



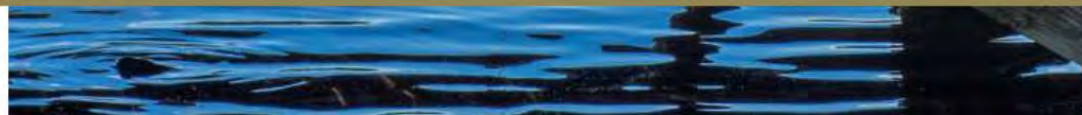
DALTON MASTER PLAN 2023

Vision and Goals for the Future of the Community



Adopted by Dalton
Planning Board 3/8/2023

... a small New England town
in the Great Northern Woods
of New Hampshire





i photo credits: Dalton Community Facebook Page, Town Website

A Vision for the Future

Dalton should remain an outstanding and desirable place to live, where the old country values and rural character of the town are preserved and enhanced, while allowing for thoughtful influx of businesses to the area. The town center is a center of civic and community life, with community gatherings and events for residents of all ages and visitors exploring Dalton's rich and robust outdoor recreation assets. Cottage industries continue to support Dalton residents and families and tourism has growth as an industry that capitalizes on Dalton's natural resources and beauty. Local regulations are simple and targeted at the most common concerns of Dalton's residents without detracting from each person's enjoyment of their property or adding significant burdens for enforcement. Dalton's rural character has been preserved, but better opportunities for seniors to age within the community have been identified as a priority, as well as ensuring greater affordability and access to housing for young adults and families. Residents come together to participate in and volunteer for community efforts and management and pride in the community continues to grow.

Table of Contents

A Vision for the Future	2
Introduction.....	5
Role of the Master Plan	5
The 2023 Update Process.....	5
Goals.....	6
Setting the Stage	7
Considerations for the Future	8
Community Connection Goals.....	10
Land Use	11
Introduction	11
Land Use Goals, Policies & Actions.....	11
Current Land Use	12
Future Land Use.....	17
Natural Resources	22
Introduction	22
Natural Resources Goals.....	22
Existing Conditions	23
Input & Analysis	29
Opportunities.....	30
Economic Development	39
Introduction	39
Economic Development Goals	39
Existing Conditions	40
Input & Analysis	44
Transportation	47
Introduction	47
Transportation Goals	47
Existing Conditions	49
Input & Analysis	56
Implementation Approach.....	57
Introduction	57
Appendix A: Outreach and Engagement Summary	62

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The 2023 Dalton Master Plan was a joint effort of the Dalton Planning Board, Town Staff, Community Members who participated in the update and community input opportunities, and the planning staff of North Country Council who served as the Master Plan consultant for Dalton.

A particular thank you to the community members who lent their voices and gave their input to this update. Thank you for your time and for sharing your hopes, concerns, and experiences at an outreach event, the survey, or a Planning Board meeting.

Planning Board Members

- Carl Lindquist, Chair
- Jo-Beth Dudley, Selectboard Representative
- Gal Potashnick, Member
- Steve Ordinetz, Member
- Terri Parks, Member
- Erik Nilsen, Alternate
- Adam Finkel, Alternate



Introduction

Role of the Master Plan

New Hampshire state laws (statutes) grant permission for municipalities to maintain and regularly update a Master Plan within RSA 674:2. The purpose of a Master Plan is to guide future growth, land use, and development. It is not a regulatory document, however the values, goals, and vision contained within it must be in place before a community can regulate subdivision or development of land. Master Plans give a big picture look at the community today and sets goals for the future based on the interests and needs of its citizens. Master Plans do not set requirements, instead they provide information that decision makers can use to inform actions and decisions of the town. This information is provided as data & local input.

The 2023 Update Process

The Dalton Planning Board started work on an update to the 2014 Master Plan in the fall of 2021.

The foundations of this master plan are the values and goals of Dalton citizens and property owners. The Planning Board worked with North Country Council to create an outreach and engagement strategy to reach a wide representation of the community. An online survey was launched for all residents and property owners, and input booths were set up at three (3) places in the community.



- In-Person Events:
 - 1 day at Town Square Fair & 2 Days at the Dalton Transfer Station
 - 39 people provided input
 - The events were advertised through press releases in local newspapers, shared posts on social media, and on the Town's website.
- Survey Responses:
 - 108 responses were received.
 - The survey was advertised through press releases, shared posts on social media, the Town's website, and through post card mailers sent to each registered voter and property owner in Dalton.

The Planning Board used the information received from residents and publicly available data on the Town's land use, resources, and the population to explore needs and opportunities for the community surrounding:

- Land Use
- Economic Development
- Transportation
- Natural Resources

Each topic was discussed at Planning Board meetings open to the public and the Board used discussion guides containing the input and information from outreach and research conducted by North Country Council. These guides and the discussion they framed form the basis of this Master Plan.

Goals

The goals listed below relate to the topics in this Master Plan. For more details, and the actions and policies which support them, explore each chapter of the plan and the implementation approach. They were developed input from people as the base, what data tells us, discussion of the Planning Board, and best practices.

Community Connection Goals

CC Goal 1	Provide robust opportunities for the community to come together and celebrate Dalton.
CC Goal 2	Improve the vibrancy and use of the town center as a gathering space for the community.
CC Goal 3	Increase civic connection, transparency, and relationships.

Land Use Goals

LU Goal 1	Ensure orderly development of land within Dalton.
LU Goal 2	Improve affordability, tie new residential development with land preservation.
LU Goal 3	Have sound regulations that promote health and diversity in Dalton.

Natural Resource Goals

NR Goal 1	Increase land protection, preservation and stewardship in the community.
NR Goal 2	Protect natural resources from inappropriate or hazardous development pressures.
NR Goal 3	Expand network of outdoor recreation assets and use of them.

Economic Development Goals

ED Goal 1	Support Dalton's tradition of cottage and home-based industries as the core of business activity in the rural dispersed community.
ED Goal 2	Improve access to high-speed internet within Dalton as a tool to increase markets for cottage industries, improve access to basic needs, education, training, health care, and social connection in the digital age.
ED Goal 3	Encourage business creation and growth unique to Dalton's unique resources and aspirations of its residents, such as agriculture, outdoor recreation businesses, restaurants and retail.

Transportation Goals

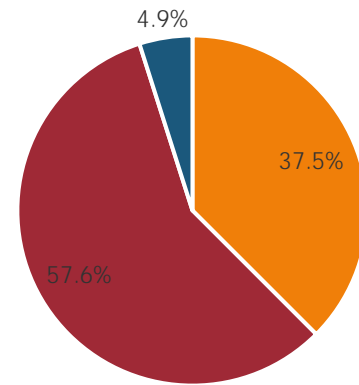
T Goal 1	Have a clearly marked, safe and well-connected network for on- and off-road bicycle and walking that allows residents and visitors to explore the varied terrain, views and landscapes in town.
T Goal 2	Promote ride-sharing as a tool to aid neighbors and reduce environmental impact. Residents commuting to work and seniors or those with mobility challenges will benefit from ride-sharing.
T Goal 3	Improve and strengthen the network of local roads by better understanding and planning for the costs of roadway maintenance and betterment projects.
T Goal 4	Improve and strengthen Dalton's transportation network of state numbered routes through regional and statewide engagement.
T Goal 5	Visually improve "gateways" into Dalton along major routes.

Setting the Stage

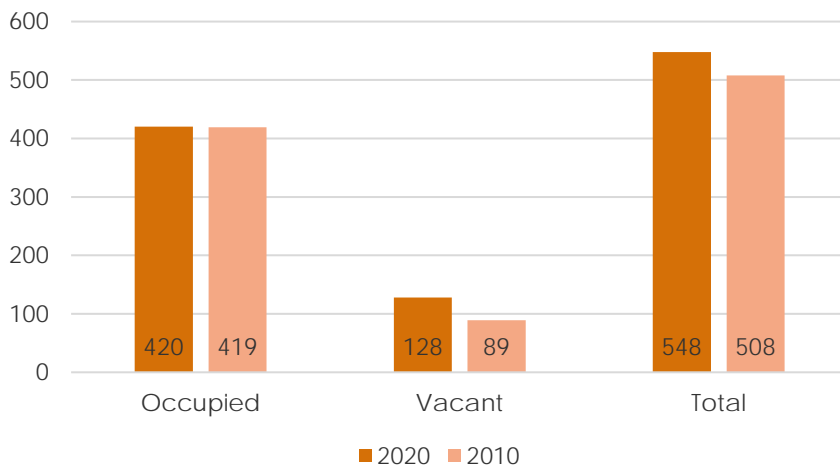
Dalton, NH is a relatively small rural community located along the banks of the Connecticut River directly east of the Moore Dam Reservoir in the White Mountain Region of northern New Hampshire. In 2020, the U.S. Census documented Dalton's population as 933 (down 4.7% from 2010).

Dalton's largest neighboring town and largest employer community is Littleton, NH. The towns of Whitefield and Lancaster, NH and St. Johnsbury, VT are also nearby and serve as employment centers.

Place of Work



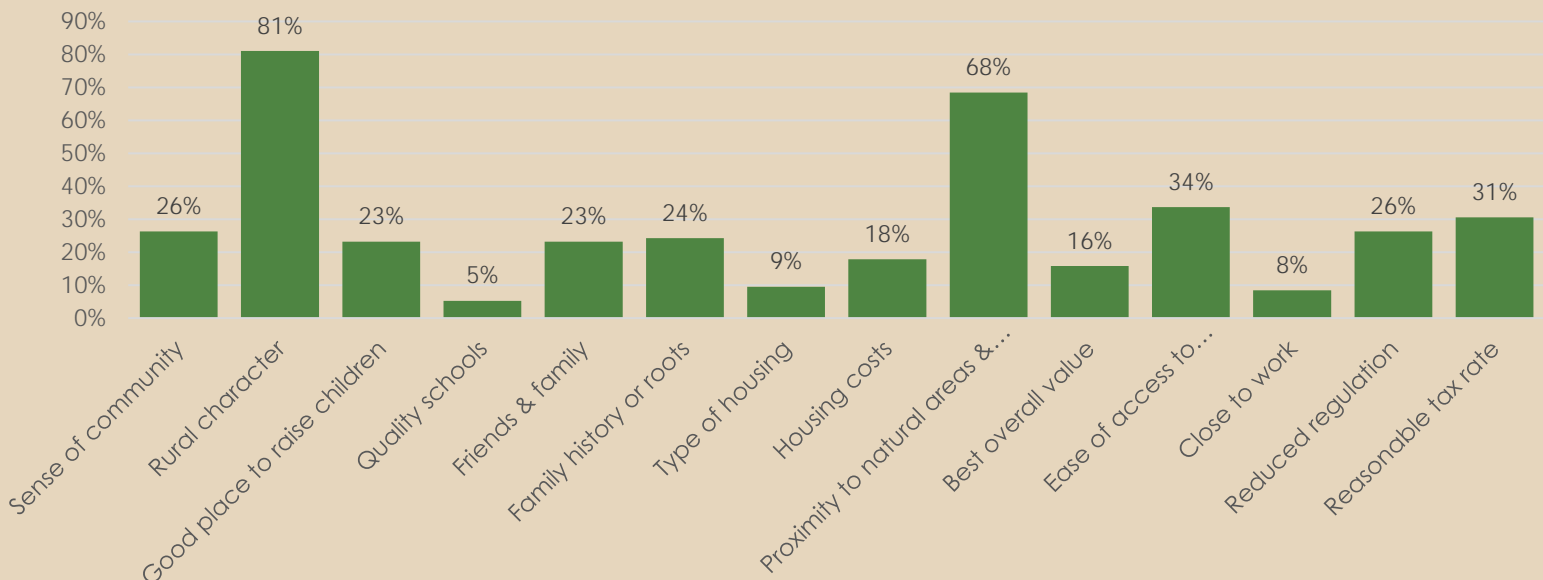
Occupancy of Housing



■ In County ■ Outside County ■ Outside State

Dalton has traditionally been a primary choice of residence in the area for people seeking a rural setting with reasonable property values and short commutes. In recent years Dalton has seen an influx of part-time homeowners, which can be seen through an increase in the total number of housing units during a period of population decline, and an accompanying jump in number of vacant housing units. (US Census).

Reasons why 2021 survey respondents live or run their business in town:



Town center is small and contains municipal offices, a town library, the former town hall which is now a historical society, and fire department. Respondents to the 2021 master plan survey expressed a desire to see the town center strengthened to serve as a hub for civic activities and increased use for community events. The most significant visible commercial cluster contains a general store with a gas station located at or near the intersection of Dalton Road (Route 135) and Bridge Hill (the road to Gilman VT). Of survey respondents interested in designating areas for commercial development, most desired to see such development located near these two areas, which both provide opportunities for mixed-uses where residences and services are in close proximity.

Industrial or commercial development has been limited in Dalton, and there is no area specifically designated for future commercial or industrial development today though there are several businesses interspersed among the residences and forested areas. Respondents to the 2021 master plan survey included 14 individuals who operate businesses in town, half of which have been in operation for more than 20 years. 25% were started within the last three (3) years. The presence and location of some businesses has created a conflict between those who desire property maintenance standards and limitations to reduce impacts to neighbors and property values and those who feel that there should continue to be little or no restriction on the use of private property. Today, there are a wide number of small or cottage businesses operating from homes and at dispersed locations in town. Most residents express support for small businesses, but are concerned about impacts from larger operations. The most significant business in terms of size in Dalton is the gravel and asphalt supply operation at the J W Chipping Gravel Pit which is located well away from most residential areas.

Rural character is a shared value of the community. When asked their “biggest hope” for the future of Dalton, 24% of respondents to the 2021 survey said their biggest hope was to see the community remain rural and largely unchanged. 71% of people who were interested in seeing new residential development expressed a preference for single-family homes and 26% were interested in seeing housing specifically for seniors. 21% did not want to see any new residential development. Today a very limited rental stock exists in Dalton, which may impact the number of young adults residing within the community. The average age of a Dalton resident is 53 years old, which is notably older than Coos County at 48 years, and the state of NH at 43. A population balanced in age is valuable in maintaining stability, continuity, and vibrancy of a community.

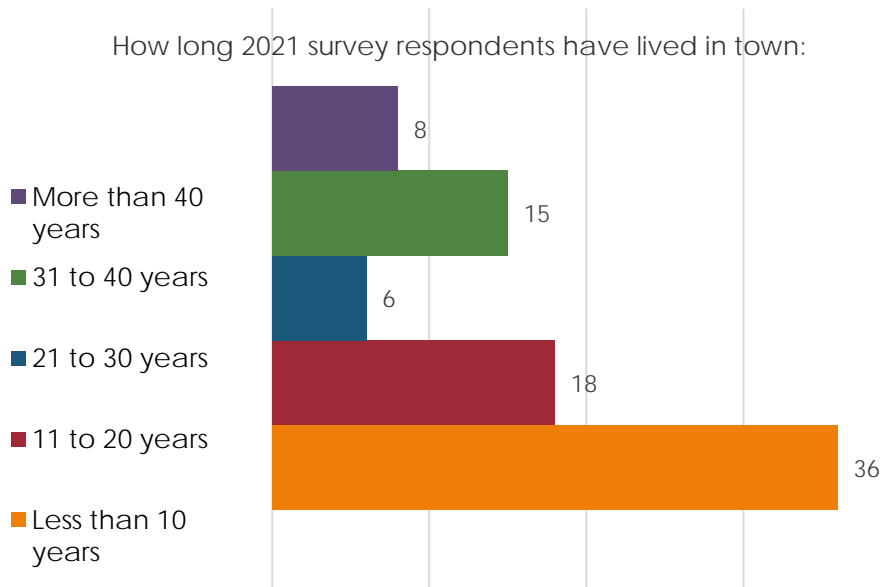
Many citizens who worry about the continued upward pressure on taxes see the value of commercial and light industrial development as a tool to diversify, stabilize, and potentially reduce residential tax burdens, but have expressed desire to segregating such uses. When asked about their concerns for the future of the community, many respondents to the 2021 survey expressed concerns surrounding the health and operation of small businesses. Dalton remains supportive of its small business traditions. Many respondents expressed strong desires to see limitations and restrictions on heavy industrial uses in Dalton and those often associated with high levels of pollution.

