources



**Village of Old Bennington, Vermont
Water Resources**

- Ground Water Source Protection Areas
- Vermont Significant Wetland Inventory
- River Corridors
- Village of Old Bennington
- Old First Church
- AE (1% annual chance floodplains with elevations)
- Streams
- Flood Hazard Areas
- Floodways

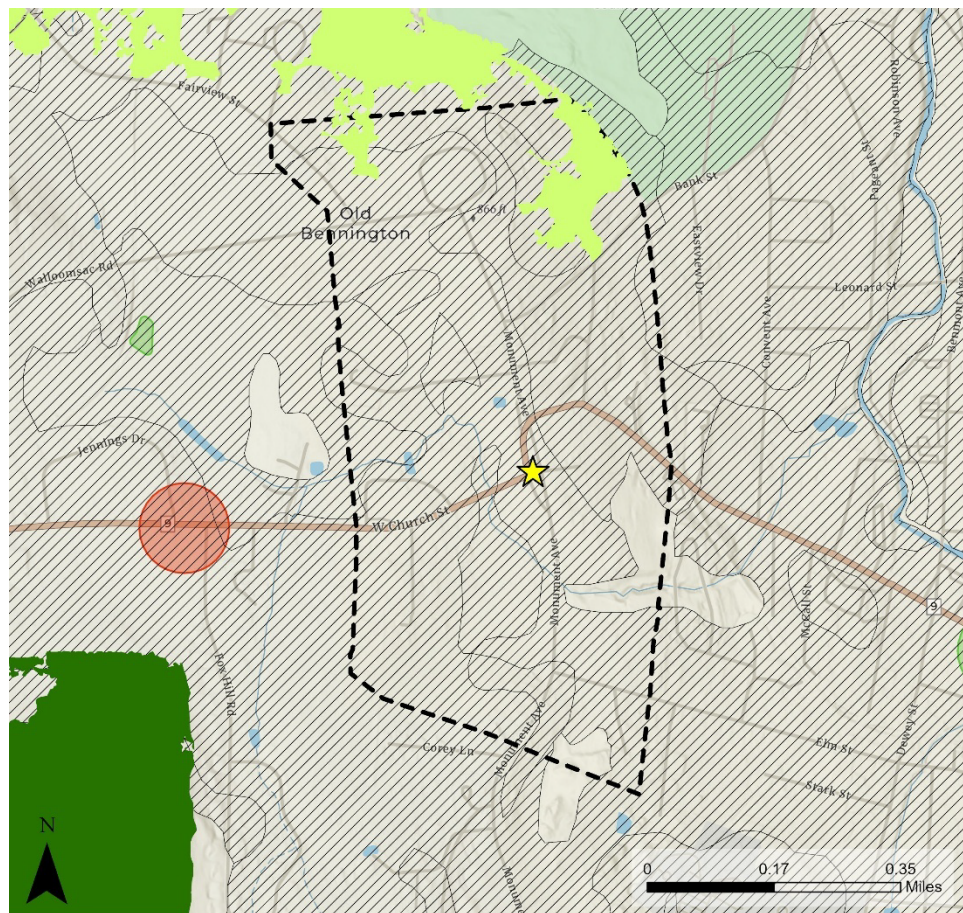
This map should be used for general reference and planning purposes only.

Source: BCRC

Prepared by Bennington County
Regional Commission, April 2026



Map 3. Critical Natural Resources



Village of Old Bennington, Vermont Critical Natural Resources

Interior Forest
HIGHEST PRIORITY
PRIORITY
 Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species
 Animal
 Plant
 Agriculturally Important Soils

Village of Old Bennington
 Old First Church

This map should be used for general reference and planning purposes only.

Source: BCRC

Prepared by Bennington County Regional Commission, April 2026



Located in the Walloomsac River watershed, much of the Village of Old Bennington is elevated above the river valley and the surrounding Town of Bennington. Most of the village benefits from relatively level land, with some steep slopes in the northern part (along Monument Hill) and along the eastern edge (where steep slopes lead into downtown Bennington).

This relative height over the valley floor largely spares the village from river-based flooding. However, there is a small stream running through the central part of the village and flooding in Jennings Brook occurs intermittently during especially wet seasons, including in 2023. Parts of the stream and the land around Monument Elementary School have been identified as highest priority surface waters and riparian

connectivity by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR). Additionally, the southernmost edge of the village is located in part of Bennington's groundwater source protection area.

A few large Class 2 wetlands are found in the central and western parts of the village. These critically important natural resources are defined as areas that are inundated by surface or groundwater with a frequency sufficient to support vegetation or aquatic life that depend on saturated or seasonally saturated soil conditions for growth and reproduction. Wetlands are breeding grounds for mallards, herons, muskrats, beaver, and turtles. The Vermont Wetland Rules protect significant wetlands (Class 1 or 2) and a buffer zone directly adjacent to them (50' for Class 2 wetlands). Any activity within a significant wetland or buffer requires a state permit, which is only issued if ANR determines that the activity will have no undue adverse impacts on wetland or habitat functions. Wetlands may also be subject to federal regulation. More information is available from [ANR's Wetlands Program](#).

Because of Old Bennington's highly developed nature, there are not a great number of protected natural resources present within the village's boundaries. ANR's mapping does not show any instances of vernal pools, Rare, Threatened, or Endangered Species, or Significant Natural Communities within the village's boundaries. Parts of the village have been identified as [priority interior forest blocks](#)—on the northern end around the Monument—but no connectivity blocks or wildlife road crossings have been identified.

Preservation of forest land and limiting the extraction of natural resources is not a significant concern in Old Bennington because of the high degree of existing development in the village. The village has no notable mineral or sand and gravel deposits, and while mapping does indicate that prime agricultural soils are located throughout the village, most of these lands are already developed and largely fragmented, so they do not have great potential for productive agricultural uses. Even if future resources are discovered, it is unlikely that the village's development pattern would make such extractive resource operations viable, due to the lack of available buffer land that would mitigate the nuisance on surrounding areas.

The village does not currently contain any commercial agricultural operations, and its historic pattern of development as a relatively dense village does not lend itself well to large agricultural ventures. While state law limits zoning authority for accepted agricultural practices, recent court opinions (2025) have opened the door to municipal regulation of agricultural uses, particularly in existing built-up areas. Some small-scale, low-impact agricultural operations may be compatible with historic development patterns in the village.

Open land in Old Bennington is primarily for recreational, cultural, and institutional uses. Several large parcels (5-10+ acres) are also associated with estates, dwellings, and an inn. Aside from recreational use of open lands, the balance tends to be maintained for aesthetic purposes or kept in a natural state.

Goals

- Identify, protect, and preserve important natural and historic features of Old Bennington's landscape, including:
 - significant natural and fragile areas; outstanding water resources; significant scenic roads, waterways, and views; and important historic structures, sites, or districts, archaeological sites, and archaeologically sensitive areas.
- Maintain and improve the quality of air, water, wildlife, forests, and other land resources.

- Provide for the wise and efficient use of natural resources and the proper restoration and preservation of the aesthetic qualities of the village.
- Encourage and strengthen low-impact agricultural practices.

Actions and Policies

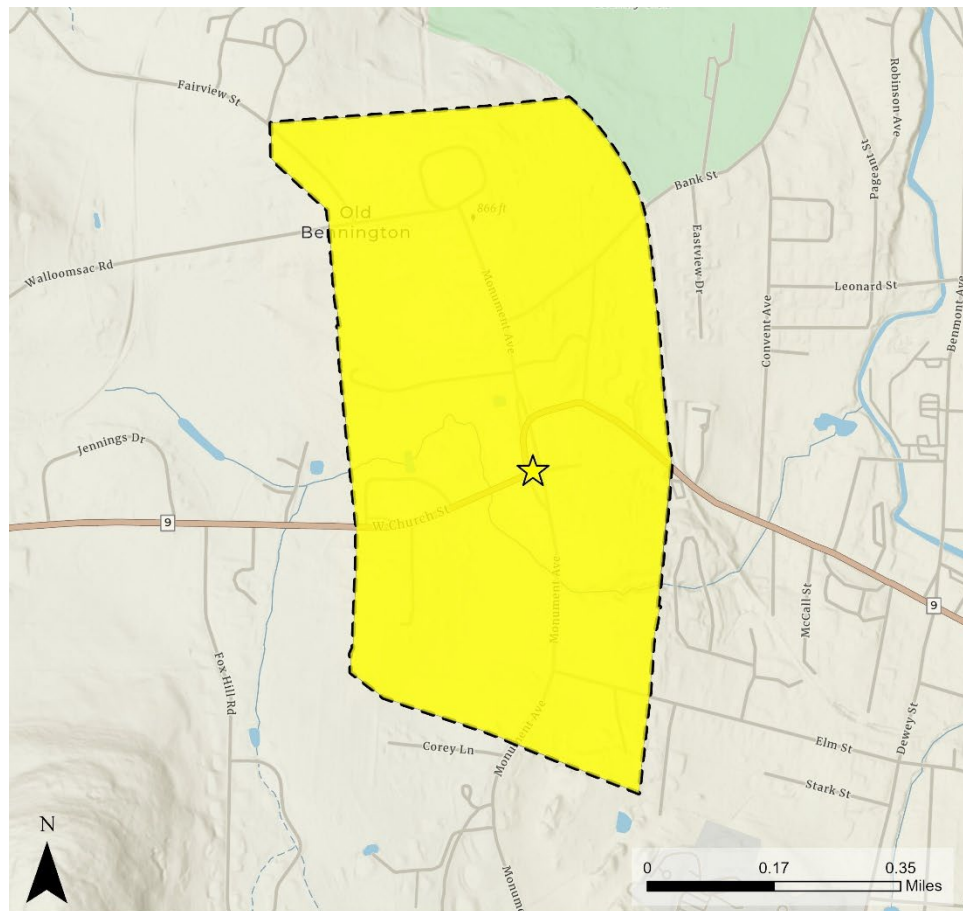
Historic Resources

- Support the preservation of historic structures in the village.
- Maintain Design Review Standards.
- Share educational resources about the history of Old Bennington through Village communication channels.
- Promote Bennington Historical Society programs and events that pertain to Old Bennington.
- Work proactively with state officials to maintain/restore the Bennington Monument and grounds.

Natural Resources

- Support watershed partners and municipalities to prioritize stormwater projects in Basin 1.
- Consider the scope of agricultural practices that would be acceptable in the village as part of a future zoning bylaw update.
- The use of locally-grown food products should be encouraged.
- Sound agricultural management practices should be encouraged.

Map 4. Future Land Use



**Village of Old Bennington, Vermont
Future Land Use**

Residential Village

Village of Old Bennington

★ Old First Church

This map should be used for general reference and planning purposes only.

Source: BCRC

Prepared by Bennington County Regional Commission, August 2026



Land Cover and Development Trends

The Village of Old Bennington was largely developed following a historic pattern that dates back to the 18th and 19th centuries. Development is centered along Monument Avenue and a few secondary streets, with few instances of open space throughout the village.

Open land is an integral part of the character of the Village of Old Bennington. Open land is beautiful—it provides vistas to enjoy, enhances property values of the homes in the area, provides habitat for wildlife, and offers places for people to walk or cross-country ski, among other benefits. It is an essential goal of the village to preserve existing open land in Old Bennington for present and future generations to enjoy.

Today land use in Old Bennington is primarily residential, with a few civic and commercial institutions.

Property use in Old Bennington has been relatively steady in recent years. A review of grand list data from 2015, 2020, and 2024 shows little fluctuation between the number of residential, commercial, utilities, and miscellaneous uses in the village. The data demonstrates the overwhelming majority of residential uses in the village, with a handful of commercial and miscellaneous uses.

Table 2: Old Bennington Tax List Data. 2015, 2020, and 2024 Village Tax Lists				
Type	2015	2020	2024	Change 2015-2024
Residential 1(<6 ac)	78	75	74	-4
Residential 2 (6+ ac)	4	5	6	+2
Commercial	8	8	8	-
Industrial	0	0	0	-
Utilities / Electric	1	1	1	-
Utilities / Telephone	1	0	0	-1
Farm	0	0	0	-
Woodland	0	0	0	-
Miscellaneous	3	0	4	-1

Regulatory Considerations

The process to review and update the Village's land use regulations should take into consideration plan recommendations and additional public input. The updated zoning map will be incorporated in a plan amendment, or the next scheduled update of this plan.

Old Bennington's current zoning bylaws demarcate one zoning district that encompasses the entire village. That district's dimensional standards do not reflect the built patterns of development, with the required minimum lot size of 80,000 square feet (roughly 2 acres) measuring larger than half the village's existing lots.

Community feedback for this plan indicated strong support for a continuation of the village's neighborhood character and its predominantly residential land use. Currently most of the residences in the village are single-unit homes. Changes due to Act 181 require other housing types to also be allowed in areas that permit single-unit homes, and additional uses in areas served by both public water and sewer. For more detailed information about the state's requirements around land use regulations, see **Appendix B**.

During the community engagement period, Old Bennington residents also showed support for limited commercial uses, especially the revival of the Walloomsac Inn property as an operational inn. Much of this support was rooted in a desire to see the property, which was in severe disrepair, restored and celebrated as a significant historic site in the village.

The Planning Commission should review and update the village's zoning bylaws, subdivision regulations, and village ordinances to ensure adequate and appropriate implementation of the developmental goals and objectives of the Village and compliance with state statutes.

Non-regulatory Considerations

In many cases non-regulatory options for maintaining neighborhood character—by preserving land and historic properties, for example—may be more effective than regulations. These include, but may not be limited to:

- Providing information and technical assistance to property owners regarding accepted land management practices and property restoration and rehabilitation (e.g., through a Planning or Historic Preservation Commission)
- Supporting private efforts to conserve land in areas that conform to the Village Plan
- Supporting state and federal acquisition of additional lands for public management and use, in a manner that does not unduly restrict public access or adversely affect the village's tax base.

Both regulatory and non-regulatory programs for managing growth and development need to be designed in relation to the village's overall fiscal and administrative capacities to sustain such programs.

Goals

- Plan development so as to maintain the historic settlement pattern of a compact village center
- Development should be undertaken in accordance with smart growth principles

Actions and Policies

- Update the Village's land use regulations to ensure adequate and appropriate implementation of the developmental goals and objectives of the Village and compliance with state statutes.

Housing

Census Data

The US Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) collects and analyzes housing data and reports housing related estimates by county and municipal jurisdictions. The following housing data come from the 2024 ACS Estimates.

Old Bennington has 87 housing units, 81 of which are occupied. Almost all of these housing units are single-family dwellings (97%) that are owner-occupied (94%). Approximately 5 units, or about 6%, are renter-occupied. Housing units in the village are predominantly large, older homes. Over half of the housing units in the village have four or more bedrooms, compared to only 24% of homes in Bennington County. Approximately 75% of the houses in Old Bennington were built prior to 1940, compared to only 25% of homes in Bennington County.

The median home value in Old Bennington is estimated to be \$445,500, which is significantly higher than median home values in both the Town of Bennington (\$213,300) and Bennington County (\$279,900).

Projected Housing Needs

The 2026 Regional Plan establishes an upper and lower housing target for each municipality target for the years 2030 and 2050. According to the 2026 Regional Plan, Old Bennington should add 4–7 new housing units by 2030, and 19–37 units by 2050, at least three of which should be rental units that are affordable to people making less than 80% of the area median income.

The Village faces some regulatory, physical, and labor barriers that may constrain housing development. Local regulatory constraints to housing creation in the Village can be addressed by updating the zoning bylaws to comply with the HOME Act and Act 181 as discussed in Appendix B. The Village is physically constrained due to a land area of less than half a square mile, much of which is already developed, leaving a very limited area for new housing development. Additionally, the Village faces the same labor constraints as the rest of the region and the state; Vermont has a workforce shortage that extends to the construction and trades industries, which makes housing development difficult and expensive.

The housing targets can be met in part by a comprehensive update to the Village's land use regulations to allow for the density required by the HOME Act (Act 47). The HOME Act stipulates that five or more dwelling units per acre must be allowed in areas that allow residential development and are served by municipal water and sewer service. This requirement applies to the entirety of the Village of Old Bennington, as all parcels are either already connected to municipal water and sewer service, or are within the service area and could be connected.

Taking advantage of infill opportunities can allow the village to grow its housing stock in accordance with housing targets while maintaining its historic character. Infill housing opportunities in Old Bennington include the development of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) on existing residential properties, and conversion of large single-family homes into a small number of apartments. These infill strategies can have the added benefit of providing homeowners with additional income and giving those who wish to age in place the opportunity to downsize while remaining in their home. Despite the larger size of many homes in Old Bennington, the average household size is only 2.3 people, suggesting that there is underutilized space available that could be converted into apartments while also relieving homeowners of

some of the upkeep of their homes. The village’s current zoning bylaws allow for the pursuit of these infill opportunities subject to design review by the Planning Commission.

Some new housing development that complies with the Village’s design review requirements may also be appropriate. The introduction of statutorily required types of “middle” housing units could expand the housing options in the Village, especially for young professionals or families looking for smaller, affordable places to live.

Housing Affordability

Two factors determine housing affordability: the costs of housing, and the ability of a household to cover those costs. Housing is generally considered “affordable” if annual housing costs do not exceed 30% of gross annual household income. Once these costs exceed 30%, a household is considered cost burdened. Annual housing costs generally include mortgage or rent and utilities, but may also include condominium fees. For planning purposes, the relative affordability of housing is determined in relation to median household income.

As reported in ACS 2024 5-year estimates, Old Bennington’s estimated household income (\$168,750) was 2.3 times higher than the county median, while reported housing values were 1.5 times higher. Although median monthly housing costs for homeowners in Old Bennington (\$3,188) are nearly twice as high as they are for homeowners in Bennington County (\$1,708), only about 15% of homeowners are cost burdened in Old Bennington compared to nearly 30% of Bennington County homeowners. Additionally, only about 51% of Old Bennington homeowners have a mortgage, slightly less than Bennington County (57%).

Table 3: Old Bennington Housing Affordability Statistics: Comparison with Town of Bennington and Bennington County. 2024 ACS 5-Year Estimates			
	Old Bennington	Town of Bennington	Bennington County
Median Home Value	\$445,500	\$213,300	\$279,900
Median Monthly Housing Costs	\$3,188	\$1,652	\$1,708
% Cost Burdened	15.4%	24.9%	29.1%
% Housing Units with Mortgage	51.3%	57.5%	56.9%

There are very few rental units in Old Bennington, and although gross rents in the village are on par with the Town of Bennington and Bennington County, approximately 40% of renters in Old Bennington are cost burdened. These estimates suggest that, in recent years, housing has become relatively more affordable for long-term homeowners, as mortgages are paid off, but less affordable for local renters.