Considerations for the Future

The most defining shared value in the community of Dalton is a hope to preserve the community as an independently minded, rural, predominately residential community. Future encouragement or policies to promote industrial and commercial development in areas of the town must consider the desire of its citizens to maintain the essential rural lifestyle. '21 Survey results indicate modest support for commercial

development, but limited support for industrial uses/ Such areas should remain a secondary use of land within this residential community.

As the commercial expansion in the neighboring town of Littleton accelerates, remote work trends increase, and rural areas grow in popularity as observed during the COVID-19 pandemic, people will be attracted to the more relaxed, rural atmosphere and reasonable property values of Dalton as a place to live. Strategies to mitigate the impact of development and preserve the rural character of Dalton will require clear enforcement of and improvements the Town’s subdivision regulations to allow opportunities for growth based on the character and capacity of the land. Pressures for residential development may strain Dalton’s ability to maintain its relaxed rural character with limited regulation.



New residents gained through in-migration may increase the demand for services. Depending on the services demanded and/or the volume of population growth observed, continuing to provide adequate services may increase tax demands. Ensuring new residents understand and embrace the Dalton valued traditions and way of life will be important for maintaining neighborly relationships and civic health.

Planning and regulations in Dalton have always been limited. In the future it will be essential for residents to understand the purpose and role of regulations to protect the character of the town and continue to explore land use regulation as a tool for the community to reach its vision.

Residential use will remain predominately low-density as private wells and septic support all development in town. Opportunities to increase housing options (with a variety of price, size, and proximity to neighbors) should focus on small-scale development like accessory dwelling units and properties with more than one unit. While advances in engineering of wastewater systems, and large capacity wells, can support construction of multi-family housing and commercial uses it is likely development of this scale will be limited due to the costs of such systems. Small businesses suitable in areas without public infrastructure will continue to be the core of economic activity in Dalton. These cottage industry activities are common to rural residential settings. Identifying opportunities to help entrepreneurs and cottage business owners expand their operations and markets while remaining appropriate in scale to surrounding development can improve the livelihoods of residents.

Community Connection Goals

Community Connection Goal 1: Provide robust opportunities for the community to come together and celebrate Dalton.

CC Action 1.1 Bring back the Mud Run, and other events to build community connection.

CC Action 1.2 Explore additional opportunities to host, and/or provide space for community events in the Town Center and at park and natural resources areas such as river access points, and Forest Lake State Park.

Community Connection Goal 2: Improve the vibrancy and use of the town center as a gathering space for the community.

CC Action 2.1 Invest in public spaces in and around the town center to improve vibrancy and sense of community in Dalton.

CC Action 2.2 Promote use of public space, such as the Town Hall and the surrounding land for informal community gatherings.

Community Connection Goal 3: Increase civic connection, transparency, and relationships.

CC Action 3.1 Use the town website, and posting board at Town Hall, to share municipal materials.

CC Action 3.2 Encourage more residents, including newcomers and long-time locals, to participate and volunteer by posting municipal, and community support volunteer opportunities on the town website and Town Hall. Including but not limited to: Bioblitzes, Volunteer driver program, and municipal boards and committees.

Land Use

Introduction

The Master Plan can have a direct impact on the use of natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas and on the general character of the community. Additionally, it can affect roads and transportation, affordable housing in keeping with community standards, and include provisions for elderly or needy members of the community. The tax base, quality and cost of essential services such as schools, fire and police protection, and road maintenance can also be affected.

Change is the natural evolution that occurs over time in any community. In the past, shifts within the attitudes and expectations of the residents of Dalton influenced the rate and type of change observed. Today, the cost or value of land has been most influential in relation to Dalton's development pattern. While historically land was valued for its productive value as forest, currently the demand for affordable building sites is the driving development pressures through sub-division of land. Dalton's relatively low and stable tax rates, coupled with limited regulation of development may fuel land speculation at little risk to investors. The rate of change and increased development observed may begin to threaten the rural character of the community. The thoughtful governance of how land will be used is critical to a successful future for the Town of Dalton.

This Land Use section of the Master Plan evaluates the existing uses of land within the community today and considers the uses of land most suitable for Dalton moving forward based upon the opinions of residents and property owners put forward in the 2021 Master Plan outreach and engagement process.

As development pressures continue to grow in Dalton, the community will need to explore additional land use regulation. Locally, land use in Dalton is regulated through Subdivision Regulations adopted in 1984 with revisions through 2013 and enforced by the Planning Board. However, not all land is equally suitable for development due to natural factors such as slope, soil make-up, ground and surface water, and increases in development come along with greater opportunities for conflict between incompatible land uses. Dalton must understand and take all of these factors into consideration when planning for the future.

Land Use Goals, Policies & Actions

The table below lists goals (*aspirations*), actions (*tasks to accomplish*), and policies (*guiding principles*) related to land use and the municipality. For more detailed Actions check out the Implementation chapter.

Land Use Goal 1: Ensure orderly development of land within Dalton.

LU Action 1.1	Dalton will identify a strategy for the protection of land. Such a strategy would identify priority areas for protection based upon ecological value, access for public recreation, and eligibility for grant opportunities and other funding vehicles.
LU Action 1.2	Utilize a capital improvement planning process to identify needed investments in municipal assets such as town hall, road, fire and EMS, and transfer station needs.

LU Policy 1.1	Ensure that land regulations in Dalton provide reasonable and realistic opportunities for the development of workforce housing.
LU Policy 1.2	Support cottage business development as well as business or mixed-use growth along Routes 142 and 135.
LU Policy 1.3	Creation and tracking of outcomes and trends related to implementation of this plan will improve accountability and measure effectiveness of Master Plan efforts.

Land Use Goal 2: Improve affordability, tie new residential development with land protection.

LU Action 2.1	Audit the Dalton subdivision regulation to identify barriers to cost-efficient subdivisions and explore ways to encourage development sited with consideration of natural resources like conservation or cluster subdivisions.
LU Action 2.2	Audit the Dalton subdivision regulations to see if lot sizes and frontage requirements could be reduced, or road construction standards adjusted to reduce costs.
LU Policy 2.1	Encourage housing that meets the economic needs of Dalton’s workforce to preserve economic diversity and meet the requirements of NH’s workforce housing statute (RSA 674:58-61).

Land Use Goal 3: Have sound regulations that promote health and diversity of development in Dalton.

LU Policy 3.1	Dalton will continually evaluate the interests of its citizens and the impact of existing regulations on development of private property. Regulations will be supported by the community and reflect a history of property owner autonomy.
LU Policy 3.2	Dalton will educate property owners and residents on the role and purpose of Master Planning and land use regulation in order to promote informed decision making by the community.

Current Land Use

Residential. Dalton’s land use pattern is predominately residential. Due to the lack of water and wastewater infrastructure, residences have been primarily single-family homes scattered throughout the town. The Subdivision Regulations of Dalton require 2 acres of land for each parcel of land subdivided. These regulations also provide for minimum side (20 ft), front (50 ft), and rear (30 ft) setbacks between property lines and structures. The lot size minimums used align with the community’s desire to remain a principally low-density residential community. As of the 2020 census, there were 548 dwelling units in Dalton, increased from 508 in 2010. Of those dwelling units 128 are vacant and 420 are occupied. In NH vacant structures are most often seasonal, vacation, or occasional use homes, not abandoned.

Community Center. The town center contains the town hall; the municipal building where basic administrative offices are maintained including a library, the fire station, and a church. Police services are contracted by the state police. While these services are located in a centralized location, Dalton stakeholders feel there is opportunity to improve the function of this area of town. A classic town center with government, retail commercial and multi-unit dwellings, and the town common does not exist today;

however as time continues such a center, if developed, should be located around the historic town center. Opportunities exist to strengthen the town center through increased community and civic events as well as through mixed-use development including some smaller lot or multi-family housing development.

Commercial and Industrial. The vast majority of business operations in town operate from individual homes and are discussed here as cottage industries. As of 2020, there are 52 registered businesses in Dalton. Existing small businesses are sometimes viewed as a mixed blessing. The lack of land use regulations and enforceable standards to limit the impact of such businesses upon abutting residences causes conflicts between neighboring property owners. The town should consider the establishment of specified commercial, industrial, or mixed-use areas of town to control the possible impacts associated with accumulations of industrial or commercial equipment and their uses. Dalton may consider the establishment of property maintenance standards, applicable to all land uses, to mitigate the impact if such is needed. At the present time there are no limitations on business activity or where such uses can be located. This lack of separation has opened up conflict where heavy land uses associated with commercial or industrial use are not buffered from existing residential uses. This a natural outgrowth of how Dalton has evolved with limited regulation and a healthy number of home occupations and small businesses.

Recreational and Tourism. Dalton, by virtue of its location in the White Mountains and its close proximity to I-93, has become increasingly accessible to people who are seeking recreational opportunities in the woods, streams, ponds, and mountains of the area. Forest Lake not only has a growing number of year-round residents but is a prime summer camp location for both residents local to the area and visitors alike. Development has extended to formerly remote and sometimes inaccessible areas near the lake. This is making it more difficult to establish and enforce reasonable and sustainable building development controls and guidelines. New development can create an increasing burden on infrastructure and services alongside an increase in the community's tax base. At the same time tourism along the Connecticut and Johns Rivers, while a real potential, has yet to be developed as a resource for the town in terms of attracting tourism business. Future unfettered development in this remote, rustic, and rural area may attract the tourists seeking outdoor activities but may also threaten the rural nature of Dalton without limitation.

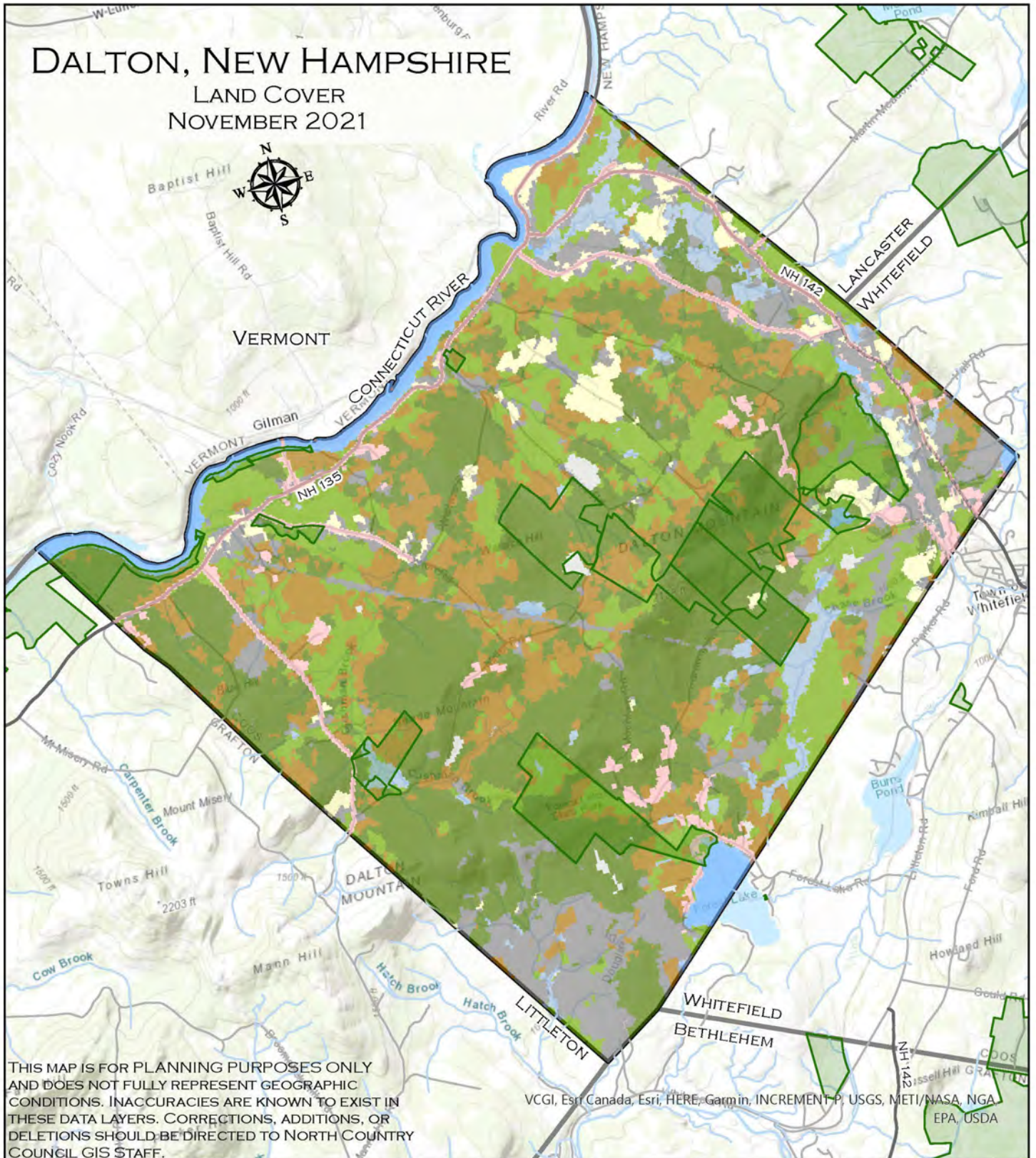
Forestry and Agricultural. As a part of the economy of Dalton farming has been on the same steady decline as it is everywhere in the New England area. Prime farmland soils are located along riverbeds and scattered throughout the steep terrain typical of Dalton. By its nature, because of the ruggedness of most of the land in Dalton, the farming value of the land has always been at best marginal with the possible exception of river bottom locations. At the present time there are very few actual functioning farms in Dalton and as such they have very little impact on resources, nor do they contribute significantly to the economy however the continuation of these historic land uses is of great value and importance to the community moving forward. Forestry is a viable and important activity in Dalton. Forests are the town's most abundant resource covering approximately 80% of the land. They consist of both softwood and hardwood species which are valuable to the wood products industry. Where the land is steeply sloped it is generally unsuited for most commercial or industrial uses. There are former pasture areas, once cleared for farming, which have returned or are in the process of returning to forest. This represents a potential economic resource for Dalton.

Public Lands. Dalton’s public lands consist of Forest Lake State Park, a recreational field on Route 135, and the lands upon which municipal buildings are located. Future considerations might include the purchase of lands or easements for land protection purposes. Respondents to the 2021 Master Plan survey indicated a desire for increased land conservation along the Route 135 and Route 142 corridors in town. 55% of respondents sought increased conservation on Routes 135 whereas 48% were interested in more conservation along Route 142.

DALTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

LAND COVER

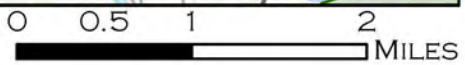
NOVEMBER 2021



THIS MAP IS FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY AND DOES NOT FULLY REPRESENT GEOGRAPHIC CONDITIONS. INACCURACIES ARE KNOWN TO EXIST IN THESE DATA LAYERS. CORRECTIONS, ADDITIONS, OR DELETIONS SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO NORTH COUNTRY COUNCIL GIS STAFF.