Old Bennington has one of the highest median home values in the county (\$445,500). According to Vermont Housing Finance Agency’s [Home Affordability Calculator](#), a household would need a combined annual income of at least \$148,999 to afford a home at this price. Although Old Bennington’s median household income is higher than this, high home prices and minimal availability of rental units may limit the number of young adults and new families that can afford rent or buy a house in the village, and the

ability of current residents—especially those on fixed incomes—to find affordable housing alternative as their needs change.

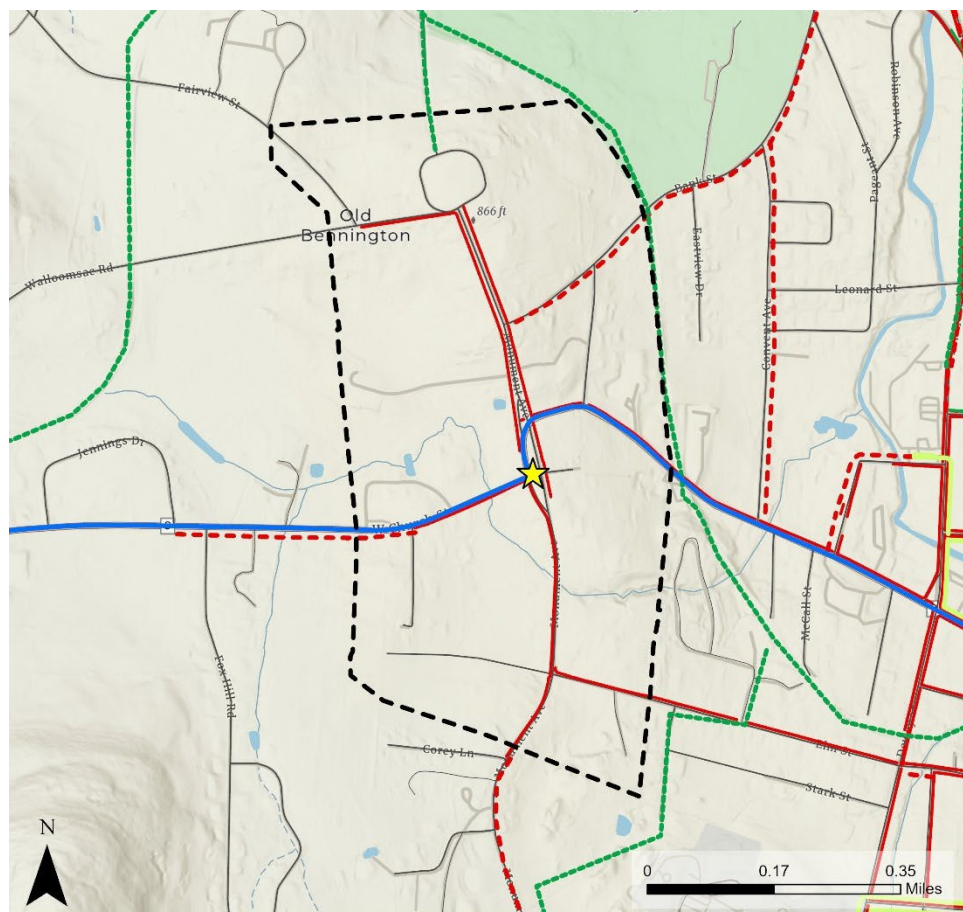
Goals

- Ensure the availability of safe and affordable housing for all Vermonters.

Actions and Policies

- Housing should be encouraged to meet the needs of a diversity of social and income groups, particularly for those citizens of low and moderate income, and consistent with housing targets provided by the regional planning commission.
- New and rehabilitated housing should be safe, sanitary, located conveniently to employment and commercial centers, and coordinated with the provision of necessary public facilities and utilities.
- Sites for a variety of housing types should be readily available in locations similar to those generally used for single-family dwellings.
- Accessory dwelling units within or attached to single-family residences that provide affordable housing in close proximity to cost-effective care and supervision for relatives, elders, or persons who have a disability should be allowed.
- Support infill housing that aligns with the residential and historic character of the village.
- Support the improvement of the existing housing stock to create new rental and homeownership opportunities for people of all income levels.

Map 5. Transportation Facilities



**Village of Old Bennington, Vermont
Transportation**

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| Roads | Bike and Pedestrian Infrastructure |
| Town Road | Existing Sidewalk |
| Private Road | Existing Shared-Use Path |
| State Highway | Planned Sidewalk |
| Public Transit | Planned Shared-Use Path |
| Green Mountain Express | Village of Old Bennington |
| Vermont Translines | Old First Church |

This map should be used for general reference and planning purposes only.

Source: BCRC

Prepared by Bennington County
Regional Commission, April 2026



Present and Prospective Transportation Facilities

Old Bennington is largely centered around two main roads: with Monument Avenue bisecting the village on a north-south axis and West Road/Town Hill Road (VT Route 9) running across west to east.

The main roadways of Old Bennington consist of:

Monument Avenue is a main north-south road that also runs through the center of the village and contains many of the historic homes of the village. It is heavily used by tourist and local traffic connecting from

US Route 7 to the south with North Bennington to the north. It is also used by people traveling to the Southwest Vermont Medical Center, which is accessed from Monument Avenue Extension.

Town Hill Road/West Road (VT Route 9) runs in an east-west direction past the Walloomsac Inn and the Old First Church, through the center of the village and past the Monument Elementary School and the Bennington Museum. This road serves as a main access route for traffic from New York State to Bennington and other locations in Vermont, and is a major highway for through traffic from the east. Because of its central location in Old Bennington, this road has a profound impact upon the Village. Route 9 is the highest trafficked road in the village, with nearly double the annual average daily traffic counts of Monument Ave.

Walloomsac Road is an east-west road, which serves to connect Monument Avenue to Fairview Street.

Bank Street is an east-west road connecting Benmont Avenue to Monument Avenue.

Catamount Lane is a north-south road running between Route 9 and Bank Street on the eastern side of the village.

Elm Street is an east-west road leading from lower Monument Avenue to downtown Bennington and US Route 7.

Fairview Street is a north-south road that connects the Village to the Silk Road, which leads to North Bennington.

Other roads in the village would be considered local secondary roads or dead-ends, which serve the residents of those roads.

Street Management and Maintenance

All roads require maintenance to ensure public safety and effective stormwater management. Since 1959, Old Bennington has been responsible for its own maintenance of village roads, which it has accomplished through work with private contractors.

A 2019 report from MSK Engineering and Design concluded that several roads in the village needed major reconstruction and most other roads required improved maintenance. The report identified Fairview Street and Bank Street as the two roads with the poorest conditions; in 2023, the Village completely reconstructed Fairview, and in 2025 they reconstructed Bank Street. With support from Norm LeBlanc, the Village of North Bennington's road foreman, Old Bennington has been prioritizing the maintenance work that the 2019 report identified as necessary, with the intention to prioritize full replacement and reconstruction projects again in a few years.

These road maintenance projects have largely been financed with increases to the Village's tax rate; Old Bennington was awarded a \$200,000 grant from the Agency of Transportation in 2023, which supported the Bank Street project. In spring 2025, the Village considered transferring road maintenance back to the Town of Bennington. At the time of a nonbinding vote in April 2025, a majority of voters were opposed to the transfer and instead supported a continuation of the Village's independent maintenance.

The Village also attends to regular street maintenance issues, including pothole repairs, road erosion, and catch basin cleaning and maintenance.

Stormwater Infrastructure

Municipal stormwater infrastructure consists primarily of open drainage ditches and culverts along public roads. Upgrades to this infrastructure and improved stormwater management on municipal sites will be required over the next decade under state clean water and general road permit requirements (Act 64). In 2025 the Town of Bennington adopted a new [Stormwater Master Plan](#) to better manage runoff, “reduce sediment and nutrient pollution in village centers and to treat water from drainage networks with large watershed” (p. 2). The plan identifies Monument Elementary School as a site of a priority project due to the outfall from the roof drain into the school parking lot. The plan proposes a bioretention intervention to divert water and improve drainage onsite.

Traffic Calming

Increased speeding and resulting concerns about safety were some of the top issues raised by Old Bennington community members during the public engagement for this plan. Speeding traffic creates a hazard to residents, pedestrians, and pets, increases noise and air pollution, and detracts from the quiet, peaceful and historical ambiance sought by the village.

Old Bennington previously had its own police officer who enforced speed and other traffic regulations in the village. Due to financial and staffing constraints, the village no longer maintains its own police presence and the Town of Bennington is not able to provide a posted officer at the prior level of consistent enforcement. This mirrors a statewide trend in Vermont, in which communities must look to other strategies (beyond enforcement) to improve road safety.

Traffic calming is the practice of using design interventions to reduce car speeds and make streets safer. The Village Trustees have embraced traffic calming through their establishment of a specialized subcommittee in 2025; this group strives to find interventions that will slow car traffic down as it moves through the village and improve safety and quality of life for travelers—vehicular and pedestrian—and residents. The Bennington County Regional Commission also provides technical assistance to support traffic calming interventions in municipalities throughout the region. A speed study can give the municipality important information about where speeding is most severe and inform context-specific recommendations for the interventions that would be best suited to Old Bennington.

Active Transportation: Walking and Bicycling

The community identified Old Bennington’s walkable environment as an important element of life in the village. Old Bennington has a strong network of sidewalks along its main corridor: sidewalks on both sides of Monument Avenue, and along West Road, Town Hill Road, Elm Street, and Walloomsac Road create a favorable environment for pedestrian activities.

Maintaining the condition of the sidewalks, including for year-round use, is an important commitment to continue supporting the community’s values. Improvements to the sidewalks at the intersection of West Road, West Main, and Church Lane could further enhance the pedestrian experience in the center of the village.

The village also has opportunities to connect to local and regional shared-use paths for walkers, runners, and cyclists. Old Bennington could be an important partner with the Town of Bennington to support such projects as a celebration of local history and scenic, natural beauty.

Public Transportation

According to the 2023 American Community Survey, 2.5% of Old Bennington households do not have access to a vehicle. While this rate is lower than that of the county and state, nonetheless, access to public transportation is important and a public service that Old Bennington’s community members can take advantage of. The Green Mountain Express, operated by the [Green Mountain Community Network](#), provides public transit services on demand for the Bennington region’s senior, disabled, and “transportation disadvantaged” residents. Although there is currently no fixed route bus service through Old Bennington, the Green Mountain Express runs service through nearby downtown Bennington to Woodford and Manchester, and Williamstown, Massachusetts. Additionally, Vermont Translines offers limited intercity bus service—with nearby stops in Rutland, Manchester, and Bennington—and provides a link to the train station and airport in Albany, New York.

Rail and Air Service

Old Bennington once relied heavily on rail service for connection to the outside world, but with the abandonment of the Delaware and Hudson line in the 1980s, such service has not been available locally for many years. Amtrak currently provides passenger service on the Ethan Allen Line, running from Rutland to Rensselaer, NY. As a regional policy, the BCRC supports efforts to expand passenger rail to the region. Such service would increase travel options for residents and advance economic development efforts by providing a convenient and enjoyable connection between Bennington and major metropolitan areas in New York State and along the East Coast.

The nearest airport open to small aircraft is the William H. Morse Airport, a state-owned general aviation airport located north of VT Route 9 in the western part of Bennington. The airport is home to the Bennington Civil Air Patrol wing, which serves the Southern Vermont region. Although there is no commercial passenger or freight operator based at the airport, it is an important general aviation center and is used frequently by business travelers. Regularly scheduled passenger service is available at the Albany International Airport (NY), the Manchester Airport (NH), and the Burlington International Airport (VT).

Goals

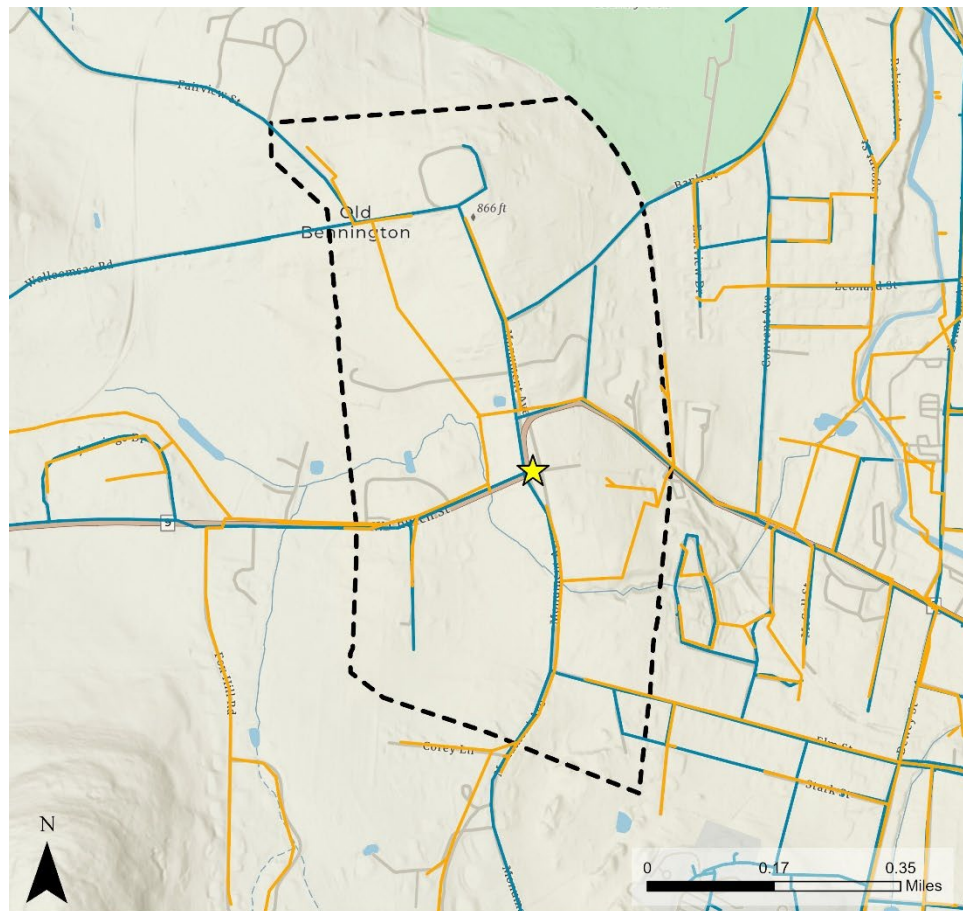
- Support safe, convenient, economic, and energy efficient transportation systems that respect the integrity of the natural environment, including public transit options and paths for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Actions and Policies

- Collaborate with the Bennington County Regional Commission’s transportation planners to identify the most impactful locations and interventions for traffic calming; implement those interventions.
- Maintain and improve public roads as necessary to foster a safe neighborhood environment as envisioned in this plan.
- Oppose widening the roadways beyond the existing paved portion of the road.
- Send a representative to participate in the BCRC’s Transportation Advisory Committee to advocate for the transportation projects needed to further the objectives and policies of this plan.

- Private roads, driveways, and accesses to public roads should be designed, constructed, and upgraded in accordance with the Village's adopted road policies and standards and land use regulations.
- Develop and maintain a policy regarding construction and maintenance of sidewalks along public roads.
- All roads defined as main arteries should have sidewalks.
- Review land use regulations to ensure adequate standards for access management, curb cuts, driveways, and roads to promote a safe and efficient transportation network.
- The Village of Old Bennington should regularly review water runoff from roads, etc. to ensure adequate flow and prudent diversion. Inadequate culverts, etc. should be reconstructed or replaced wherever feasible.
- Ensure that stormwater run-off from developed land is managed at the source so it will not place an undue burden on public infrastructure.
- Support and contribute to the development of a stormwater master plan in Bennington.

Map 6. Utilities



**Village of Old Bennington, Vermont
Utilities**

-  Public Wastewater Infrastructure
-  Public Water Infrastructure
-  Village of Old Bennington
-  Old First Church

This map should be used for general reference and planning purposes only.

Source: BCRC

Prepared by Bennington County
Regional Commission, April 2026



Public Facilities and Services

Water and Wastewater

The Town of Bennington provides the public water and wastewater services for Old Bennington and bills residents directly for these services. Within the village, nearly all residences are served by both public water and wastewater, with some exceptions along Bank Street and Monument Circle. However, nearby service lines suggest that potential expansion of both utilities is possible.

Any new housing in the village is required to tie into the sewer system at their own expense. Any builder of more than one house in an area not on an existing sewer line is required, as part of development costs, to extend the existing line, if necessary, with the permission of the Town. The size of all new sewer lines laid should be based on the long-range needs of the whole area to be served.

Utility Lines

The placement of all new utility lines underground is required.

Green Mountain Power, the local electric utility, owns most of the streetlights within the village, for which the Village pays the cost of the electricity. However, the ornamental “vintage” streetlights in Old Bennington are owned by the Village, and the Village pays the local electric utility the cost of the electricity to light them. The ornamental “vintage” streetlights should replace the standard lights whenever possible.

Telecommunications

Old Bennington has no telecommunication facilities or related infrastructure. The village relies on facilities located in neighboring communities.

Telecommunication facilities and related infrastructure require careful consideration. These structures tend to be located in highly visible locations, which can often be at odds with community values to protect the village’s historic character and aesthetic beauty. Toward that end, the zoning bylaws should incorporate provisions to guide and govern the placement of antennas and tower structures.

Public Safety and Emergency Services

Old Bennington is served primarily by the Bennington Police Department (BPD). In prior years, the Village had its own part-time officer, who retired in 2023. After that, the Village had a contract with the BPD for extra traffic patrols in Old Bennington for a number of years, which ended in 2025. Nonetheless, the BPD does provide policing support to Old Bennington, as they do in any other part of the Town of Bennington.