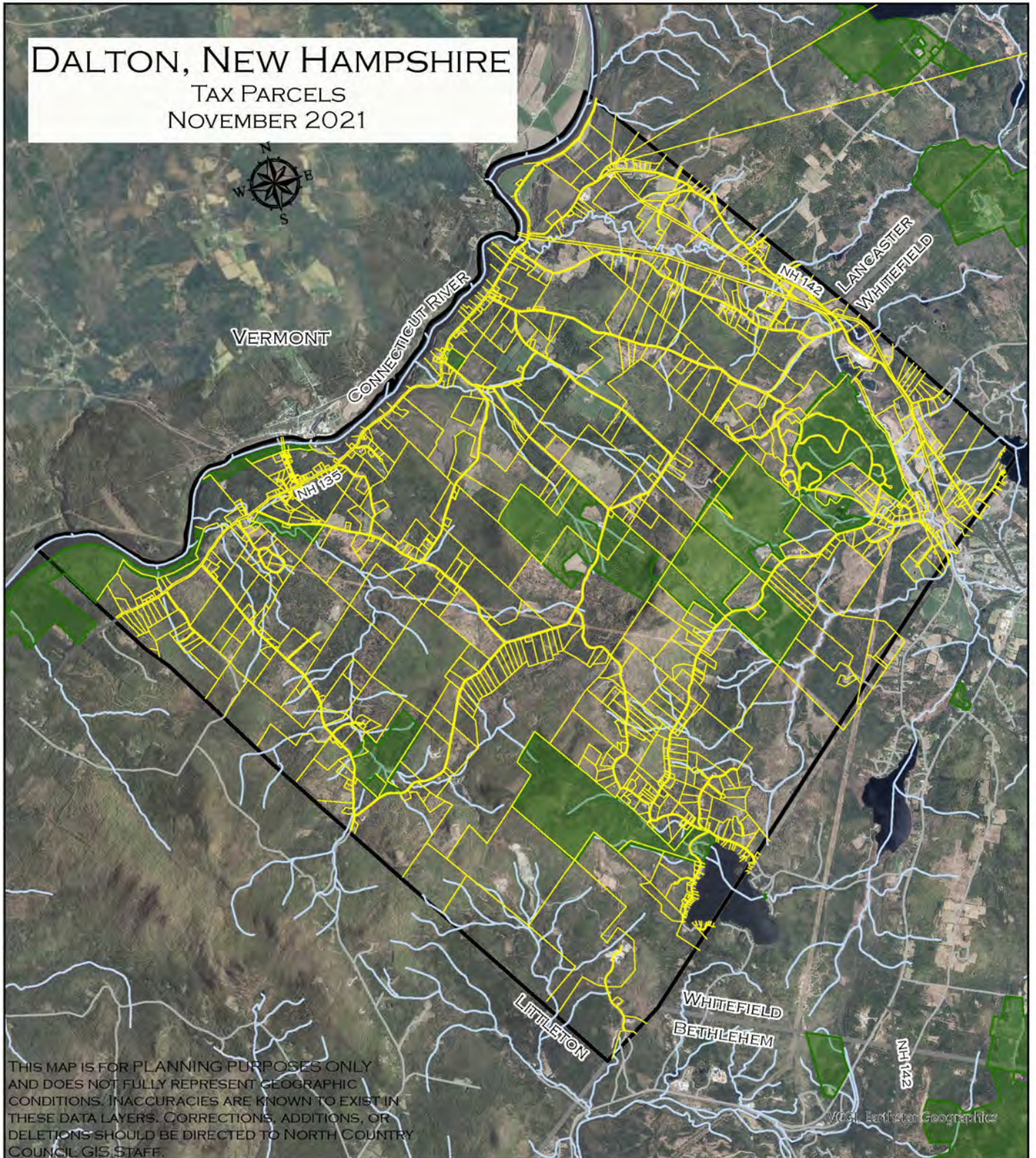
VCGI, Esri, Canada, Esri, HERE, Garmin, INCREMENT P, USGS, METI/NASA, NGA, EPA, USDA

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------------------|
| LAND COVER | WETLAND |
| DEVELOPMENT | BEDROCK / OTHER CLEARED LAND |
| CROP / PASTURE | DALTON TOWN BOUNDARY |
| CLEARCUT | NEIGHBORING TOWNS |
| DECIDUOUS FOREST | CONSERVED LAND |
| CONIFEROUS FOREST | ROADS |
| MIXED FOREST | STREAMS |
| WATER | |



DALTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

TAX PARCELS
NOVEMBER 2021



THIS MAP IS FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY AND DOES NOT FULLY REPRESENT GEOGRAPHIC CONDITIONS. INACCURACIES ARE KNOWN TO EXIST IN THESE DATA LAYERS. CORRECTIONS, ADDITIONS, OR DELETIONS SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO NORTH COUNTRY COUNCIL GIS STAFF.

- TAX PARCELS
- DALTON TOWN BOUNDARY
- NEIGHBORING TOWNS
- CONSERVED LAND
- ROADS
- STREAMS

0 0.5 1 2
MILES

Future Land Use

Regulation of Land Use. Dalton should take steps to encourage future land use patterns that support and strengthen the town's identity and character as a predominately residential rural community. To achieve this, minor portions of the town's land area should be identified for future industrial or commercial activity that is incompatible with residential uses. Establishing such area(s) and restricting highly impactful development in the bulk of the town's land which is typically residential will protect property values, and concentrate impactful land uses to suitable area(s). Establishing such land use area(s) is an effective tool which can preserve character and allow for the continuation of traditional rural development patterns where uses such as forestry, agriculture, cottage and home-based businesses, and recreation occur town-wide and interspersed with residential uses, while providing buffered opportunities for more intensive development. Such a strategy will aid the community in diversifying the tax base and reducing the tax burden on Dalton's homes and families while mitigating impact to neighboring properties.

As of today, the Town of Dalton is open to the risk of changes to its rural character due to a lack of established land use regulations. An Emergency Temporary Ordinance was adopted under RSA 675:4-a but voters did not adopt the permanent zoning proposed to replace it at 2022 Town Meeting. Without land use regulations to establish limitations on commercial, industrial, or large-scale multi-family residential developments the community is vulnerable to change and unmitigated impact from increased uncontrolled development. The community's low density residential and cottage business traditions could be visibly changed by large-scale developments which could cause unanticipated impacts on the roads, natural resources, needed town services and infrastructure. For this reason, the town should continue to monitor interest and need for land use controls that encourage low-density residential uses and other traditional and compatible rural uses as discussed in this plan.

Specifically, except for the limited area(s) of town discussed below for commercial, industrial, and public uses, Dalton's land area could be defined as a single "rural/residential" land use area. The land uses in this area should consist of: (1) residential land uses; (2) the "cottage" businesses that are customary and appropriate in rural homes such as inns and bed and breakfasts, day care, arts and crafts, professional/technical, etc.; (3) forestry and agriculture; and (4) recreation and tourist-oriented businesses with limited impact acceptable for the rural environment. To preserve the community's rural character and build on a strong tradition of respecting private property rights, other land uses would not be permitted in this area, other than the continuation of current businesses.

Any new or adjusted land use regulations established within Dalton must continue to build trust, confidence, and predictability for the citizens and landowners impacted. Land use regulations are a tool used to achieve land use goals for balanced development, preservation of property rights, and mitigation of impact. As such, the tool must be maintained, revised, and improved to continue to meet the goals of the community of Dalton. The lack of regulation in Dalton's history increases the importance of ensuring new regulations as may be developed are simple, transparent, predictable, and reserved for the most impact and concerning developments.

Residential. The town should take appropriate steps so that the development of homes will occur in a manner that is as consistent as possible with the rural environment. To protect Dalton's natural resources, new residential development should be conducted so as to protect and preserve wetlands. Septic systems are permitted by the state of NH based on soil type and area. In Dalton, subdivision regulations

also impact lot sizes for newly created parcels of land. The town may consider flexibility in lot sizes where appropriate, based upon the types of soils and features of the land. In areas with land best suited for septic systems less land may be needed, alternatively areas with steep slopes or wetland for example additional lot area may be needed. Dalton's rural character is defined by the forests, lakes, rivers, streams, and open land. While it is not practical to just say "no" to future growth, the town could instead seek larger lot sizes, by excluding areas unsuitable for development from lot size calculations where appropriate to preserve Dalton's natural environment and rural feel, and allowing smaller lot sizes in area with good conditions can reduce costs for development.

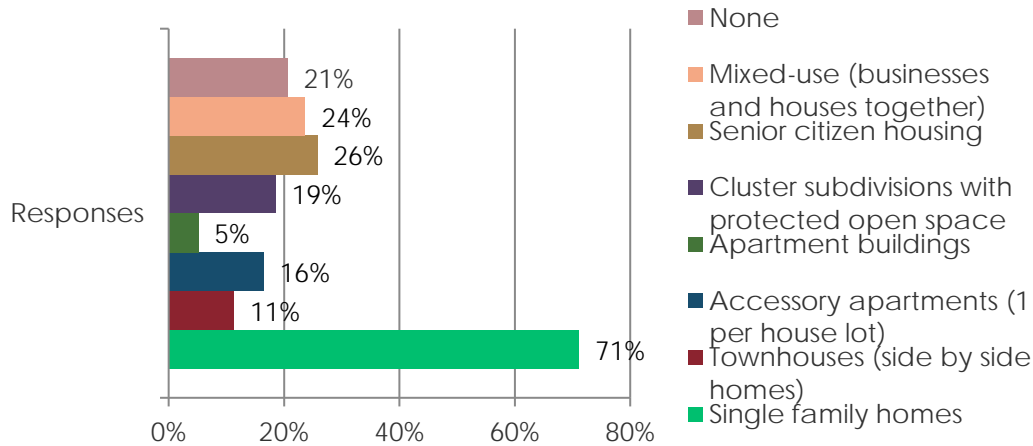
To move forward community aspirations for increased land protection and reduced impact on natural resources, Dalton should consider adding "cluster developments," or "conservation subdivisions" provisions to the Subdivision Regulations. Cluster developments or conservation subdivisions are residential developments where lot sizes are reduced and units are grouped together in order to preserve or protect the majority of the land area for protection, open space, or other non-development use. These land use regulation tools are considered innovative land use controls and work to marry community goals for land protection and reduced costs of development.

The community should take steps to encourage affordable housing, so that people of any generation and income level can make Dalton their home. Dalton's overall aging population is characterized by a small population of young adults and families and experienced a slow reduction in year-round population from 979 residents in 2010 to 933 in 2020 (approximately 5%). Ensuring a stable population with a diversity of incomes will strengthen Dalton and efforts to improve affordability may reduce the barriers to living in Dalton. The town must ensure that any and all land use regulations comply with the requirements of NH's Workforce Housing Statute (RSA 674:58-61) which include providing reasonable and realistic opportunities for the development of workforce housing including rental and multi-family housing. Workforce housing of some type must be allowed in the majority of land areas where residential uses are permitted. Workforce housing is defined as housing that is affordable (costing no more than 30% of income) to a renter family of 3 making 60% of Area Median Income, or an owner family of 4 making 100% of Area Median Income. Dalton's 2019 family Area Median Income was \$60,455; accordingly, a workforce rental unit should cost no more than \$905 dollars per month, including utilities; and a workforce ownership unit should cost no more than \$1,500 per month for mortgage, taxes, and insurance.

Many Dalton residents, including 71% of 2021 Master Plan survey respondents, expresses a preference for single-family home development if new housing is constructed in the community. However, there is a strong desire to allow the types of housing that will be affordable to all residents in the community, in particular the young who are just starting their families and the older generations. With land prices continually fluctuating it is increasingly difficult for young families or the retired to afford to live in Dalton. The town should seek to encourage an adequate supply of affordable housing by allowing opportunities for smaller-scale multi-family housing which can be supported without public water and wastewater infrastructure. Additionally, over 20% of 2021 survey respondents expressed a desire for more housing options for seniors in Dalton. Specifically, to reduce housing costs and encourage affordable housing, the town could consider, in certain areas and neighborhoods: (1) smaller lot sizes, (2) cluster or conservation subdivisions, (3) accessory dwelling units and (2) multi-family housing (both rental and owned). When asked about residential development residents would like to see in the future there was nominal

preference for mixed-use (24%) and senior citizen housing (26%), but overwhelmingly preference of respondents was for single family homes (71%).

What kind of new residential development would you like to see in the future? (Select all that apply.)



Cottage Businesses. Our community is comprised of independent, self-reliant, capable, and entrepreneurial people. Many residents wish to make a living on their property. To support this feature of the community, the town should continue to allow the traditional "cottage businesses" and similar activities in the residential areas, with appropriate limitations, to preserve Dalton's rural character. These "low impact" businesses and activities are part of the rural/residential community the town's people wish to preserve. They include hospitality businesses (inns, bed and breakfasts), day care, home-based education and instruction, arts and crafts businesses, in-home professional activities (accounting, technical, etc.) and of course forestry, agriculture, and recreation/tourist activities as discussed below. To encourage such businesses while at the same time preserving the rural character, the town could seek appropriate guidelines to mitigate potential detrimental impact. In the future, impact fees may need to be assessed on businesses that add costs to town services.

Town Center. The town-owned buildings and land in the center of town should be respected, cared for, and potentially expanded as the need may arise. The Town should explore capital improvement planning tools to aid in financial planning for required maintenance and improvement investments for these valuable assets. Outreach findings from this Master Plan update highlight a desire among residents to see increased vibrancy and activity in this area. Opportunities may exist for mixed-use development in and around this area.

Forestry and Agriculture. As traditional land uses in Dalton, forestry and agriculture should be encouraged. Farming and forestry land uses provide a variety of benefits to the local community. Improving food access and production, stewardship of natural resources, and protection of undeveloped land. Land access and continued success of these traditional industries is important to the physical appearance of Dalton's rural and pastoral landscape as well as the health of its environment and employment of residents. There is a concern, however, in the community about the future potential for large-scale clear cutting of land.

Recreation and Tourism. Dalton, being located on the Connecticut River, offers many opportunities for outdoor recreation. The town is also home to Forest Lake State Park, a year-round recreational area where a sandy beach, picnicking and beautiful views are enjoyed by residents and visitors alike. The park was one of the ten original state parks established in New Hampshire in 1935. The Park occupies nearly 400 acres of land. In the past, the park alongside the public parties in the town center were used for swimming lessons and other outdoor recreation and community events. Opportunities exist to reinvigorate these areas through hosting such events. Community member investment in such events will be necessary to make actionable progress in this area.

A major state snowmobile trail, Corridor 5, runs through the town of Dalton. With the dedication of the local snowmobile club and the generosity of private landowners, snowmobiling is a growing sport. Dalton's trails are well-maintained and enjoyed by snowshoe enthusiasts, cross-country skiers, and hikers, as well as snowmobilers. At this time the trails are not accessible to ATV users and there are no plans for this to happen.

Many Dalton residents and property owners are actively engaged in outdoor recreation and the town's natural features support the development of recreational and tourism related businesses. Dalton should help promote awareness of recreational assets including river access points along with popular walking and biking trails or loops. These activities should be allowed and encouraged in the rural/residential land use area, with consideration of such limitations, if any, as are necessary or appropriate to preserve the town's rural character. Dalton provides a wonderful environment for hunting, hiking, fishing, boating, bird watching, cycling and mountain biking, snowmobiling, skiing, snowshoeing, and other similar outdoor activities. There is an opportunity for Dalton's residents and property owners to create businesses that are based on or serve these outdoor activities, and such businesses should be allowed and encouraged in the rural/residential land use area.

Special Protections. Dalton has some very special features that play a large role in defining its rural character and natural environment. These include but are not limited to the Connecticut River and Johns River and the surrounding areas; Forest Lake; Dana Forest, the Chase Bog; and the ridge lines on Dalton Mountain and Wallace Hill. The town should consider additional protections for these special areas.

For the river and wetland areas, Dalton may wish to consider low densities and building setbacks to protect the shoreline, wetlands, and water quality. These regulations may need to be stricter than the State standards. For the ridgelines, the town may wish to consider low densities and building height limitations and/or vegetation buffers to protect the views. The town may also wish to limit and regulate windmills, communication towers, and similar structures on the ridges. In all of these areas the town may also want to consider cooperative steps to encourage landowners to open their land for trails and recreational use.

More broadly, the community feels strongly about protecting the attractive rural visual appeal of Dalton. To that end, the town may consider adopting appropriate and reasonable guidelines for property aesthetics. This may be a useful way to protect the character of the rural/residential areas of town.

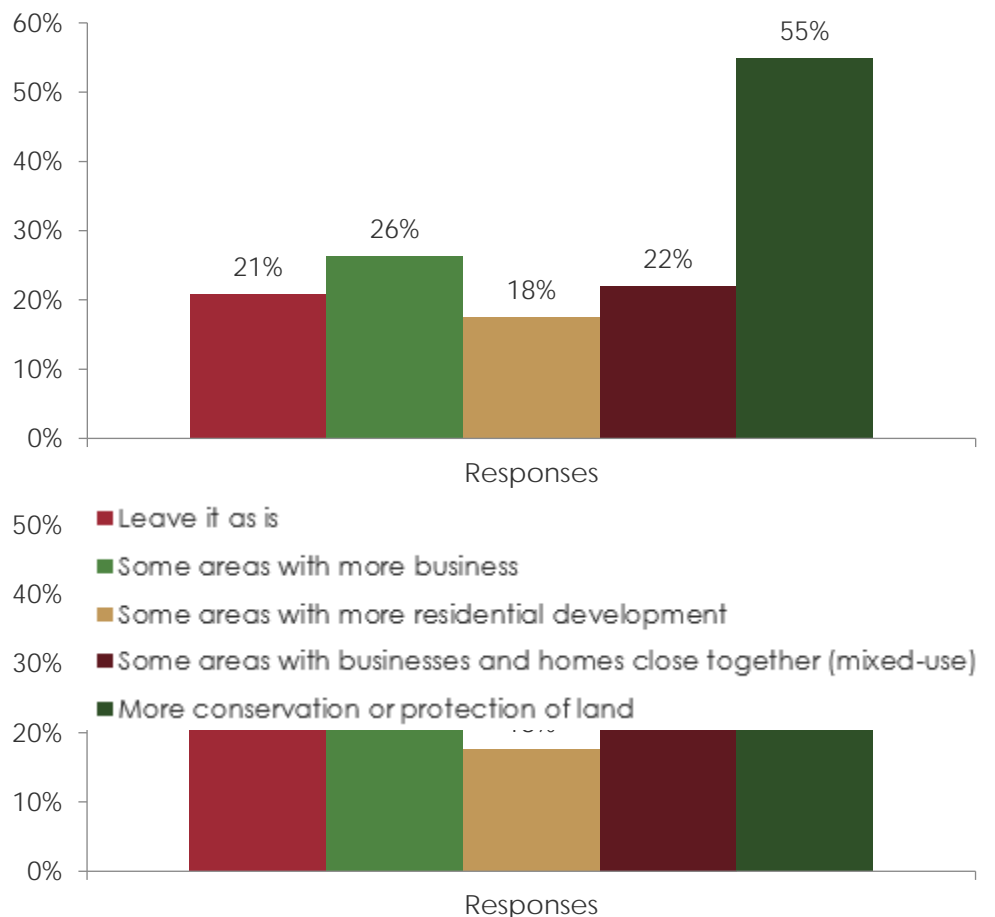
Existing Uses. The land uses discussed above would be the new land uses authorized in Dalton's rural/residential area. The rural/residential area would constitute the largest portion of Dalton's land area, and there are some existing land uses that differ from those discussed above — for example, certain

businesses. To protect the rights of our residents and property owners, these existing land uses would be allowed to continue indefinitely into the future, with appropriate limitations on future expansion and subject to health and safety considerations applicable to all land uses in Dalton. This continuation of existing non-conforming uses is called "grandfathering," however any changes to existing facilities must meet current codes and restrictions.

Commercial /Industrial. The residents and property owners in Dalton generally feel that new commercial activities — retail, wholesale, hotels, professional services, car and truck services, etc. — should be limited to particular areas of town in order to preserve Dalton's rural character. While more work needs to be done to reach a consensus on what areas are appropriate for commercial uses, such areas may include: the area near Dalton Road (Route 135) and Bridge Hill; the area in the vicinity of the Town Hall; the area of Dalton nearest to Route 116; and portions of Whitefield Road (Route 142). The town should also adopt appropriate lot size, setback, buffer, and operational guidelines for commercial and industrial land uses so as to protect the rural character of the town. Industrial uses – for example, factories, plants, quarrying and aggregates businesses – are generally inconsistent with Dalton's rural environment, and for that reason it is the consensus of the community to limit industrial uses to a specific, appropriate area of Dalton. Area(s) for industrial use should be designated based upon ecological conditions, potential impacts, and as well as the context and scale of development in the area currently. Existing uses would be "grandfathered," however any changes to the existing facilities must meet current codes and restrictions.

Corridors. Respondents to the 2021 Master Plan survey provided feedback to the Planning Board regarding future development along Route 135 and Route 142 corridors in order to gauge interest in areas for commercial or industrial development. 26% indicated an interest in more business development on Route 135 (Dalton Road) as compared to 16% on Route 142. Additionally, 55% of respondents were interested in more conservation or protection along Route 135 as compared to 48% along Route 142. Opportunities exist to identify land protection priorities for the community in these areas as well as concentrated areas for development.

Opinions on new development along Rt. 135 (Dalton Rd) from 2021 Master Plan survey respondents



Natural Resources

Introduction

The residents of Dalton pride themselves upon the rural character of the town's landscape, offering scenic beauty in abundance. Dalton's natural resources support the community's rural character, recreational opportunities, quality of life of people, wildlife, and water supply. The environment created by Dalton's system of natural resources serves both residents and visitors. The type and distribution of the town's natural resources also influences the location and type of development that takes place within the community. Some areas are of a higher priority for land protection than development due to the natural resources present. Some natural resources such as wetlands and floodplains make land unsuitable for development.

In the 2021 Master Plan survey, responses made it clear that residents are deeply interested in the continued preservation of natural spaces and the challenges posed by proposed development plans and climate change. Residents are particularly concerned about forested areas, water resources including groundwater aquifer, wildlife habitats, and the Forest Lake State Park area.

Understanding natural resource values provides a rational basis for determining which areas of Dalton are more appropriate for protection and open space, and which areas are more suitable for development, therefore Dalton's natural resources are a critical consideration in establishing a proper approach for land planning and management. Using the current existing natural resource conditions, planning can be undertaken to ensure that Dalton's land is utilized to conserve and protect natural resources, develop where appropriate, and insure reasonable and practical regulations and strategies are implemented to reflect the desires of the community for future growth.

Dalton may consider the concept of smart growth which is "an approach to achieving communities that are socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable". Sustainability means that resources are utilized in a manner that neither depletes nor permanently damages them. Dalton should strive to implement smart principles and sustainability approaches when considering their Master Plan and Natural Resource goals.

The information in this chapter will assist Dalton in determining compatible future uses for certain land areas and how to engage the community in the preservation of these valued attributes.

Natural Resources Goals

The table below lists goals (*aspirations*), actions (*task to accomplish*), and policies (*guiding principles*) related to land use and the municipality. For more detailed Actions check out the Implementation chapter.

Natural Resources Goal 1: Increase land protection, preservation, and stewardship in the community

NR Action 1.1	Dalton will identify a strategy for the protection of land. Such a strategy would identify priority areas for protection based upon ecological value, access for public recreation, and eligibility for grant opportunities and other funding vehicles.
NR Action 1.2	Continue to complete periodic natural resource inventories (NRIs) to inform land protection efforts and ensure transparency of local priority setting.
NR Policy 1.1	Improved access and understanding of Dalton’s rich natural resources and what property owners and residents can do to be stewards.

Natural Resource Goal 2: Protect natural resources from inappropriate or hazardous development pressures.

NR Action 2.1	Explore ways to promote natural resource protection through the subdivision review process by considering steep slopes, wildlife habitat areas, and reducing impervious surface areas associated with new road construction standards.
----------------------	--

Natural Resources Goal 3: Expand network of outdoor recreation assets and use of them

NR Action 3.1	Use the town website and visible public posting locations to show maps of Dalton’s recreational assets.
NR Action 3.2	Encourage the reinstatement of community events at parks and recreation areas to celebrate these resources and build sense of community.
NR Policy 3.1	Awareness and increased use of Dalton’s recreation assets including trails, paths, common walking loops, parks, swimming, and river access points should be expanded.

Existing Conditions

Inventories & Maps. Dalton’s abundant natural resources are located across a mix of state, local, and privately owned property. These areas include scenic vistas, Forest Lake State Park, Chase Bog, as well as stream and river corridors as resources that contribute to economic and recreational vitality of Dalton. In 2005, Dalton’s Conservation Commission developed a [natural resources inventory](#), which is currently being updated in 2023. Included in this Natural Resources section of the Master Plan are a series of maps that display Dalton’s natural resources landscape including:

- Recreation Assets
- Wildlife Habitat Area
- Water Resources and Flood Information
- Forest Areas
- Farm Soils
- Steep Slopes

DALTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

RECREATION
NOVEMBER 2021



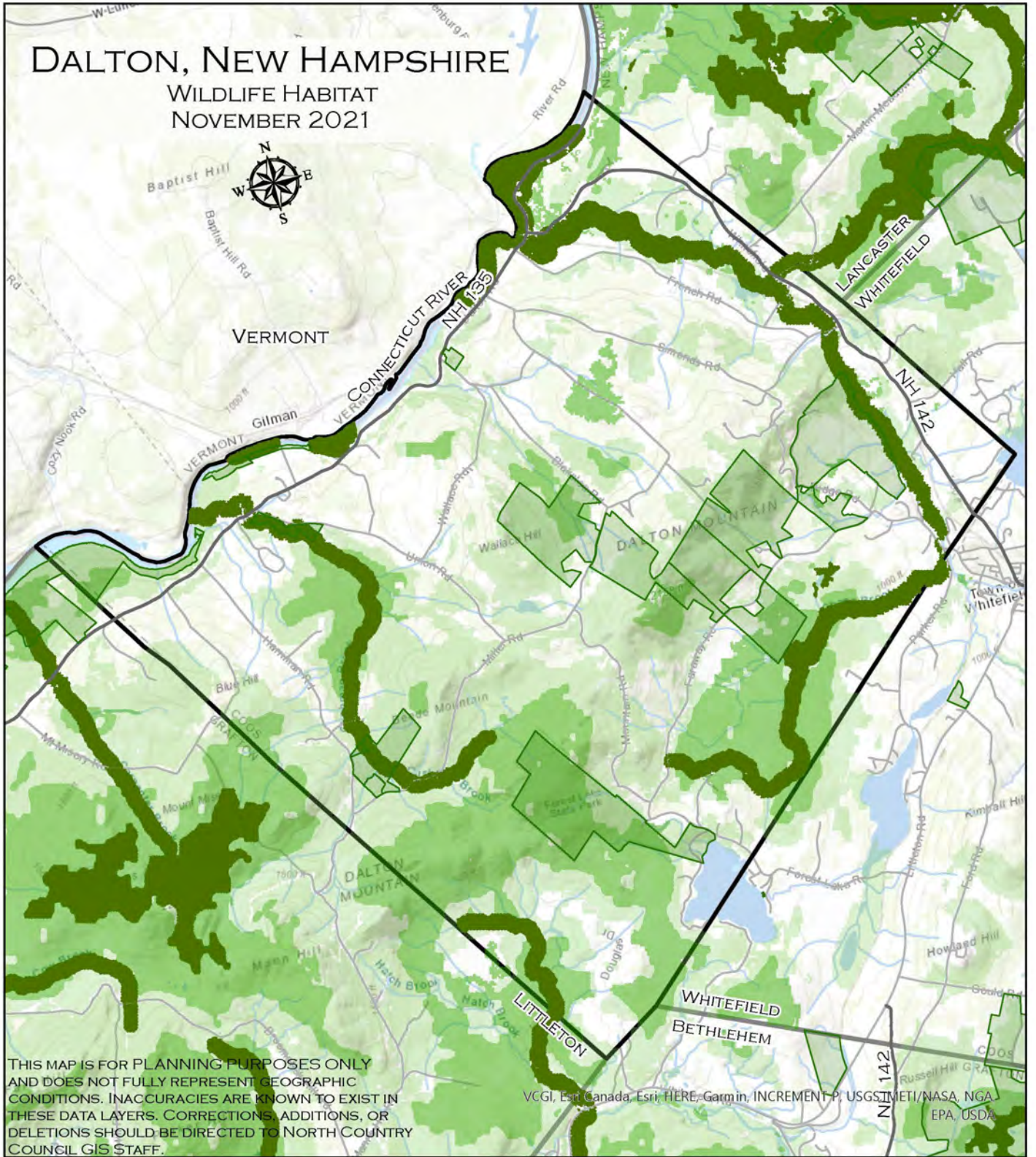
This map is for PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY and does not fully represent geographic conditions. Inaccuracies are known to exist in these data layers. Corrections, additions, or deletions should be directed to North Country Council GIS Staff.

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| DALTON RECREATION | — SNOWMOBILE TRAILS |
| WALKING TRAIL | — TAX PARCELS |
| FISHING SPOT | — CONSERVED LAND |
| PARK | — ROADS |
| CONNECTICUT RIVER ENTRY | — STREAMS |
| | — DALTON TOWN BOUNDARY |
| | — NEIGHBORING TOWNS |