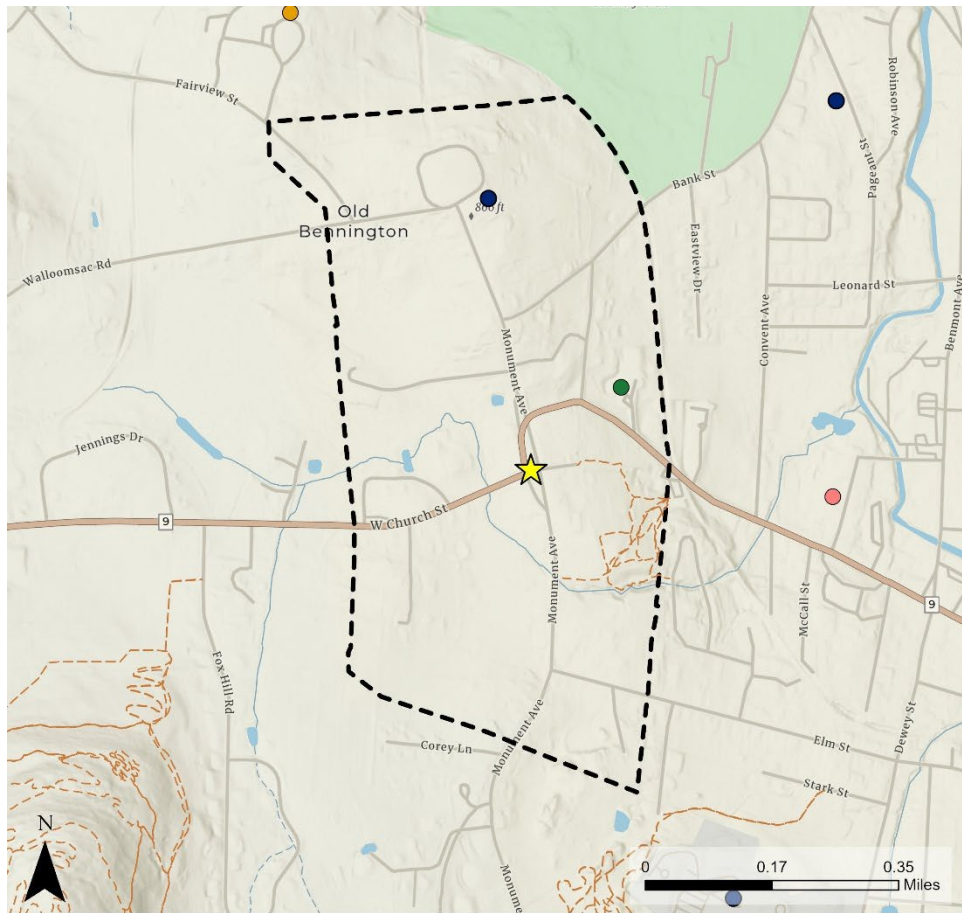
Old Bennington benefits from a nearby network of emergency services providers that strive to ensure the safety and well-being of all community members. Old Bennington falls under Bennington's Local Emergency Management Plan, which is updated annually.

Solid Waste

Old Bennington is a member of the Bennington County Solid Waste Alliance, whose mission is to reduce the amount of waste generated, conserve resources, and promote recycling and reuse. The BCSWA updated its solid waste management plan, as required by the state, in 2025. BCSWA also runs programs that help residents and businesses find solutions to the disposal of household hazardous waste.

Community Facilities

Map 7. Community Facilities



Village of Old Bennington, Vermont Community Facilities

- Day Care Facilities
- K-12 Schools
- Private
- Public
- Health / Medical Institutions
- Trails

- ▬ Village of Old Bennington
- ★ Old First Church

This map should be used for general reference and planning purposes only.

Source: BCRC

Prepared by Bennington County
Regional Commission, April 2026



Many of Old Bennington's community facilities and public sites are historic resources that are discussed in other chapters of this plan. Other community facilities that serve the village are located in the Town of Bennington. These include the Bennington Free Library, the Bennington Recreation Center, public parks and shared-use paths, and healthcare facilities. More information about these facilities can be found in the [Bennington Town Plan](#).

One important community facility that straddles the boundary of Old Bennington and the Town of Bennington is the Bennington Museum. The Bennington Museum is an important cultural institution for Old Bennington, offering art and history exhibits, as well as public events. The Bennington Museum houses the Bennington Historical Society and the Regional History Room, which contains a large

collection of historical records. Outside on the museum grounds is the George Aiken Wildflower Trail, a 0.3-mile public trail that features a variety of sculptures and painted benches.

Other recreational sites include the playground at Monument Elementary School, which is open to the public outside of school hours.

Educational Facilities

Schools

The Village does not operate its own schools. The Monument School, an elementary school located within the boundaries of Old Bennington Village, is operated by the Southwest Vermont Union Elementary School District. It serves both the Village and the Town of Bennington and has an enrollment of approximately 130 students. Village children also attend the middle school and high school operated by the Mount Anthony Union School District. Private elementary and high school education for village residents is also available at nearby schools. Old Bennington residents can also attend Southwest Tech which provides technical and skills-based educational programs for both youth and adults.

Childcare

Safe and affordable childcare services are important to both local residents and the local economy. Childcare facilities serving a limited number of children are allowed in residential areas in accordance with Vermont state law. There are a number of registered home day care providers and licensed early education services offered in Bennington. There is a childcare and preschool facility in Old Bennington located at the Barn on Monument Circle. The facility is operated by Myers Prouty Children's Campuses and has a licensed capacity of 25 children.

Information on childcare facilities as well as information on services for families, providers, employees, and people interested in opening a new facility can be found through the [Child Development Division of the Vermont Department for Children and Families](#).

Goals

- Plan for, finance, and provide an efficient system of public facilities and services to meet future needs.
- Ensure the availability of safe and affordable childcare and integrate childcare issues into the planning process.
- Broaden access to educational and vocational training opportunities sufficient to ensure the full realization of the abilities of all Vermonters.
- Maintain and enhance recreational opportunities for residents and visitors.
 - Public access to noncommercial outdoor recreational opportunities should be identified, provided, and protected wherever appropriate.

Actions and Policies

- Both water and wastewater services should be extended until they reach those residents now dependent upon private wells and septic systems. New dwellings within 2000' of sewer lines must connect.
- Amend village ordinances to be in harmony with Bennington sewer ordinances

- Whenever and wherever possible, existing utility lines should be placed underground.
- Support provision of quality childcare, education, and recreation services so Old Bennington will be an attractive community for families
- Support the development of small licensed childcare facilities in the Village.
- Ensure that the zoning bylaws incorporate provisions to guide and govern the appropriate placement of telecommunication antennas and tower structures.

Energy

The Village of Old Bennington recognizes that it is necessary to work toward a sustainable energy future in a manner that minimizes environmental impacts, protects historic character, and benefits the local economy. The purpose of this energy section is to further those goals and recommended actions by increasing public awareness of energy issues, assessing local energy use and conservation opportunities, and evaluating the potential for utilization of various renewable energy resources.

To maintain a high quality of life and a strong economy, and protect important natural resources, the Village must develop conservation strategies, improve energy efficiency, and transition to the widespread use of renewable energy. The following sections will provide estimates of current energy use by sector as well as projections illustrating the magnitude of conservation, efficiency, and transition to alternative fuels needed to meet state and local energy goals.

Much of the data presented in this energy section comes from Low Emissions Analysis Platform (LEAP) model. The LEAP model is a tool used by the State of Vermont to analyze energy consumption and develop energy demand targets for the years 2015–2050. The targets are designed to meet the greenhouse gas reduction requirements set forth in the Global Warming Solutions Act (GWSA). The LEAP targets for each sector include two scenarios: baseline energy demand and a “CAP Mitigation” energy demand. The baseline scenario, or business-as-usual scenario, was developed to estimate regional energy demand under current conditions. The Climate Action Plan (CAP) Mitigation scenario was developed to estimate energy demand needed to meet the state’s greenhouse gas reduction requirements. The CAP Mitigation scenario is consistently used throughout this plan.

The regional LEAP targets were broken out into town targets by the BCRC using each town’s share of regional energy use. LEAP targets for Old Bennington were further broken down from the Bennington targets based on the village’s share of housing units, commercial establishments, and vehicles. The general trend presented in these targets is that Old Bennington must decrease its overall energy use through a combination of conservation and efficiency methods, which will involve increasing electrification of the thermal and transportation sectors, and decreasing the use of fossil fuels. More information on the LEAP targets can be found in the appendix of the *Bennington Regional Plan*.

Figure 1: Estimated Village Energy Use by Sector. Based on a disaggregation of total energy use by sector for the Town of Bennington.

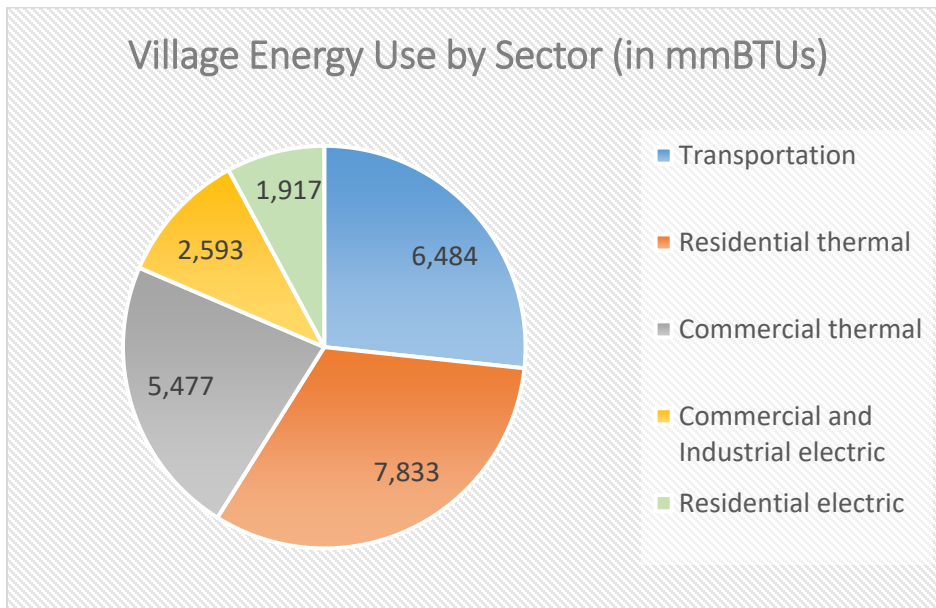
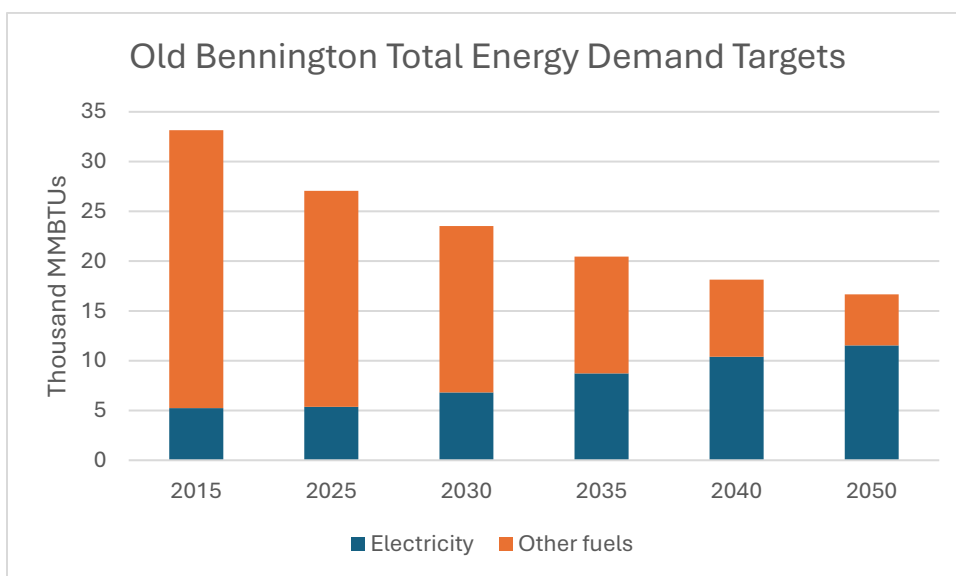


Figure 1 estimates that the largest share of energy in Old Bennington is consumed for space heating and cooling, especially for residences. This makes sense for the context of Old Bennington where more than 95% of housing units are single-family detached homes, and more than 50% of homes have nine rooms or more (2024 ACS 5-year estimates).

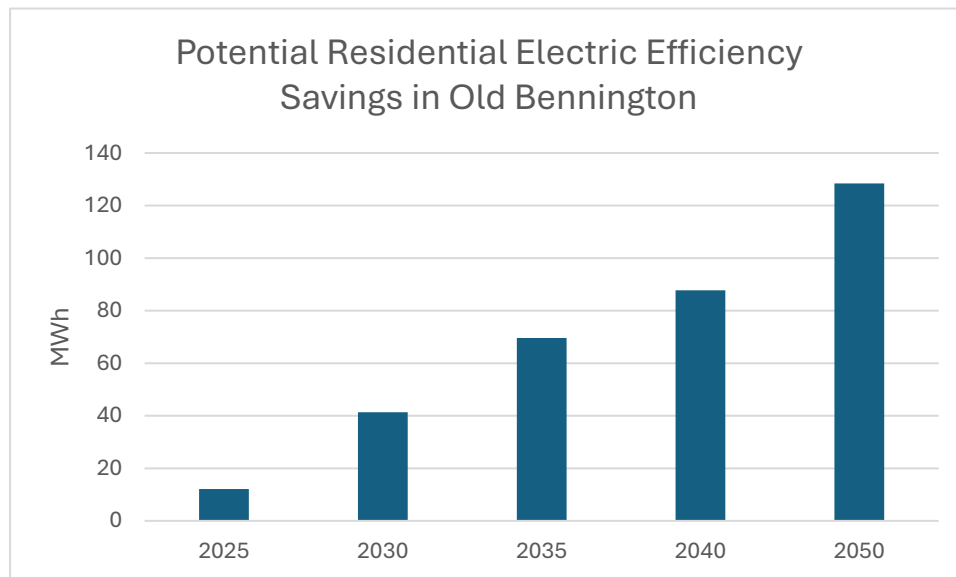
Figure 2 below presents incremental targets which can help guide the Village in decreasing overall energy use and increasing electrification.

Figure 2: Old Bennington Energy Demand Targets disaggregated from CAP Mitigation LEAP Projections for the Town of Bennington.



Although technically a conductor of energy and not a source, electricity is referenced throughout this chapter as an energy source since widespread adoption of appliances, vehicles, and thermal technologies powered by electricity are critical to achieving Vermont’s energy goals. Although electricity use has already begun to increase with the electrification of the heating and transportation sectors, electricity is expected to become more efficient as electric technologies continue to improve. Figure 3 below shows the electric efficiency savings in megawatt-hours, that are possible to achieve through the implementation of energy efficiency measures and future technology improvements.

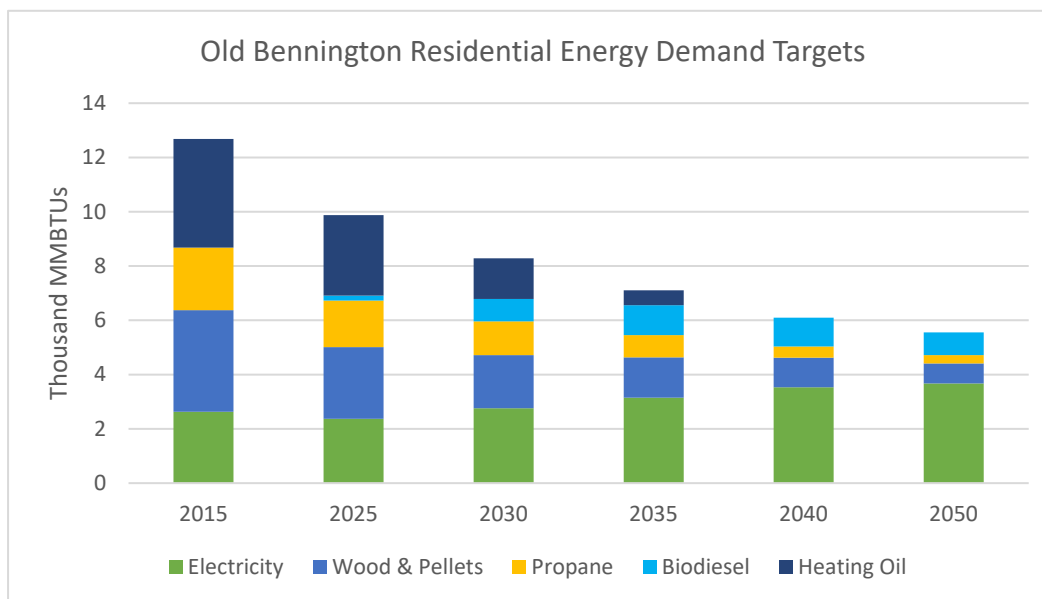
Figure 3. Potential Residential Electricity Efficiency Savings in Old Bennington disaggregated from data developed for the Town of Bennington. Data provided by the Public Service Department and sourced from the 2022 Energy Efficiency Market Potential Study.



Residential Energy Use

Old Bennington has around 150 residents and over 81 occupied housing units, all of which consume energy for transportation, space and water heating, and powering lights and appliances. Figure 4 illustrates how residential energy use could change over the next several decades to meet state energy and emissions goals. Under this scenario, residential energy use would decrease by more than 50% with increased efficiency, growing electricity and biodiesel use, and a phasing out of fossil fuel use.

Figure 4. Old Bennington Residential Energy Demand Targets disaggregated from CAP Mitigation LEAP Projections for the Town of Bennington.



Residential Energy Costs

Vermonters face many affordability challenges, and the cost of energy is no exception. According to the [U.S. Energy Information Administration \(EIA\)](#), Vermont uses more petroleum per capita than almost two-thirds of states, primarily in the transportation sector. The EIA also estimates that approximately 56% of Vermont households heat with petroleum products, the third largest share of US states. This holds true for Old Bennington, where approximately 73% of households heat with fuel oil (2024 ACS).

According to the EIA, the average price per gallon of residential fuel oil in 2025 was \$3.67. Average annual heating oil consumption varies depending on house size and condition, but some general estimates according to multiple different fuel dealers are as follows:

- Medium home (1,500–2,500 SF): 800–1,200 gallons/year
- Large home (2,500+ SF): 1,200+ gallons/year

Many of the homes in Old Bennington are larger homes, so assuming that they use around 1,200 gallons of fuel oil a year (and potentially more), Old Bennington residents that heat with this fuel source may spend \$4,440 a year or more on heating costs. Heating costs are just one component of household energy expenditures, which also include electricity and transportation fuel.

Energy burden is defined as the proportion of household income spent on energy costs. The [2023 Vermont Energy Burden Report](#) indicates the Bennington’s average energy burden is around 10.8%, slightly more than the state average energy burden of 10.6%. Energy burden data is not available for incorporated villages, but given that Old Bennington’s median household income is significantly higher than the Town median, it is reasonable to assume that the Village’s energy burden is lower. Nationally, an energy burden greater than 6% is considered high and is correlated with a “greater risk for respiratory diseases, increased stress and economic hardship, and difficulty in moving out of poverty” according to the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE).