0 1 2
MILES

DALTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

WILDLIFE HABITAT
NOVEMBER 2021



WILDLIFE ACTION PLAN

- TIER 1
- TIER 2
- TIER 3

- DALTON TOWN BOUNDARY
- NEIGHBORING TOWNS
- CONSERVED LAND
- ROADS
- STREAMS
- WATER BODIES

0 0.5 1 2
MILES

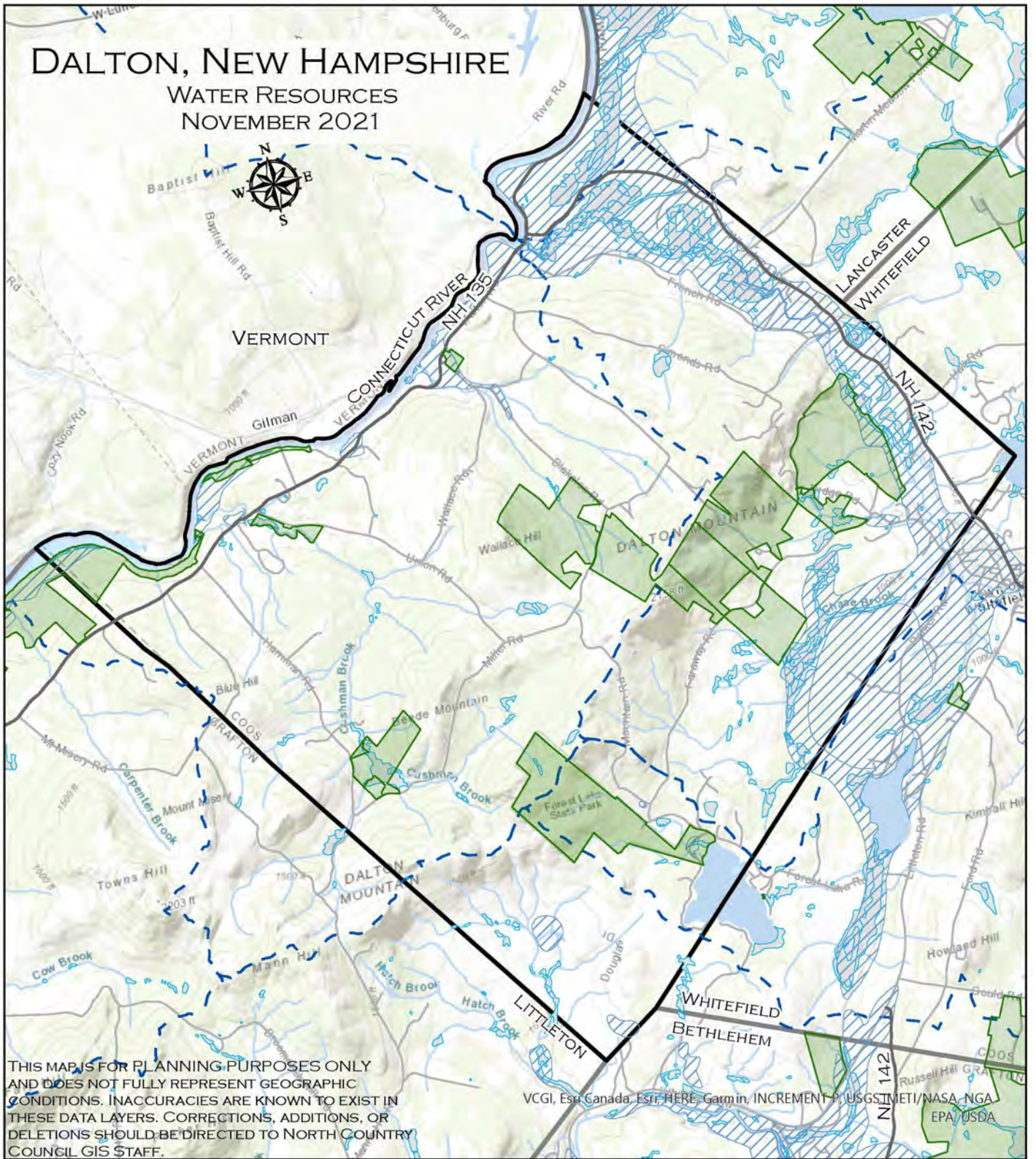
TIER 1: HABITATS OF HIGHEST RELATIVE RANK BY ECOLOGICAL CONDITION IN NH

TIER 2: HABITATS OF HIGHEST RELATIVE RANK BY ECOLOGICAL CONDITION IN BIOLOGICAL REGION

TIER 3: SUPPORTING LANDSCAPES

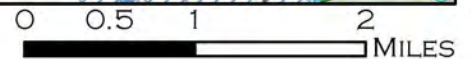
DALTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

WATER RESOURCES
NOVEMBER 2021



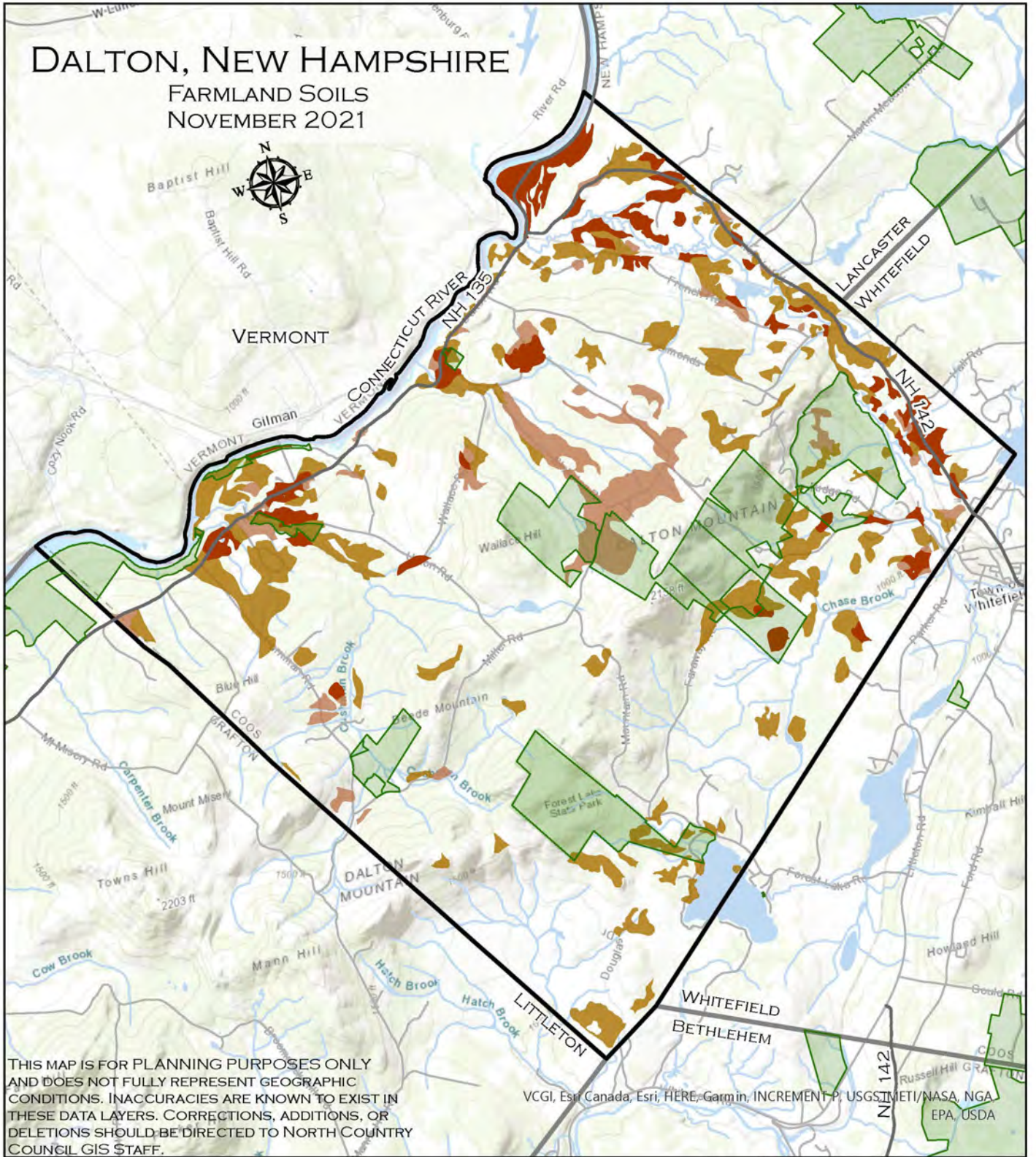
THIS MAP IS FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY AND DOES NOT FULLY REPRESENT GEOGRAPHIC CONDITIONS. INACCURACIES ARE KNOWN TO EXIST IN THESE DATA LAYERS. CORRECTIONS, ADDITIONS, OR DELETIONS SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO NORTH COUNTRY COUNCIL GIS STAFF.

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------|
| DALTON TOWN BOUNDARY | WATER BODIES |
| NEIGHBORING TOWNS | WATERSHEDS |
| CONSERVED LAND | WETLANDS |
| ROADS | AQUIFERS |
| STREAMS | |



DALTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

FARMLAND SOILS
NOVEMBER 2021



FARMLAND SOILS

- ALL AREAS ARE PRIME FARMLAND
- FARMLAND OF LOCAL IMPORTANCE
- FARMLAND OF STATEWIDE IMPORTANCE

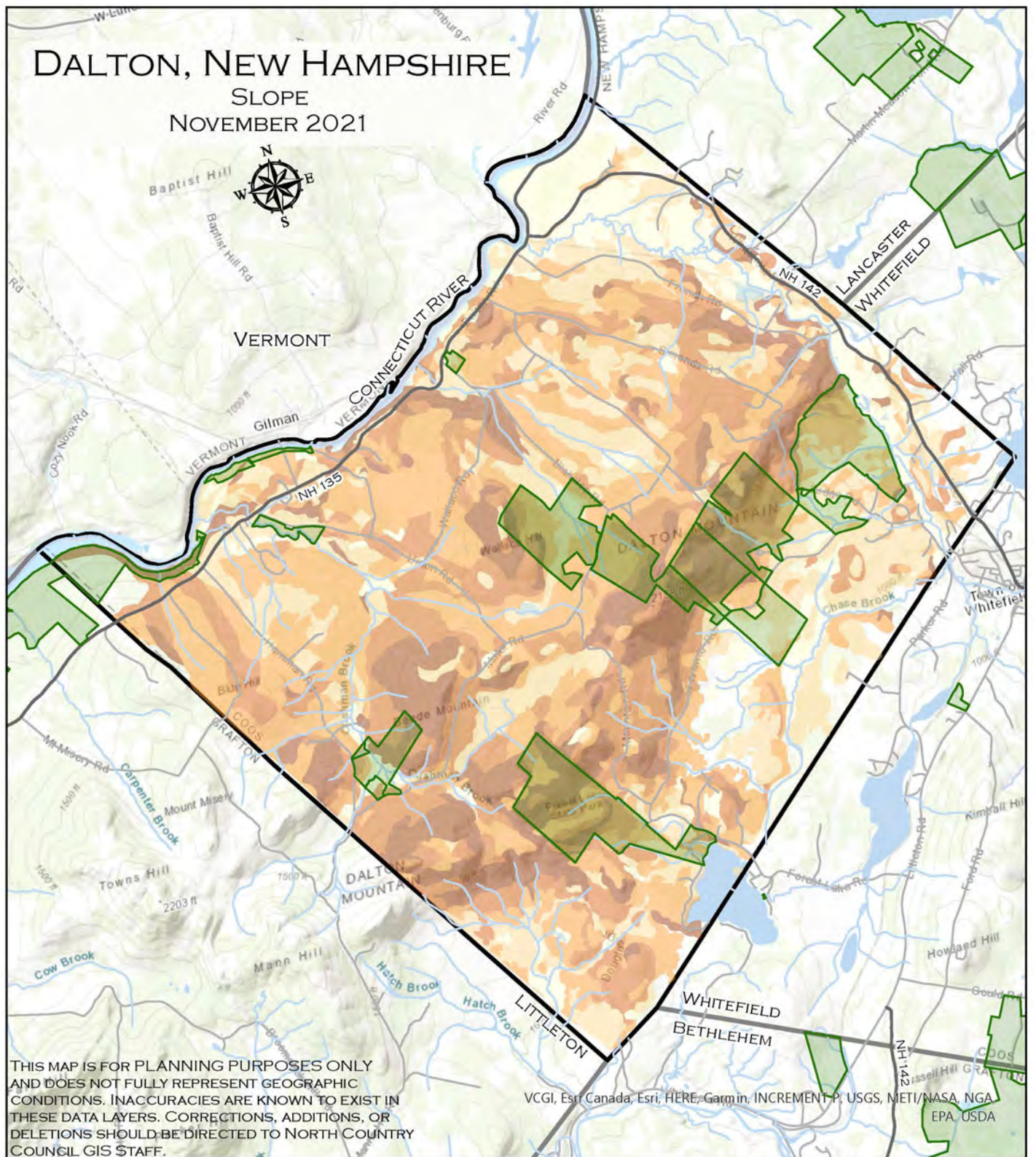
- DALTON TOWN BOUNDARY
- NEIGHBORING TOWNS
- CONSERVED LAND
- ROADS
- STREAMS
- WATER BODIES

0 0.5 1 2
MILES

VCGI, Esri, Canada, Esri, HERE, Garmin, INCREMENT P, USGS, METI/NASA, NGA, EPA, USDA

DALTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

SLOPE
NOVEMBER 2021



THIS MAP IS FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY AND DOES NOT FULLY REPRESENT GEOGRAPHIC CONDITIONS. INACCURACIES ARE KNOWN TO EXIST IN THESE DATA LAYERS. CORRECTIONS, ADDITIONS, OR DELETIONS SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO NORTH COUNTRY COUNCIL GIS STAFF.

VCGI, Esri, Canada, Esri, HERE, Garmin, INCREMENT P, USGS, METI/NASA, NGA, EPA, USDA

SLOPE (PERCENT)

- 0-3
- >3-8
- >8-15
- >15-25
- >25

- DALTON TOWN BOUNDARY
- NEIGHBORING TOWNS
- CONSERVED LAND
- ROADS
- STREAMS
- WATER BODIES

0 0.5 1 2 MILES

Local Capacity & Capabilities. The Town has natural resource land protection and preservation assets to put to work at local, state, and federal levels. Locally, conservation-minded landowners and a municipal Conservation Commission can pursue public and private land protection projects. The recognized Friends of Forest Lake group provides a local connection to State owned conservation and recreational waters and forests near the State Park.

David Dana Forest. This conserved forest block is mostly spruce-fir and managed for timber products by The NH Forest Society. Several fields are mowed annually to maintain them as grassy openings for wildlife habitat. There are several trails available to public use, limited to foot traffic only. For more trail information, visit [TrailFinder](#) or [The NH Forest Society](#). A unique feature of the Forest is the old gold mine that was operated by the Whitefield Mining Company until 1885. The mine is an excavated cliff face. According to historic records, a very limited amount of commercial gold was removed from the site before it was determined to be uneconomical and closed.

Additionally, the Forest trails allows access to the Johns River and fishing holes. River access is via an old railroad bed that runs to the north off of the town roadway just east of the spot on Ridge Rd where the Dana Forest entrance is marked by a Forest Society sign.

David Dana donated the land in Dalton to the Forest Society. The land was once proposed for a 23-lot subdivision. The land offers diverse habitat, a half mile of frontage along the Johns River, productive timberland, and nearly two (2) miles of recreational trails.

Forest Lake State Park. This was one of the ten original state parks established in 1935 with the aid of Civil Works Administration and the Civilian Conservation Corps under President Franklin Roosevelt's administration. The park includes 397 acres and a 200-foot sandy beach that lies along the shore of Forest Lake and a public boat launch off Newell Road. Popular activities include swimming, picnicking, mountain biking, fishing, and boating.

There are local efforts to develop recreational trails throughout the state park parcel, but these efforts require local support, volunteers, and connections to trail builders to ensure trails are established equitably for both recreation users, land protection, and preservation of the natural resources.

Input & Analysis

Survey Responses. When asked during the 2021 Master Plan survey, 81% of respondents stated they chose to live or run their business in Dalton because of its rural character and 68% of respondents indicated their preference for close proximity to natural areas and water bodies.

When asked to share their biggest hope for the future of Dalton there was a strong theme to keep the rural character and open lands unchanged (24%) as well as protect and conserve the environment (18%)

When asked to share their biggest concern for the future of Dalton the primary concern was development of a landfill (32%). There was also a moderate theme of concern for the protection and prevention of degradation of natural resources as well as concerns of pollution mitigation (both had 7% response rate).

55% of respondents would prefer to see more conservation or protection of the land along the Rt 135 corridor (Dalton Rd connecting to Littleton and Lancaster).

48% of respondents would prefer to see more conservation or protection of the land along the Rt 142 corridor (Whitefield Rd connecting Dalton to Whitefield).

Areas of focus for preservation centered around Forest Lake (13) and Dalton Mountain (4) areas.

60% of survey respondents indicated a desire to see more development of outdoor recreation businesses.

Trends. Two major trends could be pulled from the survey responses regarding Dalton's greatest natural resource challenges and or needs:

1. A need for increased or continued preservation of natural spaces including forested areas, water resources, wetlands, wildlife habitats and the Forest Lake State Park area.
2. Concerns regarding the potential impacts from a proposed landfill, increased development, climate change, loss of property owner control, and lack of land use regulations.

Conservation Commission. Member of the Dalton Conservation Commission provided input on this chapter of the Master Plan. The Conservation Commission identified the following aspirations.

- More people to help with town clean-up.
- Conduct more Bioblitzes (A bioblitz is a targeted assessment of a particular piece of land, or ecosystem to identify as many plant and animal species present as possible. Events are done in a quick timeline with a group of participants.)
- Find ways to rejuvenate and expand community events at Forest Lake Stake Park (beach and forest areas)
- Consider outreach to property owners located in prime natural resources areas with information about the resource, its importance, and any land owner considerations to be a steward of the resources. (i.e. wetlands, shorelands, prime aquifers, etc.)
- Consider identifying historical sites within the Natural Resources Inventory and then explore ways to highlight and celebrate those resources such as sites along the CT river, or those along scenic by-ways or other roads in town.