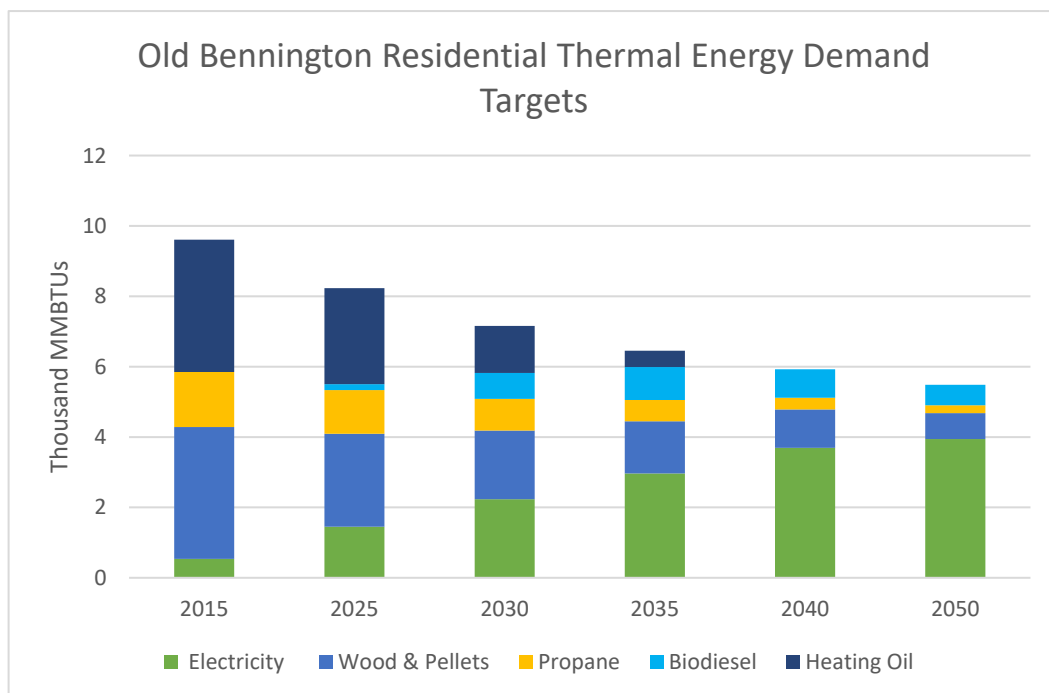
One of the most effective ways of reducing energy burden is through improving home insulation and air sealing, also known generally as weatherization (discussed in more detail a later section). Weatherization, paired with highly efficient heating and cooling systems such as cold climate heat pumps, can reduce overall energy use, lower energy costs, and reduce fossil fuel usage.

Although Old Bennington is primarily a community of affluent homeowners, there may be some residents who struggle to afford their energy bills and do not have the resources to reduce their energy burden through weatherization or other energy efficiency measures.

Thermal Energy Use

Residential thermal energy demand comprises the largest share of Old Bennington’s energy use. Therefore, to reduce overall residential energy demand in the region, implementing thermal energy conservation and efficiency measures will be especially important. Figure 5 establishes targets for the village to reduce its residential thermal energy demand by increasing the electrification of space heating and reducing the use of fossil fuels for heating.

Figure 5. Old Bennington Residential Thermal Energy Demand Targets disaggregated from CAP Mitigation LEAP Projections for the Town of Bennington.



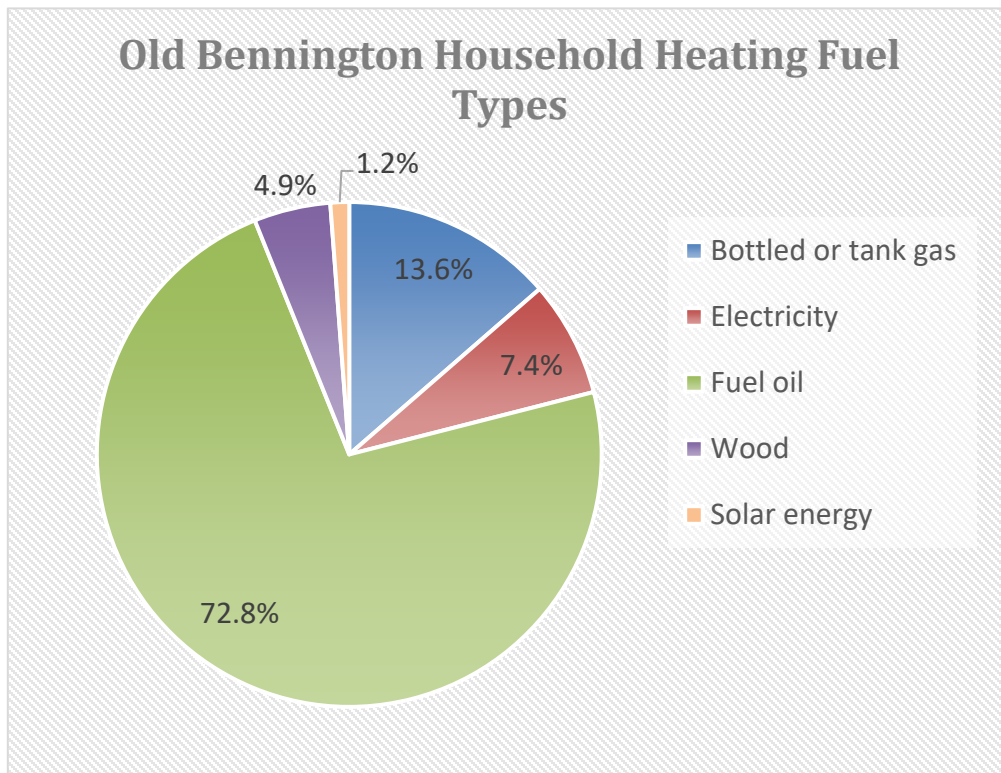


Figure 6. Household Heating Fuel Sources. Data from 2024 ACS 5-year estimates.

Currently, over 70% of Old Bennington homes are heated with oil. Although this fuel source has been inexpensive and widely accessible in the past, projected shortages and price volatility of fossil fuels suggest that village residents should reduce their reliance on these fuels by switching to more efficient systems that can be powered by renewable resources. Switching away from fossil fuels will also be important for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and mitigating the effects of climate change.

Cold-climate electric heat pumps and heat pump water heaters are highly efficient technologies that are projected to play a major role in lowering overall energy consumption. In addition to being more energy efficient than other heating technologies, heat pumps can also cool homes during the warmer months. Heat pump water heaters are an efficient way to heat water, typically one of the highest home energy costs, by using electricity to pull heat from the air. They offer a cleaner alternative to fossil fuel-based water heaters.

Table 4: Old Bennington Residential Heat Pump Targets disaggregated from CAP Mitigation LEAP Projections for the Town of Bennington

YEAR	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2050
# of Heat Pumps	6	35	65	95	125	140

Table 5: Old Bennington Residential Heat Pump Water Heater Targets disaggregated from CAP Mitigation LEAP Projections for the Town of Bennington

YEAR	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2050
# of HPWH Units	2	23	50	77	105	106

According to annual data collected by Efficiency Vermont, there were 852 heat pumps and 687 heat pump water heaters installed in Bennington as of 2024, and while this data is not collected at the village level, it is reasonable to assume that some of these installations were in Old Bennington.

Gradually switching thermal systems to more efficient electric options will improve energy efficiency, but thermal conservation gains will also rely on extensive weatherization of existing homes and adherence to building energy codes for new construction. According to ACS estimates, nearly 75% of the housing stock in Old Bennington was built prior to 1939 which makes weatherization of these older homes especially important to achieve energy efficiency.

As of 2024, there have been 1,136 weatherization projects in Bennington (Vermont Energy Dashboard and Efficiency VT), some of which may have been in Old Bennington.

Table 6: Old Bennington Residential Weatherization Targets disaggregated from CAP Mitigation LEAP Projections for the Town of Bennington

YEAR	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2050
# of Weatherized Homes	7	26	44	55	67	89

Transportation Energy Use

Due to the primarily rural nature of the Bennington region, people and goods constantly travel long distances between communities. The light duty vehicle has made this independent mobility and the freedom and access that come with it possible, yet most vehicles rely on fossil fuels to function. Given the dependence most households have on vehicles, transportation represents one of the greatest opportunities to reduce overall energy use.

Electric vehicle (EV) and plug-in hybrid electric vehicle (PHEV) technologies have advanced significantly in recent years and these systems are projected to dominate the car industry in coming decades. By electrifying passenger vehicles, residents in Old Bennington can improve transportation efficiency and divert money currently spent on fossil fuels. Targets for gradually reducing energy consumption by passenger cars are presented in Figure 7. Over the next three decades, total energy demand for transportation is projected to fall gradually to just over one third of 2015 levels, and gasoline use would decrease dramatically. Electrification of the light duty vehicle fleet will account for much of this reduction in energy use. According to data from Drive Electric Vermont, the number of EVs and PHEVs in Bennington has been increasing rapidly since 2017, and since 2022 EV registrations have surpassed PHEVs.

Figure 7. Old Bennington Passenger Car Energy Demand Targets disaggregated from CAP Mitigation LEAP Projections for the Town of Bennington.

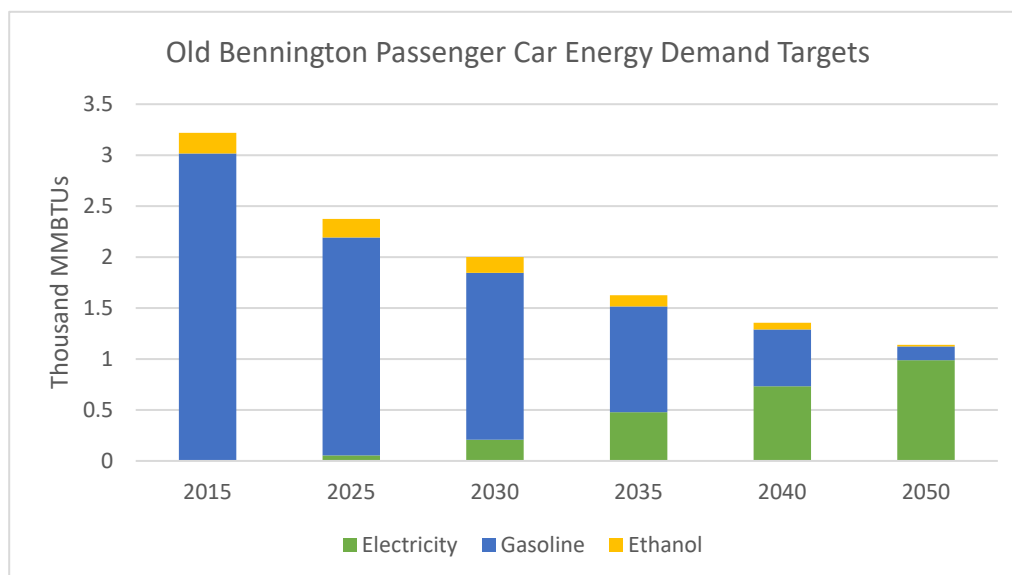


Table 7: Old Bennington EV Targets disaggregated from CAP Mitigation LEAP Projections for the Town of Bennington

YEAR	2025	2030	2035	2040	2050
# of EVs	3	13	30	47	70

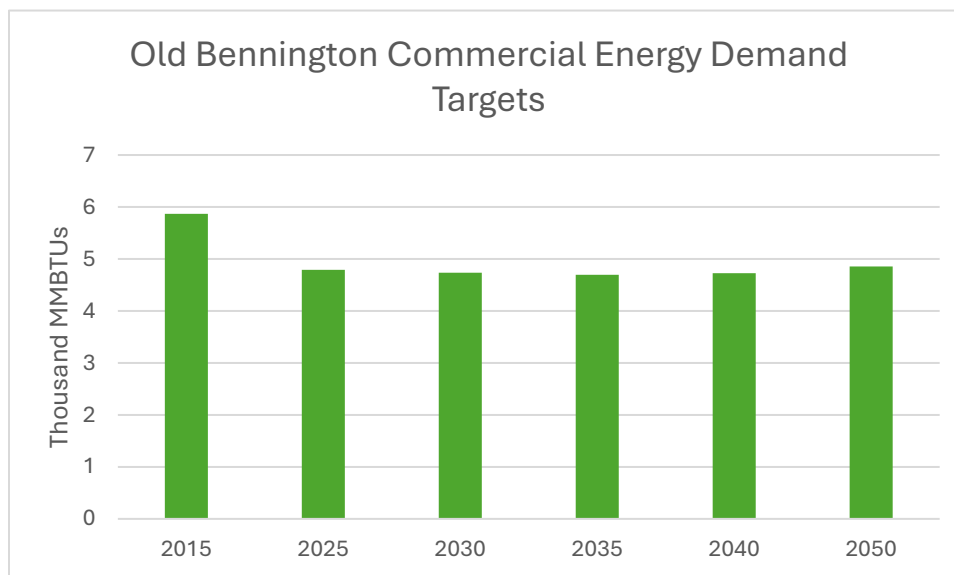
Access to reliable and affordable transportation is important for people’s ability to access jobs, services, and participate in their communities. The transition to more efficient forms of transportation should include not only widespread EV adoption, but also improvements to other methods of transportation. Improving transportation alternatives to single-passenger vehicles, such as public transit, sidewalks, and shared-use paths, helps to reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions, and improves equity for those who do not have access to a vehicle (as well as those who cannot or would prefer not to drive). For more information on Old Bennington’s biking and pedestrian facilities see the Transportation Chapter. Land use regulations that encourage clustered development in walkable town and village centers can also help reduce the need for single-passenger vehicle trips and make goods and services more accessible to people without the ability or desire to drive.

Commercial Energy Use

For the purposes of analysis and target-setting this plan assumes that there are seven commercial buildings (i.e. non-residential) in Old Bennington: the Bennington Museum, Monument Elementary School, the Bennington Battle Monument and gift shop, the Barn at Monument Circle, the Four Chimneys, the Old First Church, and Sonatina Piano.

The CAP Mitigation LEAP scenario targets project that commercial energy use will decrease slightly from 2015 levels through conservation and adoption of more efficient technologies, but the decrease will not be as substantial as in the residential sector (Figure 8.)

Figure 8. Old Bennington Commercial Energy Demand Targets disaggregated from CAP Mitigation LEAP Projections for the Town of Bennington.



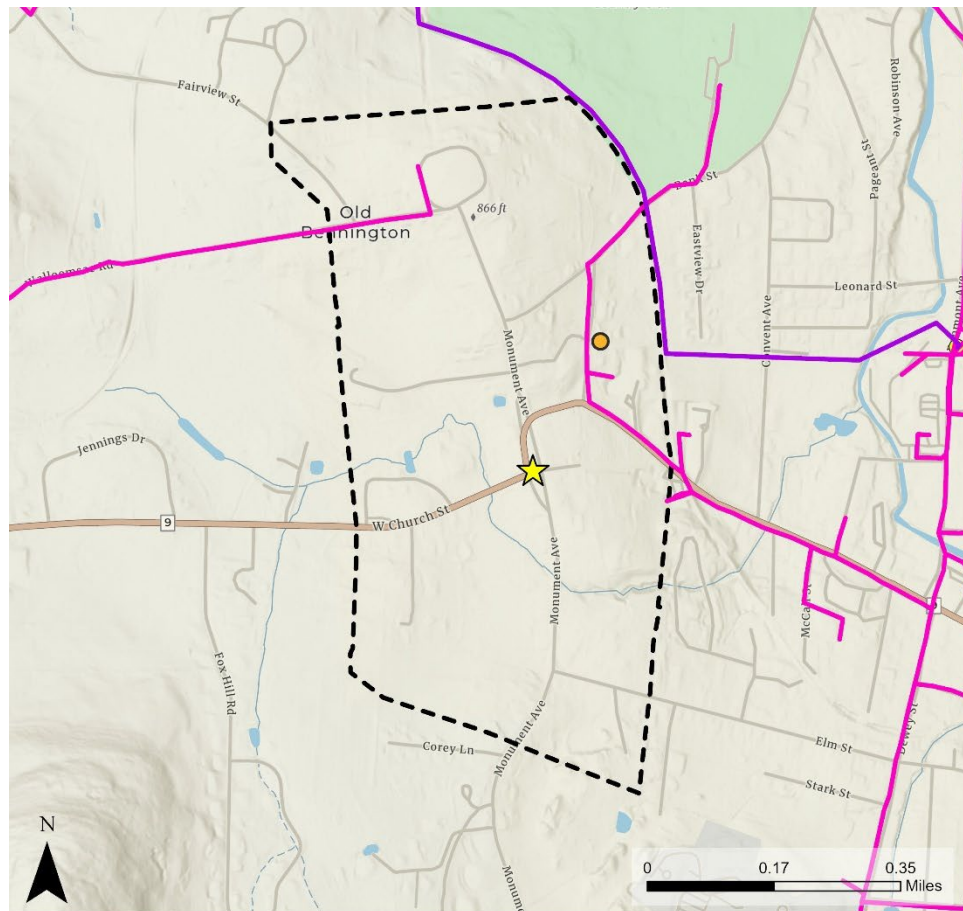
Cold-climate electric heat pumps will play a major role in lowering overall energy consumption in the commercial sector as well as the residential sector. Energy conservation goals will also be realized by extensive weatherization of commercial buildings. Because there are so few commercial buildings in the village, and future commercial development is expected to be very limited, using the LEAP model to disaggregate heat pump and weatherization targets is not helpful in this case because the targets are unrealistically high. The existing commercial buildings in the village should consider weatherization and cold climate heat pump installation as appropriate. All new commercial development must follow the [Commercial Building Energy Standards](#).

Municipal Energy Use

The Village of Old Bennington does not own any buildings or vehicles, so municipal energy use is very low and opportunities for conservation are limited. The Village's main energy expenditure is electricity for streetlighting which amounted to an average of \$4,819 per year from 2023 to 2025. Many of Old Bennington's municipal services, such as road maintenance and policing, are contracted with the Town of Bennington and the Village of North Bennington. Old Bennington can play an educational role for residents and businesses by posting energy conservation and efficiency resources on the Village website. Additionally, the Town of Bennington has an active Energy Committee, which provides educational resources and information to residents and businesses, including those in Old Bennington. Residents of Old Bennington are eligible to serve on the Bennington Energy Committee.

Local Renewable Energy Generation

Map 8. Existing Renewable Generation Resources



Village of Old Bennington, Vermont Existing Distributed Generation Resources

- Type of Generation Facility
- Ground-mounted PV
 - Phase 3 Distribution
 - Transmission
 - Electric Substations

- Village of Old Bennington
- Old First Church

This map should be used for general reference and planning purposes only.

Source: BCRC

Prepared by Bennington County
Regional Commission, April 2026



According to the Department of Public Service, there is currently about 15kW of distributed renewable energy generation in Old Bennington. All of this capacity comes from residential solar installations.

Mapping Renewable Resource Areas

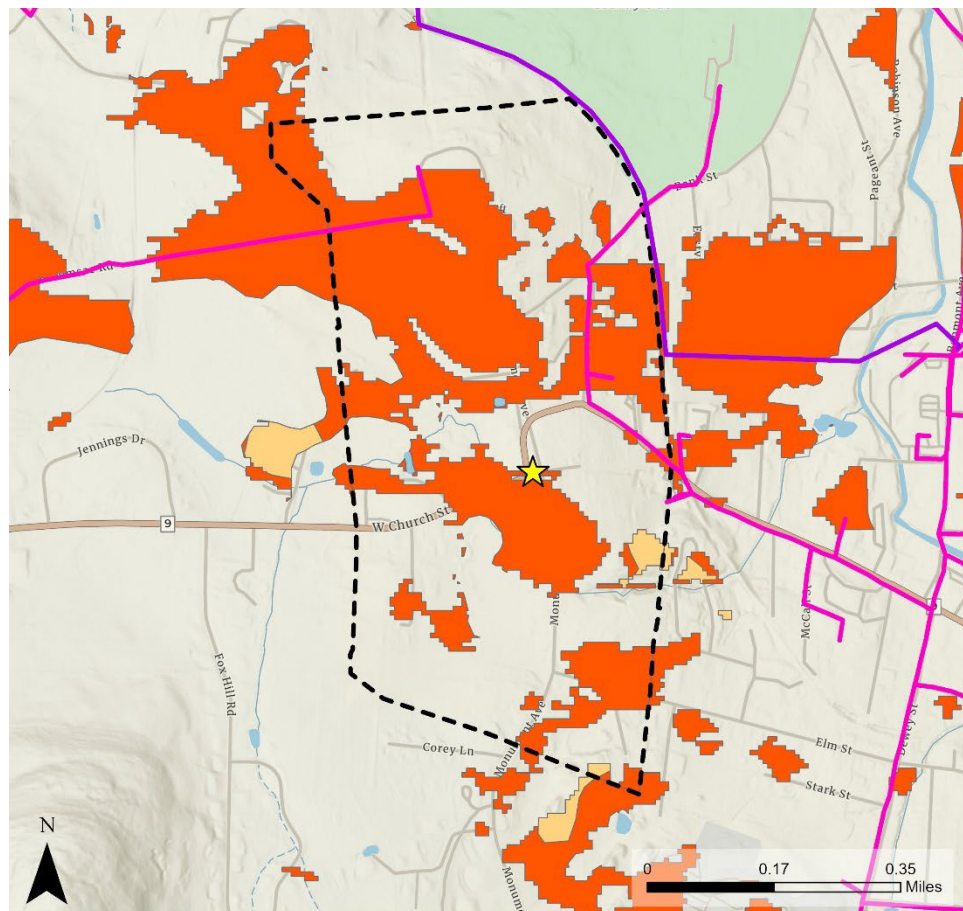
The following map analyses, which comply with Act 174 standards for renewable resource mapping (for more details, see the Bennington Regional Plan), are intended to provide information about renewable resource availability in the town. Maps were generated using GIS data layers developed by the VT Center for Geographic Information (VCGI).

Renewable resource layers were mapped, and then ‘Known Constraints’ (vernal pools; river corridors; floodways; state significant natural communities and rare, threatened, and endangered species; national wilderness areas, and class 1 and 2 wetlands) were removed entirely from available resource areas. Habitat blocks were also removed from available resource areas.

Then ‘Possible Constraints’ (VT agriculturally important soils; special flood hazard areas; protected lands; deer wintering areas; conservation design highest priority forest blocks; and hydric soils) were overlapped with renewable resources to highlight where there are potential complications for developing generation facilities.

Remaining resource areas that do not overlap with any environmental constraints are considered ‘Prime’ resource areas, and resource areas that overlap with Possible Constraints are considered ‘Secondary’ resource areas.

Map 9. Potential Solar Resources



**Village of Old Bennington, Vermont
Solar Resources**

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Solar Potential | Village of Old Bennington |
| Prime (No Constraints) | Old First Church |
| Secondary (Possible Constraints) | |
| Phase 3 Distribution | |
| Transmission | |

This map should be used for general reference and planning purposes only.

Source: BCRC

Prepared by Bennington County
Regional Commission, April 2026



This energy chapter establishes renewable energy generation targets for the years 2025, 2035, and 2050 (Table 5). The targets were disaggregated from the Town of Bennington solar targets using Old Bennington's percentage of available land acres for solar development relative to the total land availability in the Town of Bennington. These targets can largely be met through the installation of several small residential solar arrays (<15kW) that are either roof-mounted or ground-mounted with sufficient vegetative screening.

Table 8. Old Bennington Solar Generation Targets

2025	2035	2050
168 kW	378 kW	556 kW

Wind

There are no prime or secondary wind resource areas in Old Bennington. Per 24 V.S.A. § 4412 residential wind turbines with blades less than 20 feet in diameter are appropriate as long as sufficient vegetative screening is in place. Wind turbines with blade diameters larger than 20 feet are not appropriate in Old Bennington. All wind development must comply with the State's turbine noise standards and environmental regulations.

Hydro

There are no existing hydroelectric sites in Old Bennington. Due to environmental regulations and resource availability, it is highly unlikely that new dams or hydro sites will be developed in Old Bennington.

Biomass

This plan does not support the development of new large-scale biomass facilities for electricity generation in the village. Small biomass heating systems, such as wood or pellet boilers and stoves, installed at individual businesses and residences are acceptable.

Goals

- Make efficient use of energy, provide for the development of renewable energy resources, and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.

Actions and Policies

- The Village should promote local residential and commercial efficiency and conservation improvements through informational resources on the Village website and engagement with the Bennington Energy Committee.
- Old Bennington's zoning bylaws should promote compact, historical development patterns.
- The Village should ensure all municipal infrastructure continues to be evaluated on a regular basis to identify opportunities for efficiency improvements and renewable energy generation and use.
- The land use administrator should ensure new development in Old Bennington adheres to the state mandated Residential Building Energy Standard or Commercial Building Energy Standard.
- Old Bennington's zoning bylaws should encourage site planning to take advantage of a site's solar resource potential, and to accommodate multiple transportation modes through the Site Plan and Subdivision Review processes.
- The Village should work with the Bennington Energy Committee to coordinate presentations and local conversations that promote residential energy efficiency and conservation through the following programs: weatherization and technology incentives available through Efficiency VT and Green Mountain Power; energy audits and weatherization assistance provided by the Bennington Rutland Opportunity Council (BROC) and NeighborWorks of Western Vermont

(NWWVT). Providing information on programs that assist low-income residents should be prioritized.

- The Village should work with the Bennington Energy Committee to promote commercial energy efficiency and conservation through the following methods and programs: encouraging businesses to take advantage of weatherization and technology incentives available through Efficiency VT and Green Mountain Power; encouraging businesses to complete energy audits; encourage businesses to install EV charging infrastructure and promote carpooling and alternative commuting methods for employees.
- The Planning Commission intends to enhance existing screening policies in the Village's bylaws.

Community + Economic Development

Present Economic Conditions

Old Bennington is an important center of historical tourism in southwestern Vermont as well as nearby communities in New York and Massachusetts. Old Bennington has a few local businesses, including some home occupations, but the economic strength of the village continues to lie in its various historical attractions and its proximity to the Capital District of New York and the Berkshires. The village should continue to capitalize on these assets and look for opportunities to promote sustainable tourism.

Many visitors come to the Bennington Region to visit the Bennington Museum, the Bennington Battle Monument, and the Old First Church, or to take the historic walking tour along Monument Avenue. In this way, the village contributes to the economy of the Town of Bennington and the greater region, as many of the tourists who come to experience the history of Old Bennington will explore other regional attractions and patronize businesses in the Town of Bennington and beyond.

Although Old Bennington has few businesses within the village, the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the expansion of high-speed broadband internet, have led to significant increases in remote work, allowing many people to live in Old Bennington while working for employers located elsewhere. According to 2024 ACS 5-year estimates, approximately 47% of workers in Old Bennington work remotely, which is slightly higher than the Town of Bennington (39%) and more than twice the rate for Bennington County (21%).

The largest employment industries in Old Bennington have consistently been health care and social services (46% of workers), which is consistent with the Town of Bennington and Bennington County.

The village has an employment rate of approximately 62%, which is slightly higher than both the Town of Bennington and Bennington County. 86% of Old Bennington workers work for an employer located in Vermont.

Location, Type, and Scale of Desired Economic Development

Limited commercial development is anticipated in Old Bennington. It is expected that economic development in the village will primarily consist of a modest expansion of tourism-focused amenities and home occupations.

A home occupation or home-based business occurs when a resident uses a small portion of their home for an occupation that does not adversely affect the residential character of the area. Home occupations are protected in state statute (24 V.S.A. § 4412) and allow for modest, non-disruptive economic activity in residential areas.

Expansion of tourist amenities could include the addition of new hospitality services in the village, such as restaurants or lodging, or expanding/improving historical signage and wayfinding throughout the village. Any development or expansion of tourist amenities should not adversely affect the residential and historic character of the village.

Opportunities exist to foster community and economic development in Old Bennington through the restoration of historic structures. One example of this is the restoration of the Walloomsac Inn into a working inn, a project that has received broad community support.

Old Bennington values its status as a regional tourism destination, which is primarily driven by its historic character and attractions. The Village will continue to prioritize the protection and preservation of these historic assets, so that they can continue to be enjoyed by both residents and visitors for years to come.

Policies, Projects, and Programs to Foster Economic Growth

Goals

- Support a strong and diverse economy that provides satisfying and rewarding job opportunities and that maintains high environmental standards, and expand economic opportunities in areas with high unemployment or low per capita incomes.

Actions and Policies

- Support the continuation of existing businesses in Old Bennington.
- Continue to invest in the protection and restoration of historic resources that make Old Bennington an attractive place to visit.
- In cooperation with the Town of Bennington, promote the Village as a regional tourist destination.
- Oppose commercial development that detracts from the residential and historic character of the village

Climate Resilience

Flood Hazard and River Corridor Areas

Due to its elevation, there are no Special Flood Hazard Areas mapped in Old Bennington. The village has no rivers or significant streams, and no significant upland forests or river corridors, however, flooding in Jennings Brook occurs intermittently during especially wet seasons and some residents have experienced drainage issues on their property.

Following the immediate response to a natural disaster, communities are often faced with significant costs. After a federally declared disaster, qualified losses may be reimbursed through the federal [Public Assistance](#) program supplemented by the [Vermont Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund](#) (ERAF).

The Vermont ERAF program provides state funds to communities after a declared disaster to cover a portion of the cost of repair and restoration work not covered by federal funds. Communities receive a greater amount of state funding if they have taken specific steps to reduce the current risk (an additional 5% for steps 1–4, below, and another 5% for also implementing step 5, below):

- Participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).
- Adopt road and bridge standards that meet or exceed the 2013 template in the current [VTrans Orange Book: A Handbook for Local Officials](#).
- Adopt a Local Emergency Management Plan (LEMP) annually after Town Meeting Day and before May 1.
- Adopt a FEMA- or Vermont Emergency Management-approved Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP).
- Adoption of River Corridor Bylaws, or enrollment in the FEMA Community Rating System (CRS).

Old Bennington is currently only eligible for the base ERAF rate of 7.5%

Other Climate Hazards

Extreme Heat

As climate change intensifies, extreme heat events are projected to increase in Bennington and throughout Vermont. Currently Vermont has an average of seven hot days per year (87°F or hotter), but climate modeling conducted by the University of Vermont projects that Vermont will experience 15–20 hot days per year by mid-century, and 20–34 hot days annually by the end of the century. Children, seniors, and people with disabilities are especially vulnerable to extreme heat. Outdoor workers, the unhoused, and people without access to air conditioning are also disproportionately impacted by extreme heat events. Extreme heat not only affects public health, but it can also stress critical infrastructure, including the electric grid. The Bennington Local Emergency Management Plan, which covers Old Bennington, now includes procedures for responding to extreme heat events.

The effects of extreme heat on human health can be mitigated by the presence of shade trees and vegetation. Old Bennington has ample tree coverage and prioritizes the care and maintenance of its trees. However, extreme heat events are still a concern, especially due to the significant proportion of children

and older residents (22.5% and 31% respectively), and the ubiquity of older homes that may lack adequate cooling and weatherization.

Wildfires

While there have been no recent wildfires in the vicinity of Old Bennington, the village's elevation and high winds may exacerbate wildfire risk, especially during prolonged dry periods. In both forested and open settings, structures may be threatened by even small wildfires. Wildland-urban interface (WUI) areas are the most likely areas where resources will be needed to suppress wildland fire and to reduce potential hazards. The WUI can be either interface or intermix areas. Interface areas are areas where housing is located near wildland vegetation. Intermix areas are where housing and vegetation intermingle. According to the US Department of Agriculture, in 2020 Vermont had 70.6% of housing units located in the WUI. The majority of Old Bennington, with the exception of the area around the Monument, is either in the intermix or interface zone. Wildfire risks in Old Bennington could be further explored in a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP).



Figure 9. WUI image of Old Bennington showing intermix (left) and interface (right).

Local Hazard Mitigation Planning

The village is covered by the Town of Bennington's Local Emergency Management Plan (LEMP) by a Memorandum of Understanding with the Town of Bennington. The Emergency Management Director (EMD) for the Town of Bennington also serves as the EMD for Old Bennington. This arrangement should be continued.

Old Bennington is not covered by the Town of Bennington's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) and does not have a current LHMP as of the adoption of this municipal plan.

Goals

- Encourage flood resilient communities.
 - The protection and restoration of floodplains and upland forested areas that attenuate and moderate flooding and fluvial erosion should be encouraged.
 - Flood emergency preparedness and response planning should be encouraged.
- Equitably distribute environmental benefits and burdens.

Actions and Policies

- Continue the arrangement with the Town of Bennington to be covered by Town's LEMP and EMD.
- Pursue development of a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- Maintain the existing tree canopy in the village, and identify potential locations to plant new trees
- Encourages public participation in the Regional Emergency Management Committee

Compatibility Statement

The Planning Commission, in preparing this plan, recognizes that Old Bennington does not exist in isolation, but functions within a larger region that extends beyond Bennington County.

Town of Bennington

The Village of Old Bennington lies totally within the Town of Bennington. The eastern boundary of the village meets up with the western end of Bennington's planned growth area. Although land use regulations in Bennington's core allow for greater density and a wider variety of uses than what would be appropriate for Old Bennington, the alignment at this boundary is compatible, with the presence of the Bennington Museum and Monument Elementary School, as well as the residential areas on Bank Street and Elm Street. The western, northern, and southern boundaries of the village also align well with the land uses on the town side, which are largely low-density residential or open space.

There is considerable overlap between Old Bennington and the Town of Bennington when it comes to aspects of governance, including tax assessment, shared representation on municipal boards, and voting locations.

As the largest municipality in the county, the Town of Bennington is a hub for employment, education, commerce, and community for the region, and the village benefits from close proximity to these myriad amenities. The village's approach to economic development is intended to complement—not compete with—the town's role as a robust economic center.

Village of North Bennington

The Village of North Bennington is another incorporated village within the boundaries of the Town of Bennington. As a small village-style of government within the same larger town, North Bennington is a valuable resource and partner for Old Bennington. Collaboration with North Bennington's road foremen, for example, has been helpful support for Old Bennington's efforts to maintain and repair local roads. While the two villages do not directly share a boundary, both may benefit from continued partnership.

Region

While Old Bennington is unique, the village has much in common with its neighbors. Old Bennington is connected by a shared history, family, community and economic ties, local roads and communication networks, and development trends that are affecting the entire region.

The densities and pattern of development deemed appropriate in this plan are consistent with the Bennington Regional Plan adopted by the Bennington County Regional Commission. The Village's commitment to retain its historic nature and pattern of settlement is consistent both with Bennington's town plan and the regional plan, as well as state policy.

Old Bennington will continue to participate in coordinated local and regional planning efforts with neighboring municipalities, and through the Bennington County Regional Commission and other regional groups as appropriate.

Goals

- To maintain a coordinated and comprehensive municipal planning program.

- To seek the participation of local residents and property owners in an ongoing planning process, including plan implementation.
- To consider the use of local resources and consequences of growth and development on the community, the region, and the state.

Actions and Policies

- The Planning Commission, appointed by the Village Trustees, will be responsible for overseeing local planning initiatives.
- The Planning Commission will provide opportunities for Old Bennington residents and property owners to participate in local planning efforts through open meetings, public forums and hearings, and an annual report to the community.
- Old Bennington will actively participate in coordinated, regional planning efforts through its appointed representatives to the Bennington County Regional Commission and other regional groups.
- All proposed development, plans, and public policies that could affect the Village of Old Bennington should be reviewed for conformance with the Village Plan.

Implementation Program

- See **Implementation Matrix**

Old Bennington Implementation Matrix 2026

Plan Chapter	Type	Text	Potential Partners
Historic & Natural Resources	Goal	Identify, protect, and preserve important natural and historic features of Old Bennington's landscape, including: significant natural and fragile areas; outstanding water resources; significant scenic roads, waterways, and views; and important historic structures, sites, or districts, archaeological sites, and archaeologically sensitive areas.	
	Goal	Maintain and improve the quality of air, water, wildlife, forests, and other land resources.	
	Goal	Provide for the wise and efficient use of natural resources and the proper restoration and preservation of the aesthetic qualities of the village.	
	Goal	Encourage and strengthen low-impact agricultural practices.	
	Policy	Support the preservation of historic structures in the village	Preservation Trust of VT; VT Division for Historic Preservation
	Policy	Maintain Design Review Standards.	
	Action	Share educational resources about the history of Old Bennington through Village communication channels.	Bennington Museum; Bennington Historical Society
	Action	Promote Bennington Historical Society programs and events that pertain to Old Bennington.	Bennington Historical Society
	Action	Work proactively with state officials to maintain/restore the Bennington Monument and grounds.	VT Dept. of Housing & Community Development
	Policy	Support watershed partners and municipalities to prioritize stormwater projects in Basin 1.	VT Dept. of Environmental Conservation, Bennington County Conservation District
Land Use	Policy	Consider the scope of agricultural practices that would be acceptable in the village as part of a future zoning bylaw update.	
	Policy	The use of locally-grown food products should be encouraged.	
	Policy	Sound agricultural management practices should be encouraged.	Bennington County Conservation District
	Goal	Plan development so as to maintain the historic settlement pattern of a compact village center	
	Goal	Development should be undertaken in accordance with smart growth principles.	
	Action	Update the Village's land use regulations to ensure adequate and appropriate implementation of the developmental goals and objectives of the Village and compliance with state statutes.	Bennington County Regional Commission
	Goal	Ensure the availability of safe and affordable housing for all Vermonters.	