The Opportunities discussed below have been identified as tools to assist the community and Conservation Commission.

Opportunities

This section discusses two (2) different types of opportunities for the community to achieve land protection goals. The tools presented are based upon discussion with the Dalton Conservation Commission and include:

- Land Protection, Recreation and Natural Resource Funding Opportunities
- Encouraging Stewardship and Participation at the Municipal Level

NATURAL RESOURCES: FUNDING & PLANNING SUPPORT PRIMER

LAND & WATER

- **The Conservation Fund**, www.conservationfund.org: *Conservation Loan Program* offers flexible financing and expert technical assistance to Forest land protection projects aimed to protect key economically viable and ecologically sustainable properties as well as Wetland & Watershed land protection projects aimed to protect ecologically sensitive areas and freshwater quality properties in a community.
- **Forest Legacy Program**, www.nh.gov/nhdfl/land-conservation/nh-forest-legacy-program.htm: a voluntary landowner assistance program designed to provide conservation value to work forests in the face of development pressures.
- **Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP)** www.lchip.org: *Natural Resource Acquisition Grants* independent state authority makes matching grants in NH communities to conserve and protect NH's most important natural resources. LCHIP contact info: 603-224-4113
- **Aquatic Resource Mitigation Fund** <https://www.des.nh.gov/business-and-community/loans-and-grants/aquatic-resource-mitigation-fund>: competitive grants to fund projects with the goal to support land protection activities that are ecologically important and will effectively sustain aquatic resource functions in a watershed for the long term.
- **Conservation Grant Program** <https://www.agriculture.nh.gov/divisions/scc/grant-program.htm>: funded by the purchase of "Moose Plates" the grant program focuses on six areas of land protection.
- **Ammonoosuc Conservation Trust** <https://act-nh.org/>: Local land protection trust which works with local landowners to place conservation easements on privately owned land and offer educational experiences. Contact info: 603-823-777 or office@act-nh.org

TRAILS & RECREATION

- **Recreational Trails Program** <https://www.nhstateparks.org/about-us/trails-bureau/grants/recreational-trails-program>: competitive grant program offering funding for quality public trail projects throughout NH. Contact for RPT: Jay Scarborough, 603-271-3254 or jay.a.scarborough@dncr.nh.gov
- **The Land and Water Conservation Fund** lwcfcoalition.org: *State & Local Grant Funding* administered by the National Park Service (NPS) provides matching grants to create/expand parks & recreation facilities. NH contact info at Division of Parks and Recreation: 603-271-3556 or lwcf@dncr.nh.gov
- **Trust for Public Land** <https://www.tpl.org/state/new-hampshire>: *Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program* administered by the NPS, nationally competitive federal grant program that provides new or significantly improve recreational opportunities in economically disadvantages communities. NH TPL contact info: Ally McDougal, NH Director of Philanthropy 781-856-5564 or ally.mcdougal@tpl.org
- **Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program** <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/rtca/index.htm>: supports locally-led land protection and outdoor recreation projects by offering professional technical services to achieve the project vision.
- **Comprehensive Trail Services** <https://comprehensivetrailservices.com>: Private business supporting the design and construction of recreational trails by providing cost effective services to enhance private and public owned properties. Contact info: 603-493-4779 or comtraser@gmail.com
- **New England Mountain Bike Association (NEMBA)** <https://nemba.org/trail-building-schools>: *Trail Building School* course for interested parties to learn how to create sustainable, enjoyable trails and how to maintain them. Contact info: office@nemba.org
- **North Woods Stewardship Center** <https://www.northwoodscenter.org/wordpress/>: *Conservation Corps Trail Building & Maintenance*, non-profit organization offers summer trail work in the communities of Northern VT and NH. Contact info: 802-723-6551 or info@northwoodscenter.org

<p>A. The Conservation Fund</p>	<p>The Conservation Fund works to protect America’s most critical lands and waters to provide greater access to nature, strengthen local economies and enhance climate resiliency. Forest Conservation can be both economically viable and ecologically sustainable, but they need to be invested in and maintained. Wetlands and Watershed Conservation are aimed to protect ecologically sensitive areas to help protect freshwater quality and wildlife habitat while safeguarding clean sustainable drinking water.</p> <p>Conservation Loan Program: Provides flexible financing as well as sustained and expert technical assistance to land trusts and other organizations aiming to protect key properties in their communities, increase access to green and open space, recover natural habitats, provide land protection education programs, and help people connect with nature. TCF is a land trust and a lender. Click here to learn more about their Conservation Loan Program.</p>																										
<p>B. The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)</p>	<p>The LWCF is a program to conserve irreplaceable lands and improve outdoor recreation opportunities throughout the nation. It works in partnership with federal, state, and local efforts to protect land across all levels and to provide tools that communities need to meet their diverse land protection and recreation needs.</p> <p>State and Local Grant Funding: Administered by the National Park service, this program provide matching grants to state, local, and tribal governments to create and expand parks, develop recreation facilities, and further local recreation plans. Funds are distributed to every U.S. state and territory using a population-based formula. These funds are an important tool to renovate existing parks, develop new recreational facilities, acquire land for state and local parks, and promote statewide recreation planning. Click here to learn more about NPS State and Local Grant Funding.</p> <p>Recent LWCF Projects in the surrounding area (for more click here)</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="338 829 1692 1398"> <thead> <tr> <th>Name</th> <th>Sponsor</th> <th>Scope</th> <th>Fed Grant</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Riverfront Park</td> <td>Town of Lincoln</td> <td>Construction of a skate park, parking, bike-ped trails, river access and utilities</td> <td>\$200,200</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Littleton Riverfront Commons</td> <td>Town of Littleton</td> <td>Purchase of 7.5 acres, construction of parking, events area, pathway, landscaping</td> <td>\$200,200</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Remich Park Improvements</td> <td>Town of Littleton</td> <td>Demolition and reconstruction of service building (concession, bathrooms, storage), field drainage improvements, resurfacing of perimeter pathway, installation of new playground</td> <td>\$200,200</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Colonel Town Enhancements</td> <td>Town of Lancaster</td> <td>Removal and replacement of playground structures, construction of pavilion, pathways</td> <td>\$180,180</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Littleton Riverfront Commons-II</td> <td>Town of Littleton</td> <td>Renovation of existing barn structure into a welcome center/bathrooms, construction of a labyrinth-garden area, extension of existing river-walk, pathway connector to abutting state rail trail</td> <td>\$200,200</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Name	Sponsor	Scope	Fed Grant	Riverfront Park	Town of Lincoln	Construction of a skate park, parking, bike-ped trails, river access and utilities	\$200,200	Littleton Riverfront Commons	Town of Littleton	Purchase of 7.5 acres, construction of parking, events area, pathway, landscaping	\$200,200	Remich Park Improvements	Town of Littleton	Demolition and reconstruction of service building (concession, bathrooms, storage), field drainage improvements, resurfacing of perimeter pathway, installation of new playground	\$200,200	Colonel Town Enhancements	Town of Lancaster	Removal and replacement of playground structures, construction of pavilion, pathways	\$180,180	Littleton Riverfront Commons-II	Town of Littleton	Renovation of existing barn structure into a welcome center/bathrooms, construction of a labyrinth-garden area, extension of existing river-walk, pathway connector to abutting state rail trail	\$200,200	<p>NH’s contact is the Division of Parks and Recreation. Grant Round 34 is anticipated to be released in the Spring of 2023. Any potential project sponsor should contact the Office of Community Recreation for additional information and consultation. Bill Gegas, LWCF Program Specialist; or Eric Feldbaum, ASLO/Community Recreation Specialist</p> <p>603-271-3556 or lwcf@dncr.nh.gov</p> <p>LWCF State and Local Assistance Program NH Division of Parks and Recreation 172 Pembroke Rd Concord NH 03301</p>
Name	Sponsor	Scope	Fed Grant																								
Riverfront Park	Town of Lincoln	Construction of a skate park, parking, bike-ped trails, river access and utilities	\$200,200																								
Littleton Riverfront Commons	Town of Littleton	Purchase of 7.5 acres, construction of parking, events area, pathway, landscaping	\$200,200																								
Remich Park Improvements	Town of Littleton	Demolition and reconstruction of service building (concession, bathrooms, storage), field drainage improvements, resurfacing of perimeter pathway, installation of new playground	\$200,200																								
Colonel Town Enhancements	Town of Lancaster	Removal and replacement of playground structures, construction of pavilion, pathways	\$180,180																								
Littleton Riverfront Commons-II	Town of Littleton	Renovation of existing barn structure into a welcome center/bathrooms, construction of a labyrinth-garden area, extension of existing river-walk, pathway connector to abutting state rail trail	\$200,200																								

	Mt. Washington Sewerage	State of NH DNCR	Replacement of the Mountain Washington State Park Sewer Plant	\$1,045,134	
C. Forest Legacy Program (FLP)	Forest Legacy Program (FLP): Administered by the USDA Forest Service in cooperation with state partners, the program is a voluntary landowner assistance program designed to provide c land protection onservation value to working forests in the face of development pressure. FLP projects typically restrict development, require sustainable forestry practices, and protect other public values like clean water, wildlife habitat, and public access for recreation enthusiasts. Click here to learn more about NH Forest Legacy Program			NH FLP Contacts: Susan Francher, susan.francher@dncr.ng.gov Tracey Boisvert, tracey.boisvert@dncr.ng.gov	
D. Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) :	An independent state authority that makes matching grants to NH communities and non-profits to conserve and preserve NH’s most important natural, cultural, and historic resources. Projects support by these grants: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Natural Resource Acquisition Grants: Endeavors to protect ecologically significant land for a variety of purposes including water quality protection, wildlife habitat protection and enhancement, preservation of scenic views, and protection of important forest and agricultural lands. Land protection not only protects the irreplaceable physical resources of our natural environment, but also protects the vitality, quality of life, and sense of place that are so important to NH communities. All resources conserved with LCHIP funds are required to be protected with a conservation easement or deed restrictions. Click here for the LCHIP Eligibility Self-Assessment Tool for Natural Resource Conservation. 2. Preservation Planning Grants: to support the study of eligible historic resources. 3. Historic Rehabilitation Grants: To support the restoration or rehabilitation of eligible historic resources. 			Grant Round 22 will open in 2023, prospective applicants must submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) through LCHIP’s online grant management portal in MAY 2023. LCHIP Contact information: Ben Engle, Land Conservation Specialist- bengle@lchip.org Katie Midolo, Grants Coordinator- kmidolo@lchip.org 603-224-4113 LCHIP 3 N Spring St, STE 100 Concord NH 03301	
E. Trust for Public Land NH	Grant opportunity- Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program is a nationally competitive federal grant program that provides new or significantly improved recreation opportunities in economically disadvantaged communities located in park deserts. The ORLP Program is administered by the National Park Service through the Land and Water Conservation Fund State and Local Assistance Program		Contact for TPL NH: Helen Kellogg, New England TPL Advisory Board Chair Shelby Semmes, VP NE Region, VT & NH State Director- Shelby.semmes@tpl.org 917-658-2582	Montpelier Office, 3 Shipman Place Montpelier VT 05602 802-223-1373 vermont@tpl.org	

		Ally McDougal, NH Director of Philanthropy- ally.mcdougal@tpl.org 781-856-5564
F. <u>Ammonoosuc Conservation Trust</u>	Local land protection trust which works with local landowners to place conservation easements on privately owned land.	Contact for ACT: Kim Cartwright, Executive kcartwright@act-nh.org Sheelagh Higginson, Office Manager- office@act-nh.org 603-823-7777 297 Main St, Unit 1 Franconia NH 03580
G. <u>Recreational Trails Program</u>	A competitive grant program that offers funding for quality public trail projects throughout NH, limited grants are available for non-motorized trails. Eligible projects include maintenance and restoration of existing trails, purchase and lease of trail construction and maintenance equipment, and construction of new trails. Applicants may be non-profit organizations, private groups, educational institutions, or government entities.	Contact for RTP: Jay Scarborough, jay.a.scarborough@dn-cr.nh.gov 603-271-3254 172 Pembroke Rd Concord NH 03301
H. <u>Aquatic Resource Mitigation Fund</u>	Competitive grants to fund preservation, restoration, and enhancement activities across the state. The goal of the program is to support land protection activities that are ecologically important and will effectively sustain aquatic resource functions in the watershed for the long term. The program seeks to fund projects that will maintain and increase important functions such as water quality, wildlife habitat, and flood storage. Dalton is within ARM funding region 8. <u>Stream Restoration Mapper</u> - Use this to find Opportunities in Your Community	
I. <u>Conservation Grant Program</u>	Funded by the purchase of Conservation License Plates (Moose Plates). The grant program focuses on six areas: 1) water quality and quantity, 2) wildlife habitat, 3) Soil conservation and flooding, 4) Best management Practices, 5) Land protection planning, and 6) Land conservation.	
J. <u>NPS Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program</u>	Supports locally-led land protection and outdoor recreation projects by assisting communities in developing or restoring parks, conservation areas, rivers, and wildlife habitats as well as creating outdoor recreation opportunities that engage future generations. This program does not provide financial assistance but offers professional technical services to achieve land protection or recreation project vision.	
K. <u>Comprehensive Trail Services</u>	Private business supporting the design and construction of recreational trails by providing cost effective services to enhance private and public owned properties.	Contact information: 603-493-4779 or comtraser@gmail.com
L. <u>New England Mountain Bike Association (NEMBA)</u>	<u>Trail Building School</u> : course for interested parties to learn about creating sustainable, enjoyable trails and how to maintain them.	Dalton is situated near the Franconia Area (contact Tim Clough, tclough@nemba.org) and White Mountains (contact Jeremiah Beach, jbeach@nemba.org) NEMBA chapters Contact info Trail Building: office@nemba.org

M. <u>North Woods Stewardship Center</u>	Conservation Corps Trail Building & Maintenance: non-profit educational, research, and conservation service organization serving communities of northern VT and NH.	Contact Information: 802-723-6551 or info@northwoodscenter.org
---	---	--

What is NATURAL RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP?

Defined as “a use of natural resource that is socially and culturally equitable, environmentally sustainable, and economically beneficial”. To achieve this public, private, and community actors work together in an inclusive process to develop solutions for joint challenges.

In other words, it’s an ethical value that embodies the responsible planning and management of resources. It can be applied to the environment and nature as well as economic development along with other types of resources.

Natural Resource Stewards are able to connect a passion to become a part of a larger volunteer community that can take action and make a difference.

How to become a Natural Resource Steward:

Be a conscientious Land Owner

- Consider implementing a vegetative buffer if your property lies along water frontage
- Consider placing your land into a Conservation Easement
- Consider enrolling your land in Current Use & allowing recreational access for additional tax relief
- Properly dispose of waste and recycle when possible

Participate in Learning Opportunities

- Dalton BioBlitz Days
- UNH Cooperative Extension's Natural Resources Steward Program
- Conservation Land Stewardship Program
- Trails for People and Wildlife

Volunteer or Join a Conservation Commission

- Dalton BioBlitz Days
- Trail Maintenance
- Roadside Cleanup
- JOIN

What is Natural Resource Stewardship?

Defined as “a use of natural resource that is socially and culturally equitable, environmentally sustainable, and economically beneficial.” To achieve this public, private, and community actors work together in an inclusive process to develop solutions for joint challenges. Source: <https://nature-stewardship.org>

Simply put, it’s an ethical value that embodies the responsible planning and management of resources. It can be applied to environment and nature, and economic development along with other types of resources.

Natural Resource Stewards are able to connect a passion to become a part of a larger volunteer community that can take action and make a difference in the community.

How to become a Natural Resource Steward:

1. Be a conscientious landowner.
 - a. Are you a landowner with river or lake frontage? Maintain a riparian buffer. A buffer is a forested/vegetated strip of land that borders any body of water. The presence of this buffer between human activity and the water allows streams and rivers to meander, improving aquatic habitat through shading and nutrient cycling, stabilizing banks to prevent property loss via erosion, and acts as a biofilter for runoff. Ultimately, buffers improve water quality for wildlife and humans alike.
 - b. Consider placing your land into a Conservation Easement working with a local Land Trust
 - c. Consider enrolling your land in Current Use: is a tax incentive available to qualifying landowners who maintain their land as undeveloped forest, farm or open space. with additional recreational access to benefit from additional tax relief, up to 20% reduction.
 - i. To qualify: land must be 10 or more acres, must be a forest, farm, or unproductive land.
 - ii. How to apply: contact your town office, landowners have until April 15th to apply for the current tax year. Application to complete is the A-10
 - d. Properly dispose of waste and recycle when possible. Do you know how to properly dispose of batteries, paints, pesticides, waste oil, mercury-containing lights, electronics, carpets, housewares and furniture with PFAS?
 - i. Option 1: Contact local municipal solid waste transfer station to determine if they collect used oil, fees may apply. Dalton Transfer Station currently does not accept, other local options are Lancaster (603-788-3200), Littleton (603-444-1447), and Whitefield (603-837-9171).
 - ii. Option 2: Bring used motor oil to a municipal household waste collection day
 - iii. Option 3: Consider contacting a commercial business who may collect household used oil. Local options include Stockley in Landaff (603-838-2860), NAPA Auto Parts in Lancaster (603-778-2582, VIP in Littleton (603-444-4497), and NAPA in Whitefield (603-837-9094).
 - iv. Option 4: For larger amounts of used auto oil, contact a registered Used Oil Transporter for proper management.

2. Participate in learning opportunities such as:
 - a. UNH Cooperative Extension: [Natural Resources Steward program](#)
 - b. Conservation Land Stewardship Program (CLS) [Guide for Landowners](#)
 - c. Stewardship Volunteer Training Guides: <https://naturegroupie.org/training-guides>
 - d. Good Forestry in the Granite State:
<https://extension.unh.edu/goodforestry/assets/docs/GoodForestry2010FINALreducedsizeSECURE.pdf>
 - e. Trails for People and Wildlife Guide: <https://www.wildlife.state.nh.us/trails/documents/trails-for-people-wildlife.pdf>
 - f. Conserving Your Land:
<https://unh.app.box.com/embed/s/l7mrk886jnl1f55679261w3macpeidhk?sortColumn=date&view=list>
3. Volunteer or Join Dalton Conservation Commission or other outdoor organizations in the area
 - a. Participate in Dalton BioBlitz days ([UNH Extension BioBlitz Resources](#)): A BioBlitz is a species scavenger hunt where volunteers help find and record data on as many different species as possible in a certain area and a short amount of time. It's a fun, easy way to get outside and explore nature.
 - b. Trail Maintenance Days
 - c. Roadside Cleanup Days
 - d. Community Events and Fund Raisers

Economic Development

Introduction

Economic development is the sustained, concerted action of policy makers and communities to create the conditions for economic growth and improved quality of life. It involves expanding the capacity of individuals, firms, and communities to maximize the use of their talent and skills to support innovation, lower transaction costs, and responsibly produce and trade goods and services. It can involve expanding businesses to create greater opportunities for residents and ensure these opportunities are accessible. Economic development often encourages communities to build on their assets and strengths that make them unique and complement regional economic activities rather than compete.

As Economic Development is discussed within Dalton, two (2) terms stand out as important to understanding the economic landscape. These terms are defined here and should be explored in their relation to Dalton's future hopes and aspirations for economic development.

- **COTTAGE INDUSTRY:** The 2014 Master Plan sought to encourage home-based cottage industries. Noting them as part of local heritage and character of the Town and its residents. Within the plan, these businesses are described as "Businesses operated from individual homes where the home serves as both a place of residence as well as business." These businesses include hospitality, day care, home-based education and instruction, arts and crafts businesses, in-home professional activities, as well as forestry, agriculture, and recreation activities.
- **BEDROOM COMMUNITY:** A bedroom community can be described as towns where the majority of residents commute elsewhere to work, typically in larger nearby communities and then return home to sleep. These communities are typical in the U.S. following WWII development. They typically offer very limited shopping, entertainment, and other amenities.

In the following pages, this section will consider the future goals and actions regarding Dalton's economic development, the existing conditions within the community and the surrounding area, and relevant community feedback gathered from the 2021 Master Plan Survey responses.

Economic Development Goals

The table below lists goals (*aspirations*), actions (*task to accomplish*), and policies (*guiding principles*) related to land use and the municipality. For more details Actions check out the implementation chapter.

Economic Development Goal 1: Support Dalton's tradition of cottage and home-based industries as the core of business activity in the rural dispersed community.

ED Action 1.1	Explore the use of tax incentive programs such as Community Revitalization Tax Incentives (RSA 79-E) and similar tools to spur investment in economic activities within particular locations of the community.
ED Action 1.2	Engage with the Coos County Economic Development Corporation, a non-profit, community-based business lender to highlight technical assistance program available to support Dalton based businesses.

Economic Development Goal 2: Improve access to high-speed internet in Dalton as a tool to increase markets for cottage industries, improve access to basic needs, education, training, health care, and social connection in the digital age.

ED Action 2.1 Participate in the Coos County Broadband Initiative, to map and extend service infrastructure county wide.

ED Action 2.2 Explore use of Town Hall as a publicly available high-speed Wi-Fi location for persons with limited connectivity at home. Such an effort can increase education, training, and marketing opportunities for current business owners, entrepreneurs, students and residents as a whole.

Economic Development Goal 3: Encourage business creation and growth unique to Dalton’s unique resources and aspirations of its residents, such as agriculture, outdoor recreation businesses, restaurants and retail.

ED Policy 3.1 Leveraging outdoor recreation assets in the community for business creation and growth can provide low-impact, place-based, and unique opportunities for Dalton residents that capitalize on regional trends.

ED Policy 3.2 Working lands, including farming and forestry are traditional industries which should be encouraged and supported. These industries provide a variety of benefits including food production, land stewardship and protection.

Existing Conditions

Business Activity. The table below lists the 25 businesses registered with the NH Secretary of State in Dalton as of 2021. This list has been adjusted slightly based on local knowledge during 2023.

Type of Business	Number of Businesses	Current Employers	Size of Employers (# of employees)
Government (local government & federal contractors)	4	Dalton Town Clerk, Dalton Selectmen’s Office, Dalton Tax Collector, Ridgeline Defense, LLC	1 to 4 employees at each business
Cemeteries & Churches	4	Ladd Cemetery, Johns River Cemetery, Cushman Cemetery, Harbinger Bible Conference	1 to 4 employees at each business
Automobile (Parts & truck wholesale)	1	White Mountain Used Parts	5 to 9 employees at each business
Driving Instruction	1	Team O’Neil Rally School	20 to 49 employees
Motorcycle Repair & Service	1	JR’s Cycle Repair	1 to 4 employees
Contractors (Building trades)	3	Merola Drywall, Henry’s Electrical, Thermal Mass, Inc	1 to 4 employees at each business
Recreation/trails	1	Dalton Ridge Runners	Unknown
Accounting & Bookkeeping	1	Basic Bookkeeping	1 to 4 employees
Retail	1	Dalton Country Store LLC	1 to 4 employees
Radio Equipment & Systems	1	TAC-2 Communications	1 to 4 employees
Library	1	Dalton Public Library	1 to 2 employees
Real Estate	1	Pelletier Property Management LLC	1 to 4 employees
Restaurants	1	Nomad’s LLC	5 to 9 employees

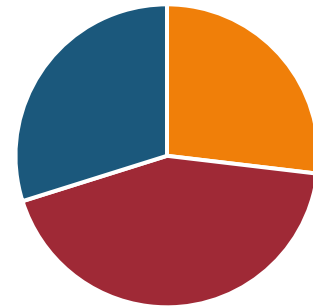
State Park	1	Forest Lake State Park	1 to 4 employees
Training Consultant	1	Raven Firearms Training	1 to 4 employees
Trucking	2	North Woods Transport, BNBJ Inc.	1 to 4 employees

Workforce and Employment Flows. There are a total of 439 jobs held by residents of Dalton based on 2019 Census data. Of those jobs 26.9% are held by people 29 years old or younger, whereas 43.3% are held by people between 30-54 years old, and 29.8% are held by people 55 and over.

Dalton’s workforce is evenly split between male and female workers.

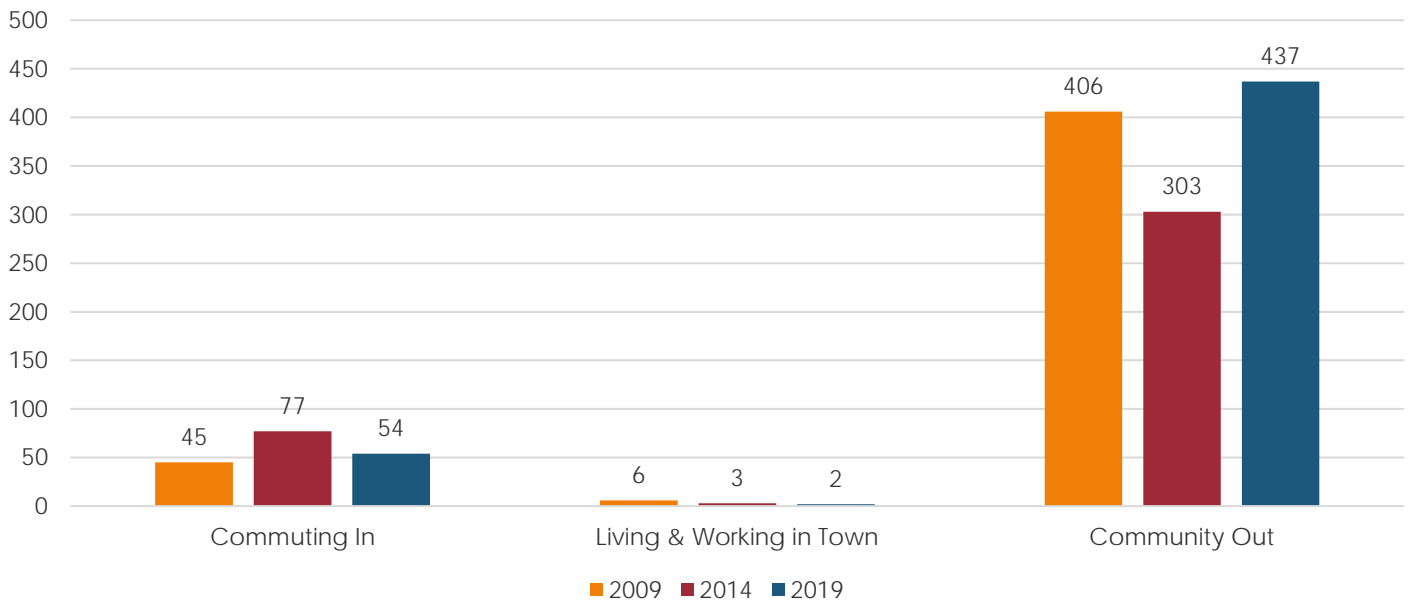
The chart below explores the commuting patterns of Dalton’s labor force as they have changed in recent years. Commute patterns are divided into three (3) categories: Commuting into Dalton, Living & Working in Dalton, and Commuting out from Dalton.

Worker Ages



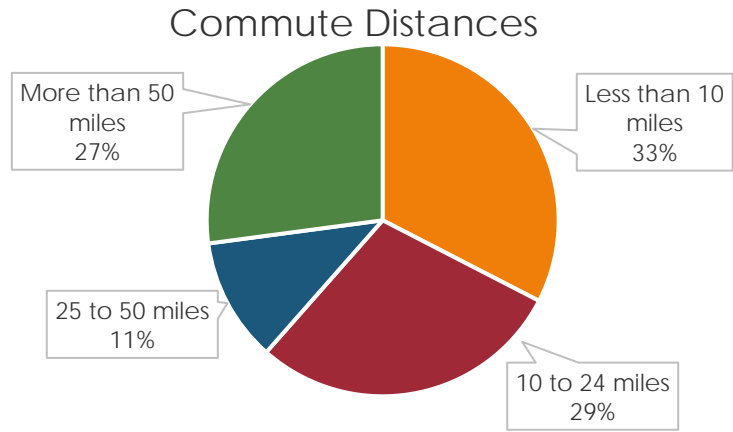
- 29 and younger
- 30 to 54 years old
- 55 and older

Commute Patterns & Volumes

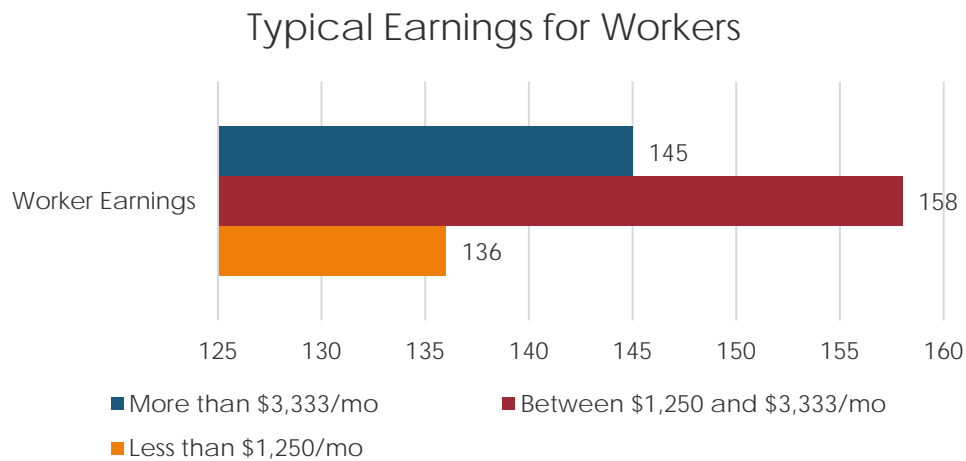


Of those Dalton residents commuting outside of town to work in 2019, the 10 most typical work destinations were:

1. Whitefield (6.3% of jobs)
2. Littleton (6% of jobs)
3. Lancaster (2.9% of jobs)
4. Concord (2% of jobs)
5. Conway (1.9% of jobs)
6. Lisbon (1.4% of jobs)
7. Tilton/Northfield (1.4%)
8. St. Johnsbury, VT (1.4%)
9. Berlin (1%)
10. Claremont (1%)

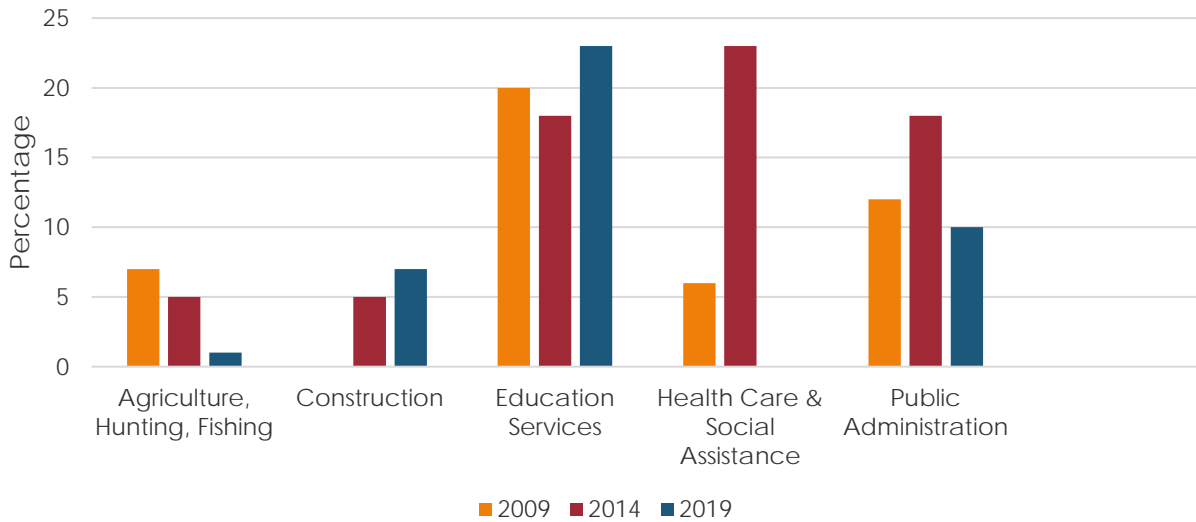


Earnings and Education. Over 30% of Dalton’s workforce earns less than \$1,250 per month in wages.