Old Bennington Implementation Matrix 2026

Housing	Policy	Housing should be encouraged to meet the needs of a diversity of social and income groups, particularly for those citizens of low and moderate income, and consistent with housing targets provided for by the regional planning commission	
	Policy	New and rehabilitated housing should be safe, sanitary, located conveniently to employment and commercial centers, and coordinated with the provision of necessary public facilities and utilities	
	Policy	Sites for a variety of housing types should be readily available in locations similar to those generally used for single-family dwellings	
	Policy	Accessory dwelling units within or attached to single-family residences that provide affordable housing in close proximity to cost-effective care and supervision for relatives, elders, or persons who have a disability should be allowed	
	Policy	Support infill housing that aligns with the residential and historic character of the village.	
	Policy	Support the improvement of the existing housing stock to create new rental and homeownership opportunities for people of all income levels.	
Transportation	Goal	Support safe, convenient, economic, and energy efficient transportation systems that respect the integrity of the natural environment, including public transit options and paths for pedestrians and bicyclists.	
	Action	Collaborate with the Bennington County Regional Commission's transportation planners to identify the most impactful locations and interventions for traffic calming; implement those interventions.	Bennington County Regional Commission
	Action	Maintain and improve public roads as necessary to foster a safe neighborhood environment as envisioned in this plan.	
	Policy	Oppose widening the roadways beyond the existing paved portion of the road.	
	Action	Send a representative to participate in the BCRC's Transportation Advisory Committee to advocate for the transportation projects needed to further the objectives and policies of this plan.	BCRC
	Policy	Private roads, driveways, and access to public roads should be designed, constructed, and upgraded in accordance with the Village's adopted road policies and standards and land use regulations.	
	Action	Develop and maintain a policy regarding construction and maintenance of sidewalks along public roads	
	Policy	All roads defined as main arteries should have sidewalks.	
	Action	Review land use regulations to ensure adequate standards for access management, curb cuts, driveways, and roads to promote a safe and efficient transportation network	
	Action	The Village of Old Bennington should regularly review water runoff from roads, etc. to ensure adequate flow and prudent diversion. Inadequate culverts, etc. should be reconstructed or replaced wherever feasible.	

Old Bennington Implementation Matrix 2026

	Action	Ensure that stormwater run-off from developed land is managed at the source so it will not place an undue burden on public infrastructure.	
	Action	Support and contribute to the development of a stormwater master plan in Bennington	Town of Bennington
Utilities & Facilities	Goal	Plan for, finance, and provide an efficient system of public facilities and services to meet future needs.	
	Goal	Ensure the availability of safe and affordable childcare and integrate childcare issues into the planning process	
	Goal	Broaden access to educational and vocational training opportunities sufficient to ensure the full realization of the abilities of all Vermonters	
	Goal	Maintain and enhance recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. Public access to noncommercial outdoor recreational opportunities should be identified, provided, and protected wherever appropriate.	
	Policy	Both water and wastewater services should be extended until they reach those residents now dependent upon private wells and septic systems. New dwellings within 2000' of sewer lines must connect.	
	Action	Amend village ordinances to be in harmony with Bennington sewer ordinances	Town of Bennington
	Policy	Whenever and wherever possible, existing utility lines should be placed underground	
	Policy	Support provision of quality childcare, education, and recreation services so Old Bennington will be an attractive community for families	Town of Bennington
	Policy	Support the development of small licensed childcare facilities in the Village	
	Action	Ensure that the zoning bylaws incorporate provisions to guide and govern the appropriate placement of telecommunication antennas and tower structures.	
Energy	Goal	Make efficient use of energy, provide for the development of renewable energy resources, and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.	
		The Village should promote local residential and commercial efficiency and conservation	
	Action	improvements through informational resources on the Village website and engagement with the Bennington Energy Committee.	Bennington Energy Committee
	Policy	Old Bennington's zoning bylaws should promote compact, historical development patterns	
	Policy	The Village should ensure all municipal infrastructure continues to be evaluated on a regular basis to identify opportunities for efficiency improvements and renewable energy generation and use.	
	Action	The land use administrator should ensure new development in Old Bennington adheres to the state mandated Residential Building Energy Standard or Commercial Building Energy Standard.	
	Policy	Old Bennington's zoning bylaws should encourage site planning to take advantage of a site's solar resource potential, and to accommodate multiple transportation modes through the Site Plan and Subdivision Review processes.	

Old Bennington Implementation Matrix 2026

energy

Action	The Village should work with the Bennington Energy Committee to coordinate presentations and local conversations that promote residential energy efficiency and conservation through the following programs: weatherization and technology incentives available through Efficiency VT and Green Mountain Power; energy audits and weatherization assistance provided by the Bennington Rutland Opportunity Council (BROC) and NeighborWorks of Western Vermont (NWWVT). Providing information on programs that assist low-income residents should be prioritized.	Bennington Energy Committee
Action	The Village should work with the Bennington Energy Committee to promote commercial energy efficiency and conservation through the following methods and programs: encouraging businesses to take advantage of weatherization and technology incentives available through Efficiency VT and Green Mountain Power; encouraging businesses to complete energy audits; encourage businesses to install EV charging infrastructure and promote carpooling and alternative commuting methods for employees.	Bennington Energy Committee
Action	The Planning Commission intends to enhance existing screening policies in the Village's bylaws.	

Community & Economic Development	Goal	Support a strong and diverse economy that provides satisfying and rewarding job opportunities and that maintains high environmental standards, and expand economic opportunities in areas with high unemployment or low per capita incomes.	
	Policy	Support the continuation of existing businesses in Old Bennington.	
	Policy	Continue to invest in the protection and restoration of historic resources that make Old Bennington an attractive place to visit.	Preservation Trust of VT; VT Division for Historic Preservation
	Action	In cooperation with the Town of Bennington, promote the Village as a regional tourist destination	Town of Bennington
	Policy	Oppose commercial development that detracts from the residential and historic character of the village	

Climate Resilience	Goal	Encourage flood resilient communities. The protection and restoration of floodplains and upland forested areas that attenuate and moderate flooding and fluvial erosion should be encouraged. Flood emergency preparedness and response planning should be encouraged.	
	Action	Continue the arrangement with the Town of Bennington to be covered by Town's LEMP and EMD.	Town of Bennington
	Action	Pursue development of a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.	Bennington County Regional Commission, VT Emergency Management
	Action	Maintain the existing tree canopy in the village, and identify potential locations to plant new trees	Vermont Urban & Community Forestry Program

Old Bennington Implementation Matrix 2026

	Action Encourages public participation in the Regional Emergency Management Committee	Bennington County Regional Commission, VT Emergency Management
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	Goal To maintain a coordinated and comprehensive municipal planning program.	
	Goal To seek the participation of local residents and property owners in an ongoing planning process, including plan implementation.	
	Goal To consider the use of local resources and consequences of growth and development on the community, the region, and the state.	
Implementation	Policy The Planning Commission, appointed by the Village Trustees, will be responsible for overseeing local planning initiatives.	
	The Planning Commission will provide opportunities for Old Bennington residents and property owners to participate in local planning efforts through open meetings, public forums and hearings, and an annual report to the community.	
	Action Old Bennington will actively participate in coordinated, regional planning efforts through its appointed representatives to the Bennington County Regional Commission and other regional groups.	BCRC
	Policy All proposed development, plans, and public policies that could affect the Village of Old Bennington should be reviewed for conformance with the Village Plan.	

Appendix A: Community Engagement Results

Community Engagement Process

This plan is informed by input from community members gathered during an extensive public engagement process which included historic walking tours, a community visioning meeting, a student postcard activity and a survey.

Walking Tours

Working with the BCRC and Bennington Historical Society, the Village hosted a series of historic walking tours on Monument Avenue. The tours were held on a single day in October, with three time slots available. Volunteers from the Bennington Historical Society led the tours, highlighting Old Bennington's history as a mixed-use commercial and residential area and the many historic homes along Monument Avenue. All of the tours concluded at the historic home of a village resident where participants could learn about the village plan update and other ways to participate.

Community Visioning Meeting

In November 2025, BCRC facilitated a community visioning meeting at Monument Elementary School which was attended by 13 people. Attendees were organized into small groups to discuss four topic areas:

5. Transportation
6. Community Connections
7. Land Use
8. Historic Character

Participants were given two questions to respond to for each topic and write down their answers on a group "idea board". At the end of each topic discussion, participants had to write down their top priority for Old Bennington in that specific topic area; at the end of the meeting, they had to rank their four priorities from 1 to 4. Transportation topics were the most common #1 and #2 priorities, specifically concerns about speeding and lack of enforcement. The priority ranking results and idea board responses are included at the end of this appendix.

Postcard Activity

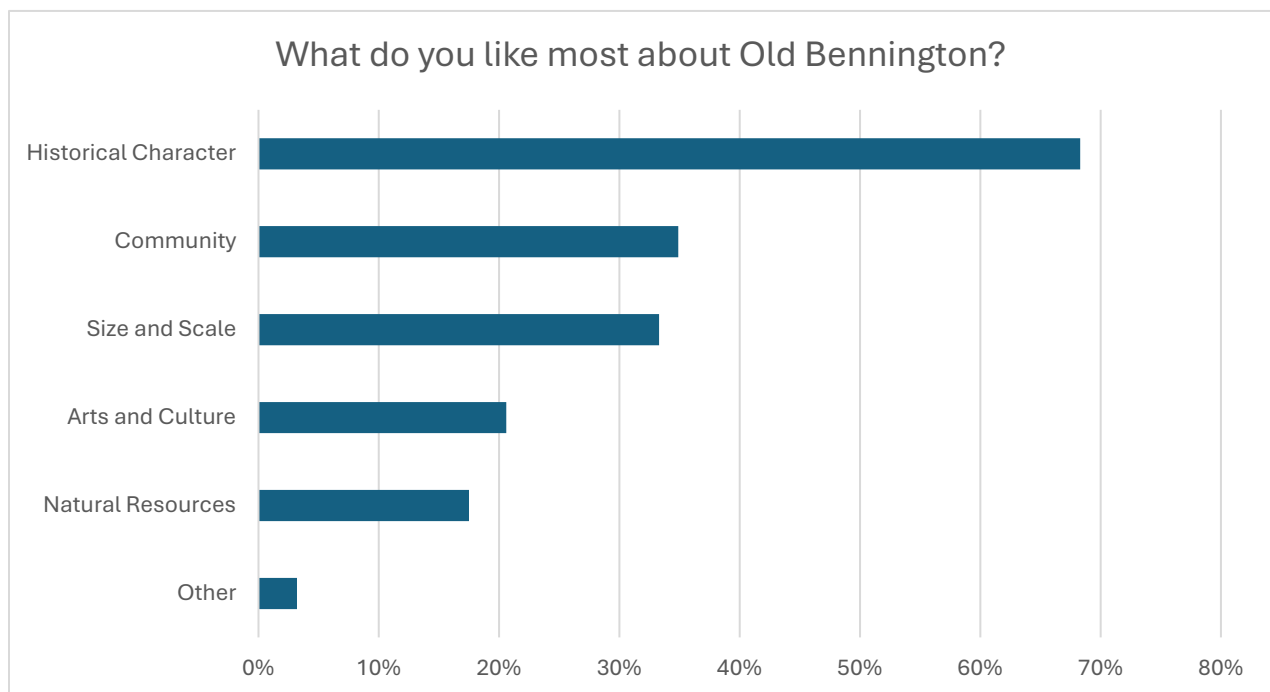
The Village engaged local youth through a postcard activity in partnership with Monument Elementary School. Staff from the BCRC attended a school assembly to explain the project and distribute postcards. Students were asked to draw or write their wish for Old Bennington on the postcard. 96 completed postcards were received, representing a broad range of wishes for the Village's future. Some of the wishes were more fantastical in nature, but many students expressed wishes for the Walloomsac Inn to be restored, more bike paths, and apple trees at the school.

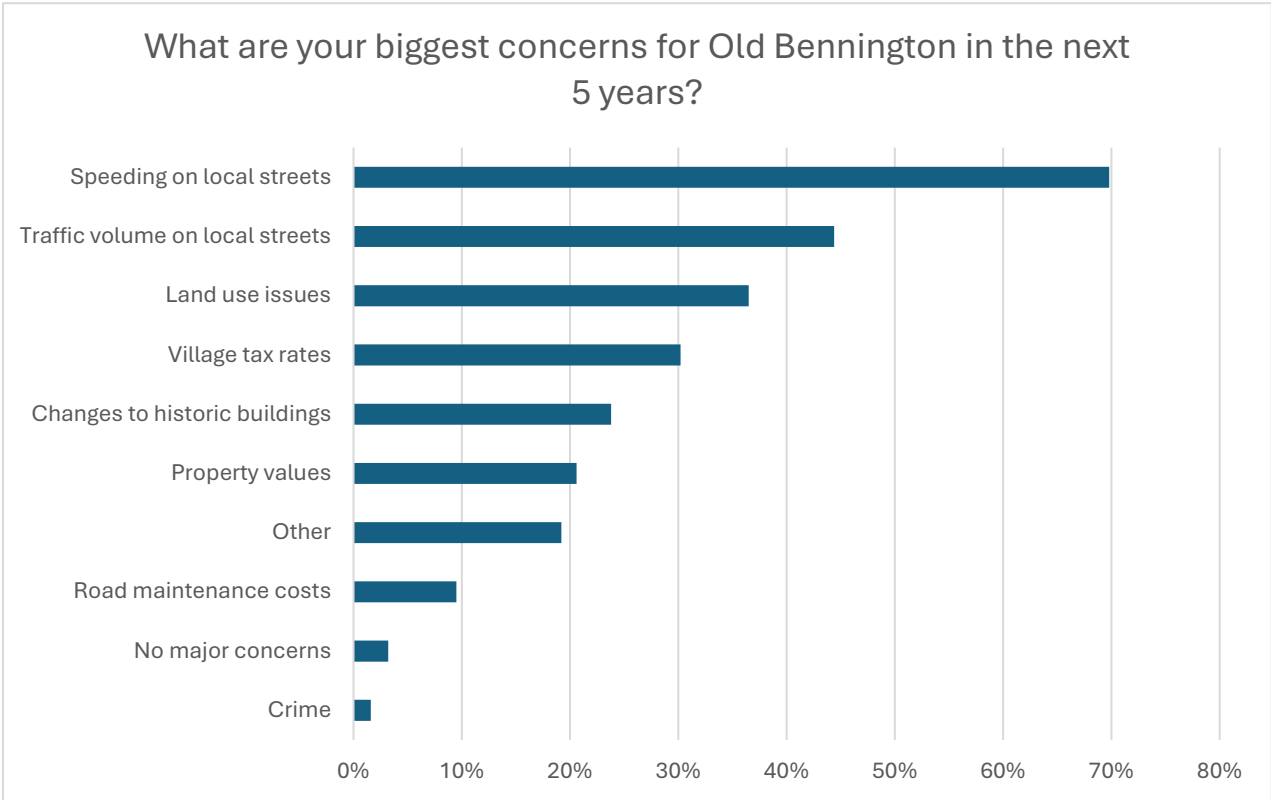
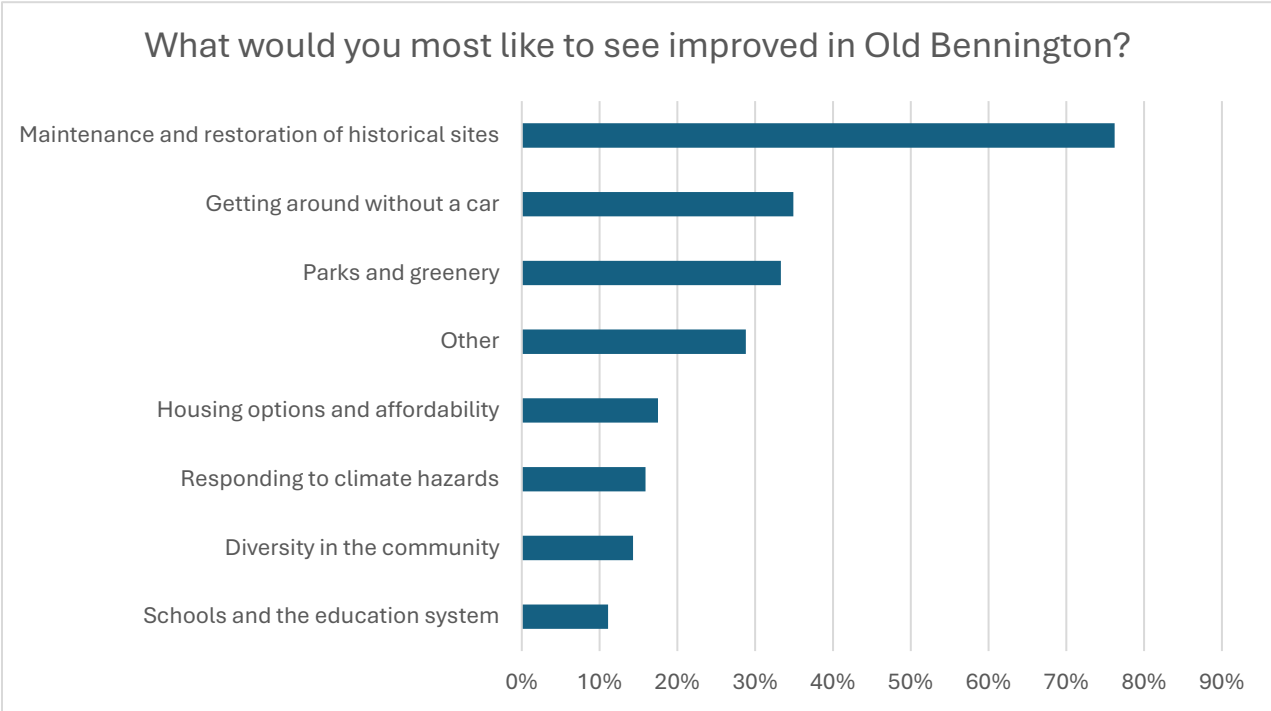
Student Postcard Themes	
Historic Character	4
Community Connections	3
Transportation	6
Land Use (General)	7
Land Use (commercial dev)	29
Public Facilities & Services	27
Miscellaneous	20
Total	96

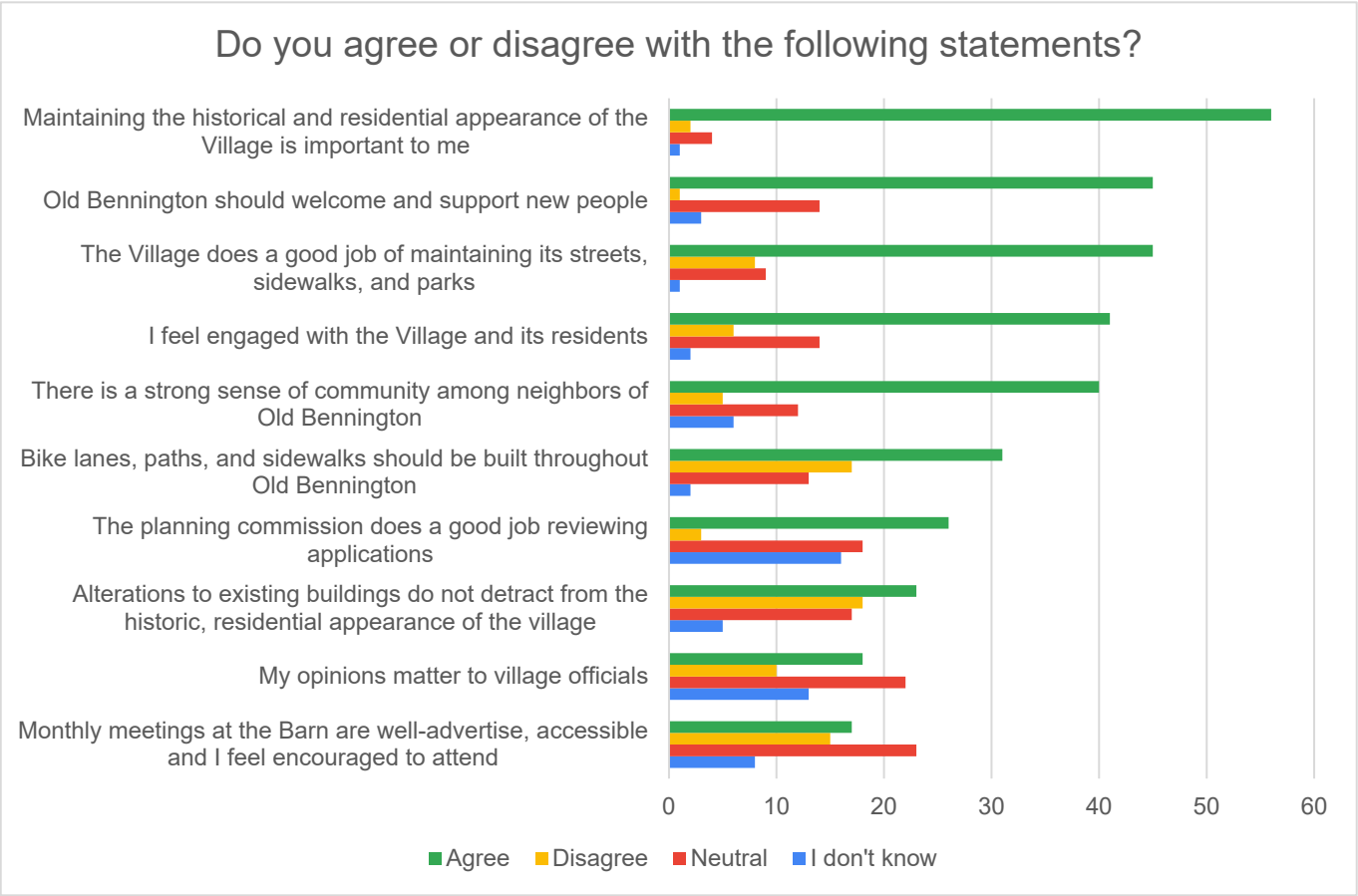
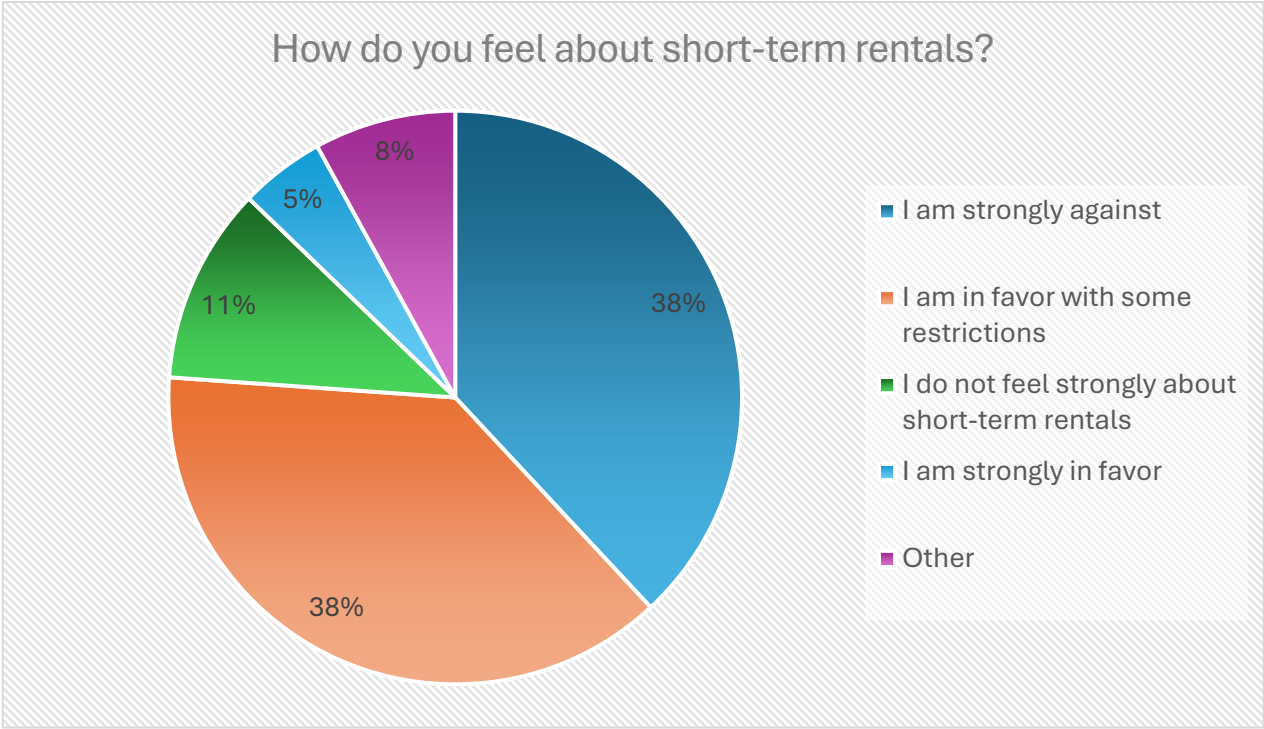
Survey Results

An online survey was available throughout the entire outreach period, with paper copies available in select locations and upon request. Members of the Planning Commission also went door-to-door distributing paper copies of the survey to residents. The survey received 64 responses, which were generally consistent with feedback received through the other engagement methods. The results of the survey can be found below, write-in responses are summarized into key themes.

Full Survey Results







What are three things that define Old Bennington for you?

1. History & Architecture
2. Iconic Landmarks
3. Quiet, residential character
4. Community & neighbor connections
5. Natural beauty & walkability
6. Variety of opinions regarding change and the future of Old Bennington

Have the benefits of living in Old Bennington changed in the last four years?

1. Traffic and speeding have worsened
2. Loss of police presence
3. Population/demographic shifts since the pandemic
4. General stability

Hopes for the future of Old Bennington:

1. Preserve historic character
2. Restore major landmarks
3. Improved traffic calming and safety
4. Balanced reuse of historic buildings
5. Limited small businesses
6. Community vitality & inclusion
7. Carefully managed tourism

What are your biggest concerns about Old Bennington in the next 5 years?

1. Speeding & traffic safety
2. Lack of police presence
3. Fear of losing residential and historic character
4. Infrastructure & maintenance issues
5. Lack of zoning clarity, consistent enforcement
6. High property taxes

Perceptions of safety in Old Bennington

1. People generally feel safe from crime, but not from speeding vehicles
2. Loss of police presence
3. People appreciate community vigilance, i.e. neighbors looking out for each other
4. Some concerns about minor crime and late-night activity especially at the Monument

What commercial developments would be suitable in the Village? How should the Village guide commercial development?

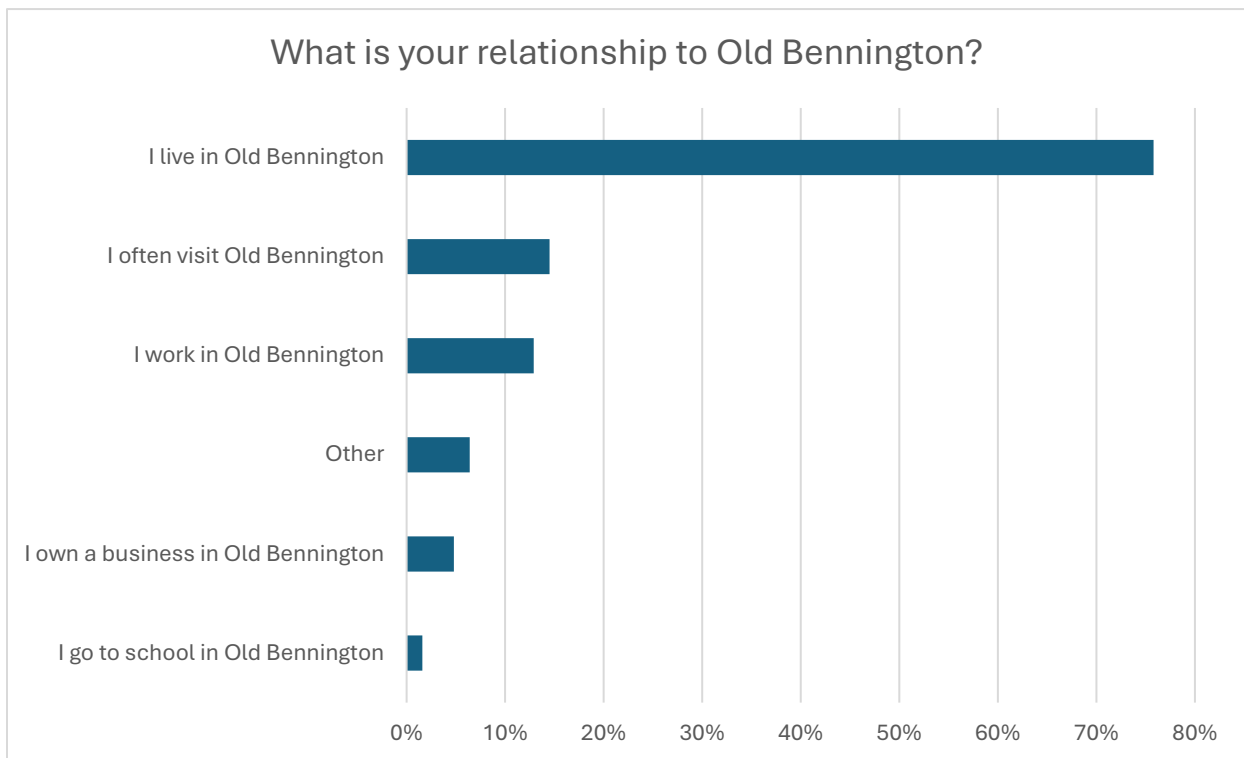
1. General opposition to most commercial development with the exception of the Walloomsac Inn
2. Any development should be small-scale, local, and preserve historic character
3. Concerns about traffic and parking pressures that commercial development would bring.

What can the planning commission do to improve its effectiveness for the Village?

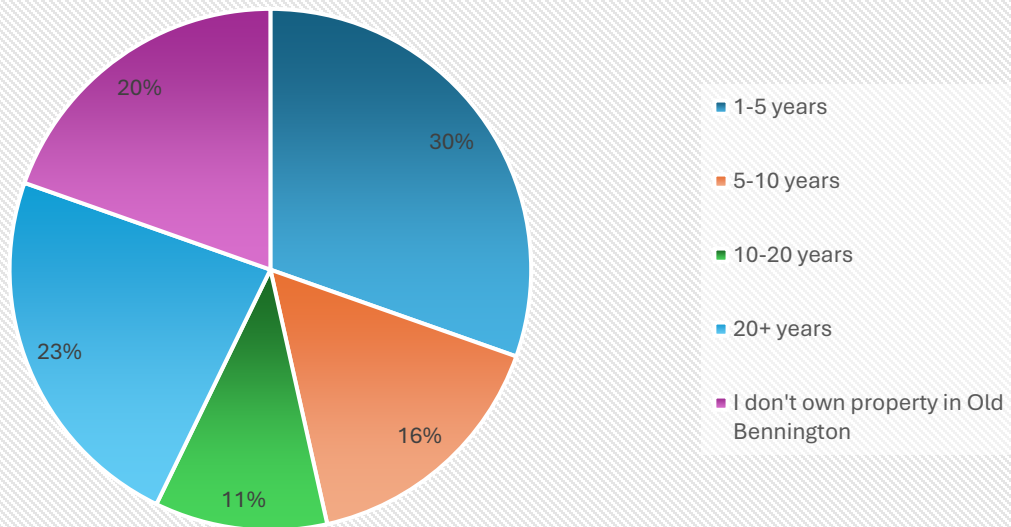
1. Consistent enforcement of land use regulations
2. Balance preservation with practicality
3. Land use regulations should be clear, easy to understand, and actively communicated
4. Historic expertise on Village boards/commissions
5. Support restoration

How should Old Bennington best incorporate solar panels?

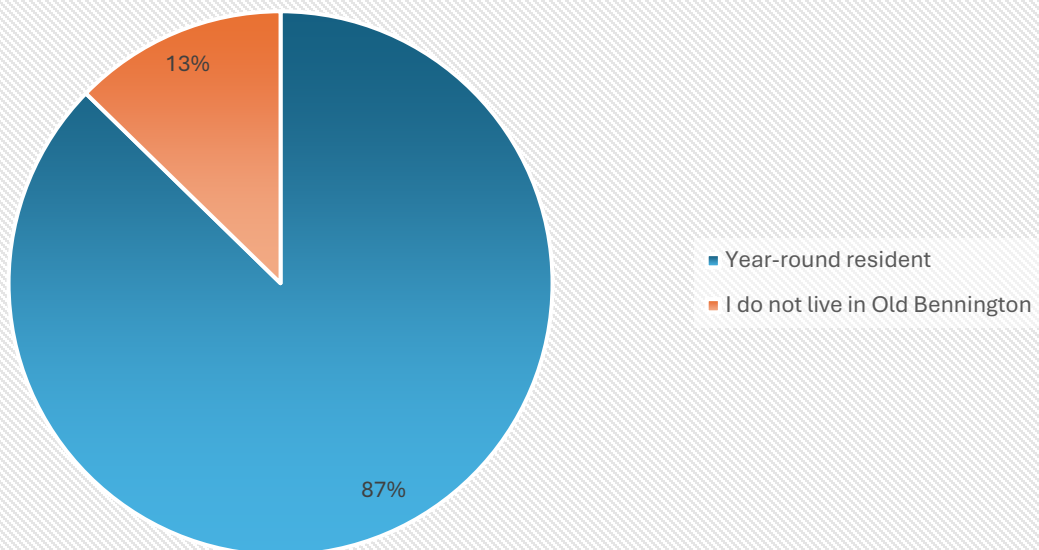
1. Proper screening is essential
2. Preference for rooftop vs. ground-mounted arrays
3. General support for renewable energy
4. Some frustration with existing poorly screened arrays

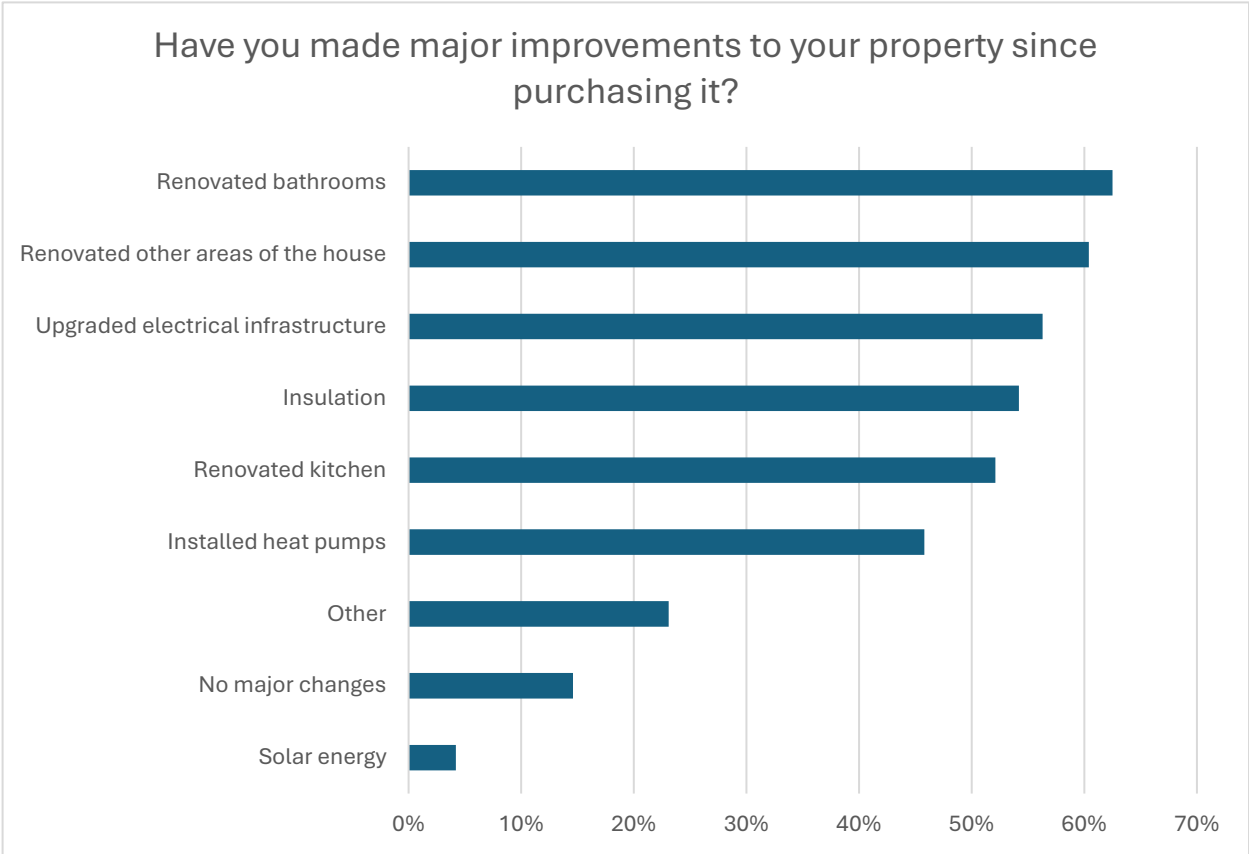
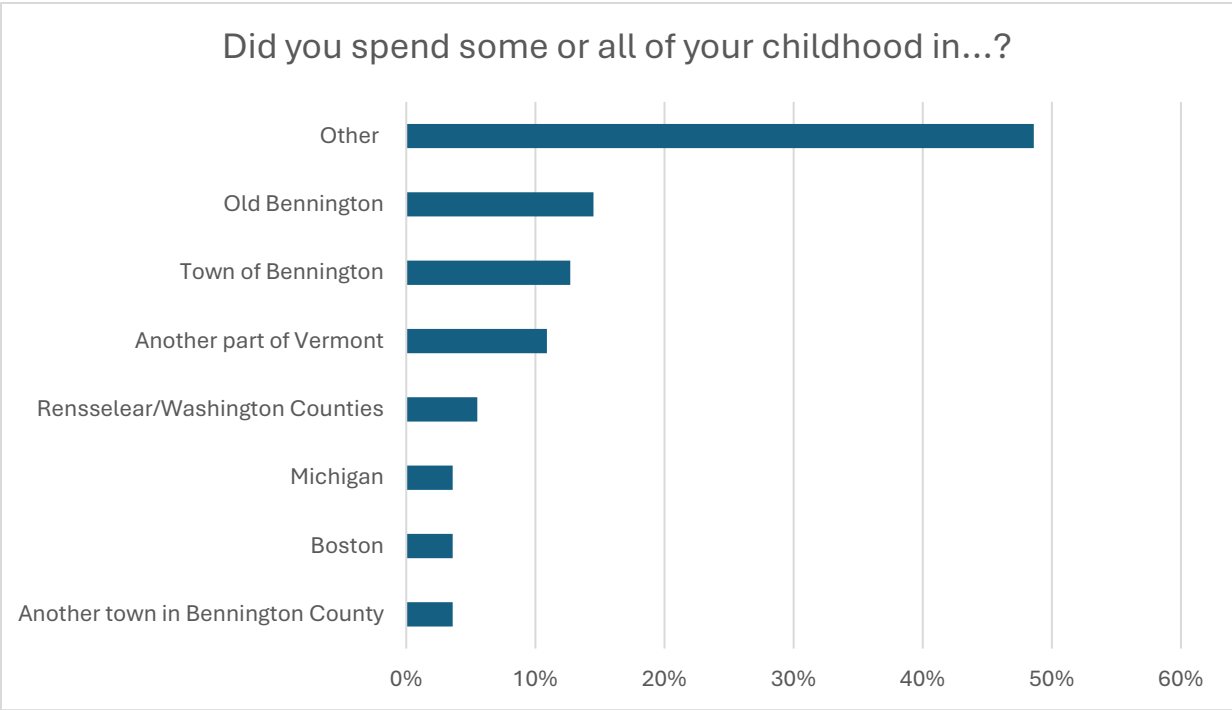


How long have you owned property in Old Bennington?

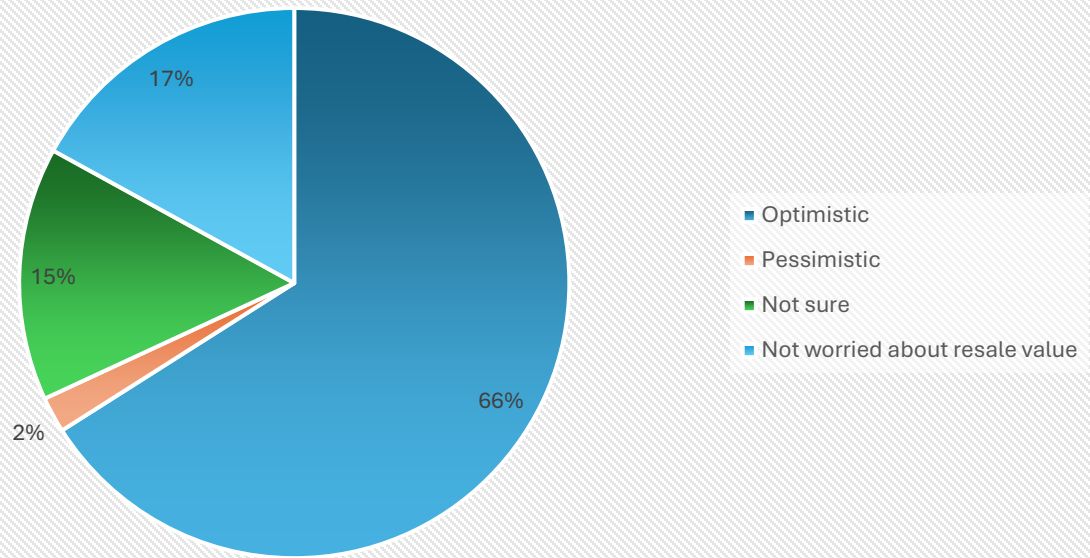


Are you a year-round or seasonal resident?

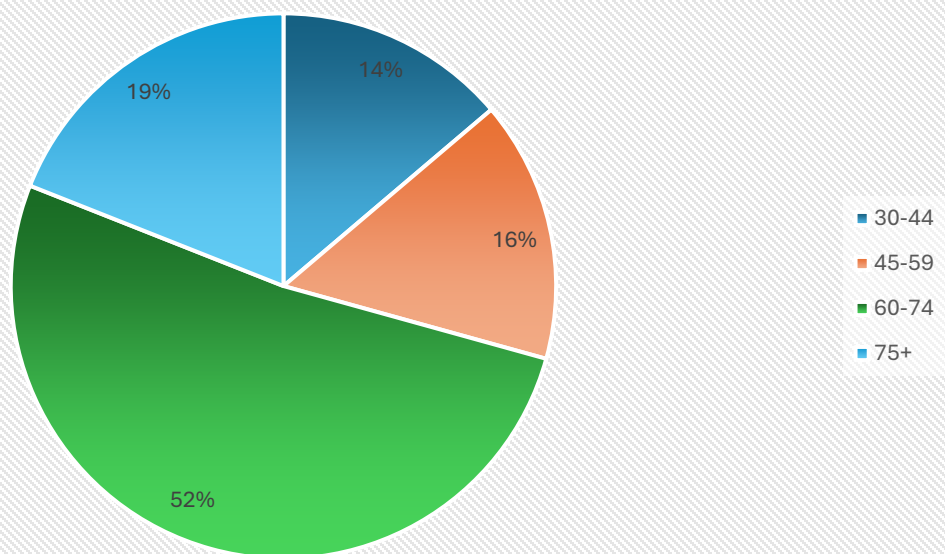




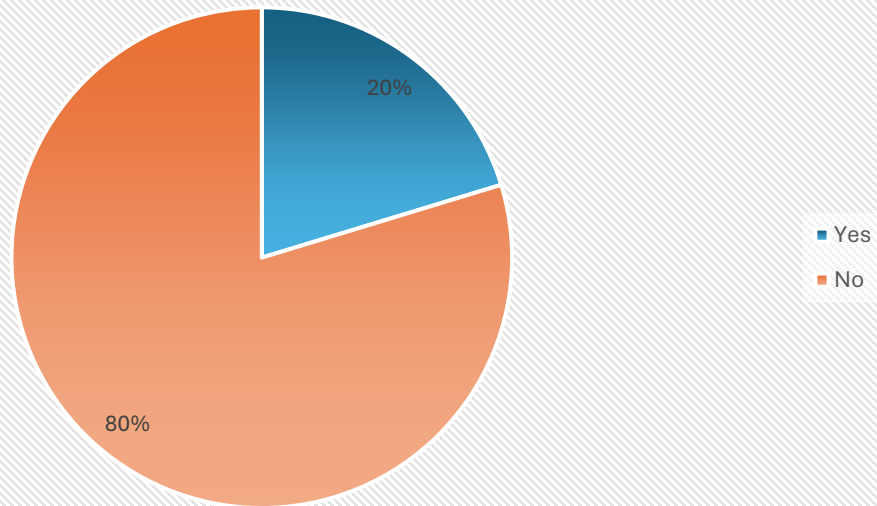
Are you generally optimistic or pessimistic about your home's resale value?



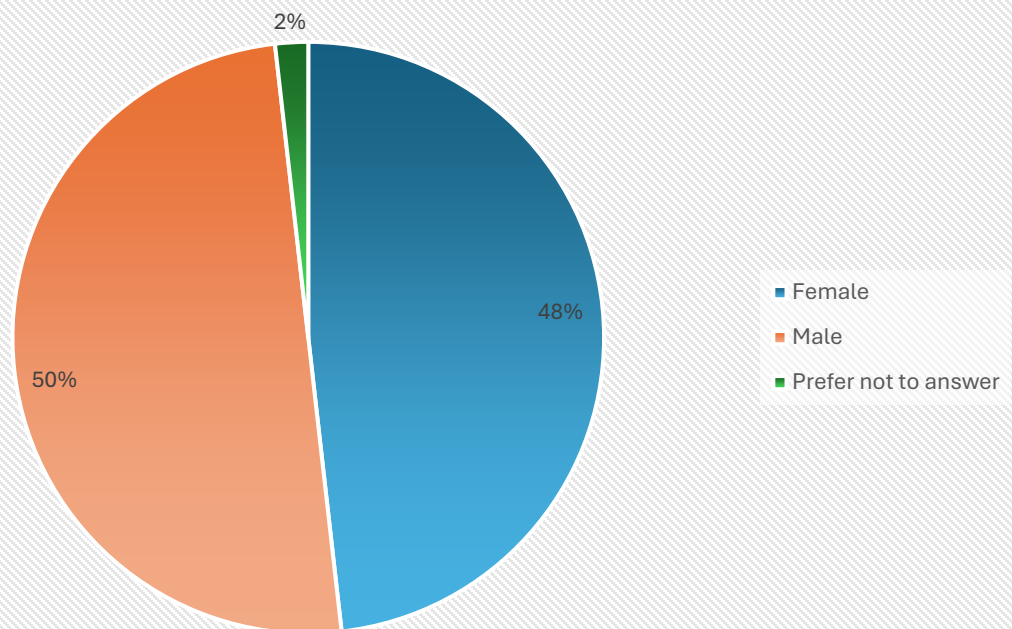
How old are you?



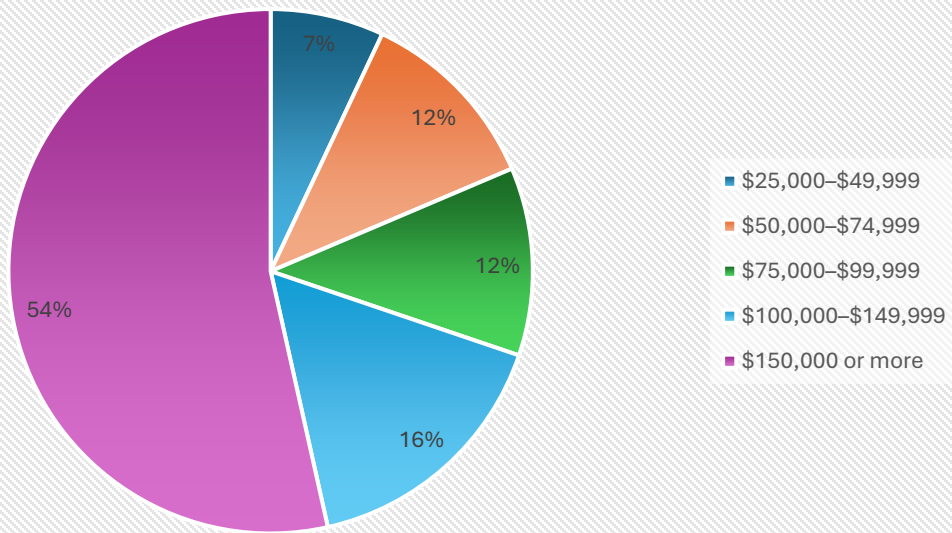
Do you have children at home under the age of 18?



What is your gender?



What is your annual household income?



Community Visioning Prioritization

Index Cards					
1st Priority	2nd Priority	3rd Priority	4th Priority		
Rehire police presence for traffic enforcement	Speeding + traffic enforcement	Redo the whole intersection at West Rd and Main St. It is incredibly dangerous! No crosswalk!	Lot size vs. HOME Act		Transportation
Traffic enforcement and speed enforcement, weight restriction on trucks	3-way stop sign at corner of Bank & Monument	Traffic calming, more sidewalks	Limit commercial development, Airbnb/short-term rental regulations		Community Connections
Speed control	Cars speeding through the village with no law enforcement - dangerous	Encourage private capital investment and commercial enterprise! Expand the tax base! If someone wants a small business, don't automatically say no	Wind farms		Land Use
Sidewalks in general; traffic speeding and crosswalks by the Walloomsac Inn	Need to enforce speed limits + think about hiring police	Zoning explained	Solar on non street sides of roofs		Historic Character
Enforce speed limits	Maintain historic integrity with any new housing development	How to address HOME Act	Historic designation is a huge advantage. Preserve & protect them in terms of streets & bylaws		
Speeding/traffic enforcement	Ban short-term rentals, commercial use	Historic looking ADUs over garages or barns	Regular newsletters (frequency TBD)		
More crosswalks and speed control	Walloosac Inn development - allow without unchecked expansion of commercial properties	Preserve historic character and communicate rules to the community	Update website to get people involved. Do 3 newsletters a year		
Keep current rural zoning - limit commercial development	Pay attention to bylaws/ordinance to preserve village character	Educate/communicate on bylaws + enforce infractions	Improve online communication beyond the current execution of oldbennington.org & Next Door		
Village should keep rural, residential zone to keep commercial entities limited	Keep houses painted white	Preserve existing buildings as they are	More residents at Village meetings		
Change the Walloomsac to commercial zoning	Figure out how to get people more interested in governance	If our bylaws require certain features, there should also be requirements for upkeep	Get more villagers to attend village meetings		
Preserve historic character	Community action on black spot disease in the trees - deal with it for all the old growth trees	Better communication from trustees on regular basis - website & print newsletter 3x year			
Preserve historic character		Regular communication with residents			
		Regular newsletter to residents			
		Action item - annual potluck meeting			
		I think it's okay as it			

LAND USE	
What are the biggest challenges facing Old Bennington in this topic area?	What strategies should the Village use to address these challenges?
Existing bylaws governing lot size vs. HOME Act rules states number of units/acre	Added land use protections
AirBnb/short term rental regulations	
Commercial use i.e. Seminary Lane & Walloomsac Inn	
Rezoning Village?	
HISTORIC CHARACTER	
What are the biggest challenges facing Old Bennington in this topic area?	What strategies should the Village use to address these challenges?
Pay attention to bylaws/ordinance - communication	Consider building codes, at least for interiors. We want to know what code issues are even governed by codes.
Solar - screened property/location: roof or ground mounts	
Signage into Old Bennington	
Preserve historic nature of the Village	
Solar arrays should be limited to non-visible rooftops	
Wind turbines	
Turbines in Jennings Brook	
TRANSPORTATION	
What are the biggest challenges facing Old Bennington in this topic area?	What strategies should the Village use to address these challenges?
Speeding & thru-traffic in the Village	Remove "shortcut" routes through Old Bennington
Road weight limits?	Hire sheriff for speed enforcement?
Traffic enforcement (police presence)	Speed cushions - Saratoga Springs has indentations instead of bumps. We should consider that! Snowplow won't get stuck
Noise from cars/motorcycles	Pester Google so Google Maps doesn't routinely send cars into the Village
Walking trail from Monument downhill (North)	Three-way stop sign at Bank & Monument

No right turn' better signage	Add crosswalks!
Fast traffic - no enforcement	
The big intersection on West Rd has no crosswalks. Not safe!	
Restore suspended law to make people pay their tickets	
Inadequate sidewalks - add one on the side that doesn't have sidewalks. Sidewalk also needed on Walloomsac Road, Fairview, Bank Street	
Bad visibility on the BIG intersection (by church)	
COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS	
What are the biggest challenges facing Old Bennington in this topic area?	What strategies should the Village use to address these challenges?
How to get more people to come to the monthly meetings	More frequent and regular information on Next Door
Maybe some people will have no interest in the routine business of the Village ever. They only come to certain meetings on hot topics	Resurrect newsletter (every 4 months?) - PC and trustees jointly
Planning communication - communication issues, website archaic	Direct mailing and electronically
	Regular communication
	Annual meeting - make it more "fun" with food/party

Appendix B: Statutory Requirements

Statutory Requirements

The HOME Act (2023) and Act 181 (2014) introduced state requirements to advance the equal treatment of housing in Vermont. In all areas where year-round single-unit homes are allowed:

- Duplexes must also be allowed
- Dimensional standards for duplexes cannot be more restrictive than for single-unit dwellings
- Dimensional standards for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) cannot be more restrictive than for single-unit dwellings

The village's connection to both public water and wastewater also means the land use and development regulations must allow certain minimum residential uses and densities (24 VSA 4412):

- 3- and 4-unit dwellings must be allowed as permitted uses
- Five or more dwelling units per acre for each allowed residential use
- Residential density and minimum lot size standards for multiunit dwelling (3 or more dwelling units in the same building) cannot be more restrictive than those for single-unit development
- Affordable housing (defined in statute) may exceed the density limit by 40%, which shall include exceeding maximum height limitations by one floor, provided that the structure complies with the Vermont Fire and Building Safety Code
- Cannot require more than one parking space per dwelling unit
- No zoning or subdivision bylaw shall have the effect of prohibiting unrelated occupants from residing in the same dwelling unit

Under state and federal law, some types of development that serve a larger public interest are afforded special protection or consideration under local land use regulations. The following uses cannot be excluded from the municipality, though most can be regulated, in a manner that is not exclusionary, under zoning:

- Public Facilities – including governmental, institutional, municipal, educational, religious, medical and solid and hazardous waste management facilities
- Accessory Dwellings – to existing single-unit dwellings
- Mobile Homes – which may be excluded only to the extent that other single-unit dwellings are excluded (e.g., from a particular district)
- Multi-unit Housing – including three or more units
- Group Homes – serving eight or fewer residents
- Mobile Home Parks – defined as three or more homes on a lot

- Home Occupations – that occupy a minor portion of a dwelling
- Home Child Care Facilities – serving 10 or fewer children
- Telecommunications Facilities – including telecom towers

A few other uses are specifically exempted from local regulation:

- Power generation and transmission facilities that are regulated by the Vermont Public Utility Commission – including wind turbines and solar arrays that are “net-metered,” (tied into the electric grid).
- Accepted agricultural practices as defined by the state – including the construction of farm structures, though local setback requirements generally apply, and
- Accepted management practices for silviculture (forestry) as defined by the state.