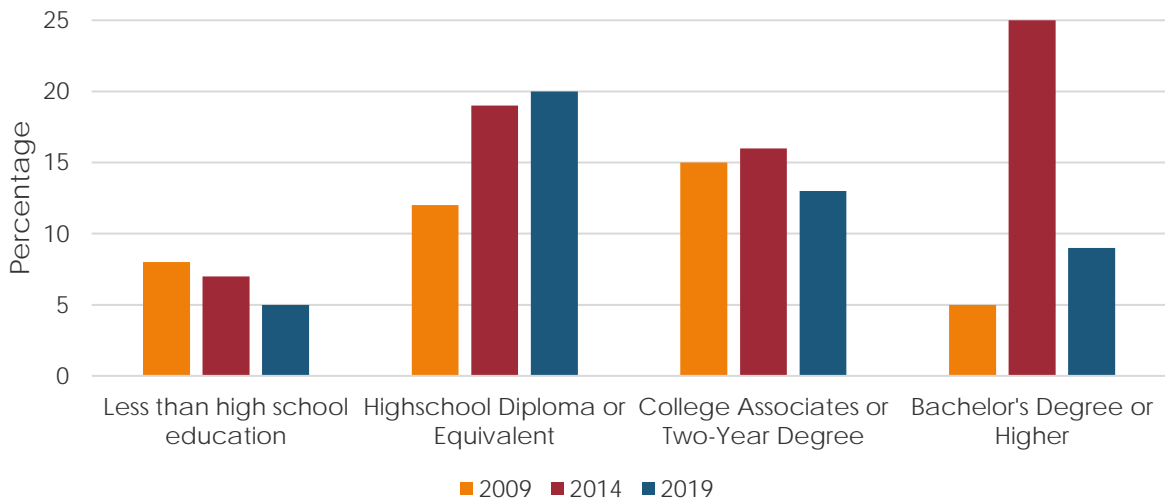


Dalton’s residents, as with any community, bring their knowledge, capabilities, and experiences to the area’s economic activity. The charts below explore Specialized Skills and Educational Levels of the community, based upon U.S. Census data.

Specialized Skills



Educational Attainment



Growth of Outdoor Recreation. Outdoor recreation continues to be a focus of economic activity across Coos County. Based upon data collected and provided by TravelStats, the following visitor volumes and expenditures have been observed in Coos County in 2021:

- Visitor Volume: 784,700 people visited Coos County
- Tourism Dollars Spent: \$317.2 million dollars were spent via tourism, including \$104.3 million in Accommodations, \$89.4 million in Food & Services, \$38.7 million in local transit and gas, and \$37.8 million in Arts, Entertainment & Recreation
- Tax Revenues: \$19.6 million was collected in Rooms & Meals tax

Since 2011, revenues generated by travel and tourism in Coos County have consistently increased when all Tourism Dollars Spent totaled \$206.9 M. Resulting in a 48% increase during this time period.

Within Dalton exists several assets which may yield opportunities to spur growth in this area. The Connecticut River Scenic Byway follows Route 135 through Dalton and attractions such as the Mt. Orne Covered Bridge, Forest Lake State Park, and the Connecticut River are located within Dalton.

Input & Analysis

Survey Responses. When asked to share their biggest hope for the future of Dalton, themes emerged around:

- Lowered, stabilized, and diversified taxes (13%)
- Modest (small) business growth (12%)
- Land Use Regulations (8%: 2% for regulation and 6% against regulation)

When asked to share their biggest concern about the future of Dalton, themes emerged around:

- Increasing taxes (13%)
- Business development (pro small & con large) (13%)
- Land Use Regulation (7%: 4% for regulation and 3% against)

When asked to share opinions on Dalton's greatest economic development (or business) challenge or need response trends centered around:

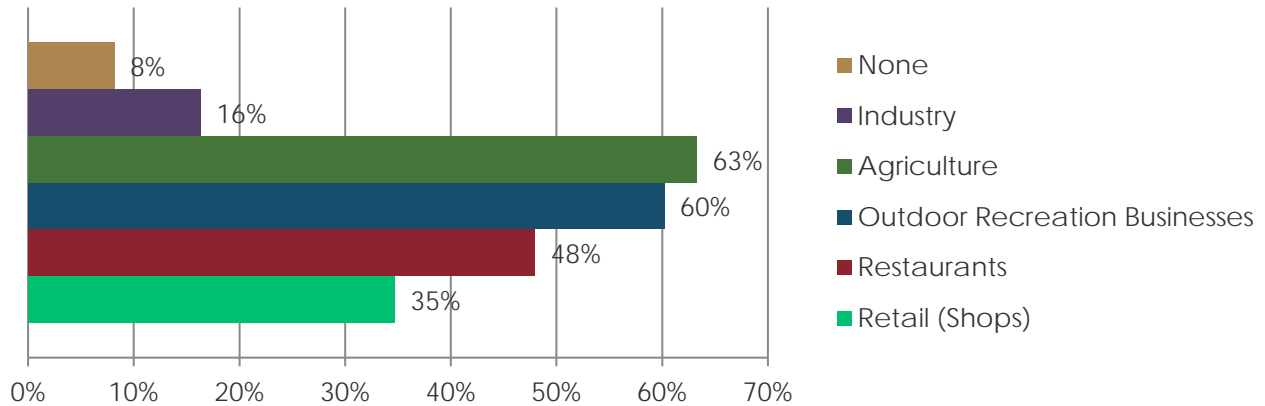
- A need to increase the tax base for the community in order to stabilize taxes and reduce residential tax burdens
- A need to increase opportunities for businesses Dalton. Primarily focused around small businesses with limited impacts to the area. Environmental, recreational, and tourism-based businesses were highlighted, as well as business that provide employment for Dalton residents
- A few respondents called out the lack of high-speed internet as a challenge

In addition to stakeholder preferences on development along the corridors of Route 142 and Route 135 discussed in the Land Use Section, respondents also identified other preferences for the types and possible locations in which they would like to see more development:

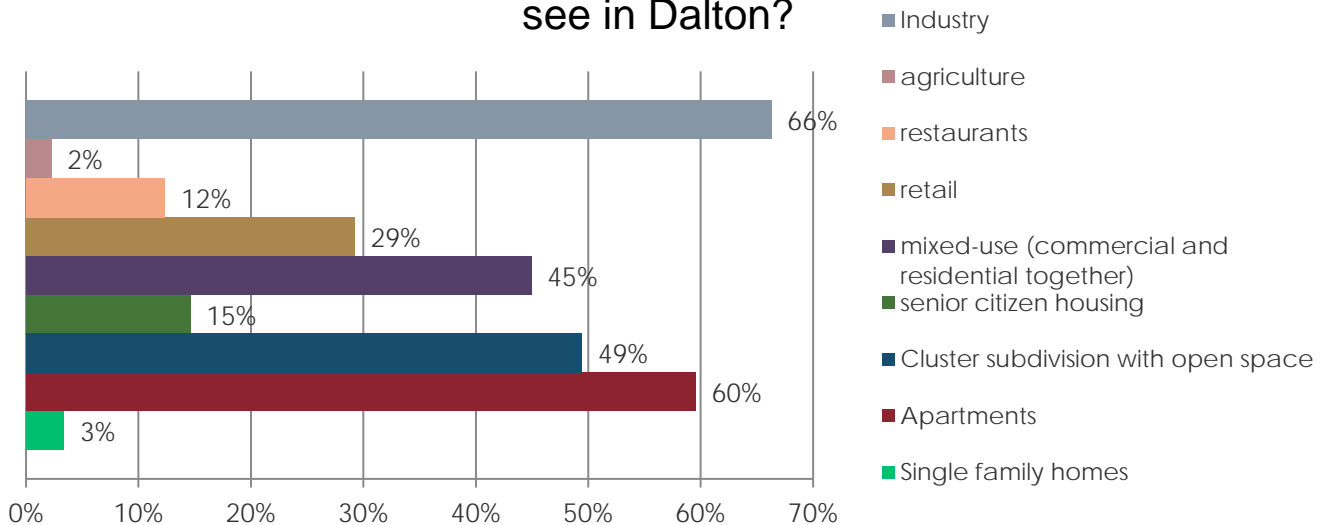
- Small businesses (4)
- Industrial (4): 2 responses indicated industrial park development; 2 responses indicated near Rt 116
- Commercial along developed roads and Top of the Hill area (5)

When asked what kind of non-residential development Dalton residents would like to see in the future agriculture (63%) and Outdoor Recreation Businesses (60%) received the greatest share of preference among respondents.

What kind of non-residential development would you like to see in the future?



What kinds of new development would you not like to see in Dalton?



Economic Development Infrastructure. The types of economic activity and employment centers in a community are impacted by the availability of physical infrastructure to support particular types or scales of activity or development. For example, many manufacturing or industrial activities require three-phase power, public water supply, and public wastewater disposal systems to accommodate their energy, resources, and waste generation needs. Understanding the types of infrastructure available throughout the community can aid in planning projects and local investment to encourage the types and sizes of businesses desired by the residents. This section will explore the presence of 1) trucking routes, 2) power transition lines, 3) public water and wastewater systems.

- **TRUCKING ROUTES:** Route 135 and Route 142 are designated trucking routes capable of transporting goods to and from Dalton businesses. Many other routes in Town are subject to weight restrictions (seasonally due to mud season) and present limitations on business activity requiring large truck or consistent delivery of goods.
- **POWER TRANSITION LINES:** The proximity of the Moore Dam hydro-electric facility provides some high-capacity power infrastructure in Dalton, even if just for transition points beyond the

community. These power lines have greater energy volumes than distribution lines (which connect to individual services) and can provide opportunities to high-energy businesses in need of three-phase power for operations.

- **PUBLIC WATER & WASTEWATER INFRASTRUCTURE:** Many large businesses and specialized businesses such as restaurants, breweries, or manufacturers are challenged to adequately provide for their water and wastewater needs on site-based systems, such as wells or septic systems. Such businesses seek locations with connection to existing public systems as a cost savings and to properly handle water and wastewater needs. In locations without such systems, businesses in need of large or complex systems are less likely to be located. Dalton lacks this public infrastructure at this time.

Transportation

Introduction

Essential to Dalton’s future vision is a transportation system that supports safe and efficient movement of people, goods and services within the town and the surrounding area. Dalton’s transportation system needs to integrate the network of state, local, and privately owned roadways with the residential and other land uses to protect air and water quality as well as be maintained in the most cost-effective means possible.

Several “smart growth” principles reflect interrelated elements that can serve to guide growth and development, including transportation choices and improvements like:

- Mixed land use
- Take advantage of compact housing design and development
- Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas
- Create a distinctive community with a strong sense of place
- Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions

This section will review the existing transportation system and the needs and opportunities that system provides for Dalton’s residents and visitors.

Transportation Goals

The table below lists goals (*aspirations*), actions (*task to accomplish*), and policies (*guiding principles*) related to land use and the municipality. For more details Actions check out the implementation chapter.

Transportation Goal 1: Have a clearly marked, safe and well-connected network for on- and off-road bicycle and walking that allows residents and visitors to explore the varied terrain, views and landscapes in town.

T Action 1.1	Install "share the road," "bike route," or other appropriate signage along common (and planned) cycling routes in order to improve driver awareness, visibility of cyclists, and promote bicycling as a safe, healthy and enjoyable use of Dalton roadways.
T Action 1.2	Advocate for improved bicycle and pedestrian facilities along major corridors (typically state aid roadways) including designated bike lanes, routes, sharrows (shared use arrows), through NHDOT transportation funding processes such as the Ten-Year Plan and Transportation Alternative Programs.
T Action 1.3	Encourage the use of unused rail corridors for multi-modal transportation for a variety of purposes, in order to preserve these rights-of-way for the future and improve off-road networks for residents and visitors alike.
T Action 1.4	Explore and identify preferred public parking locations for walkers, cyclists, and other users along common routes and points of interest.

Transportation Goal 2: Promote ride-sharing as a tool to aid neighbors and reduce environmental impact. Residents commuting to work and seniors or those with mobility challenges will benefit from ride-sharing.

T Action 2.1	Scout locations and seek funding for "park and ride" facilities in Dalton. These may include formal facilities constructed with support from NHDOT or informal facilities like existing public parking at town-owned buildings.
T Action 2.2	Increase awareness and promote ridesharing by publishing (and distributing) rideshare parking locations or posting a rideshare board at the Town offices or online.
T Action 2.3	Encourage residents to become volunteer drivers through Tri-County CAP's volunteer driver programs as a way to give back and help seniors and people with mobility challenges by providing information about the programs on the town website.

Transportation Goal 3: Improve and strengthen the network of local roads by better understanding and planning for the costs of roadway maintenance and betterment projects.

T Action 3.1	Encourage a healthy contingency be budgeted into the costs for all road work items included in the town budget in order to ensure completion of project during times of cost uncertainty and variability.
T Action 3.2	Collect and compile data on the legal ownership and right-of-way of municipally owned roadways in order to better understand the land area available to make improvements to safety and condition.

Transportation Goal 4: Improve and strengthen Dalton's transportation network of state numbered route through regional and statewide engagement.

T Action 4.1	Designate a representative to participate on the North Country Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) which is the region's formal interface with NHDOT in order to better make use of NHDOT funding in Dalton's transportation networks and to remain current on best practices and strategies to improve road networks.
T Action 4.2	Integrate transportation network improvements, including equipment needs, into Dalton's Capital Improvement Planning process. Ensure key stakeholders such as the Road Agent and NHDOT District Engineer participate.
T Action 4.3	Advocate for improvements to Dalton's state-aid highway system through the NHDOT Ten Year Planning Process, Regional Transportation Improvement Plan, and specific funding opportunities associated with these programs.
T Action 4.4	Safety is paramount to Dalton's roadways. Explore locations to complete Road Safety Audits, particularly in common accident areas.

Transportation Goal 5: Visually improve gateways into Dalton along major routes.

T Action 5.1	Explore opportunities to create signage or improvements along the Connecticut River Scenic Byways (Rt 135) a designated Scenic Byway.
T Action 5.2	Engage with the North Country Scenic Byways Committee to understand how to market a byway as an attraction for visitors and a cultural asset for local residents.
T Action 5.3	Identify areas for increased signage, lighting, and pull-off improvements in order to create a welcoming entrance to Dalton for those entering or traveling through.

Existing Conditions

Road Network. Dalton’s road network is a mix of state, local, and privately owned roadways of various condition, purpose, and functional classification. The State of NH classifies roadways in town ways. The first is by a state funding category (the State-Aid classification system) and the second is by federal funding category (the Federal classification system). The State-Aid system was developed by the State of NH as defined by RSA 229-231, to determine responsibility for construction, reconstruction, and maintenance as well as eligibility for use of state aid funds. Dalton has 57.5 miles of roadways within the municipality.

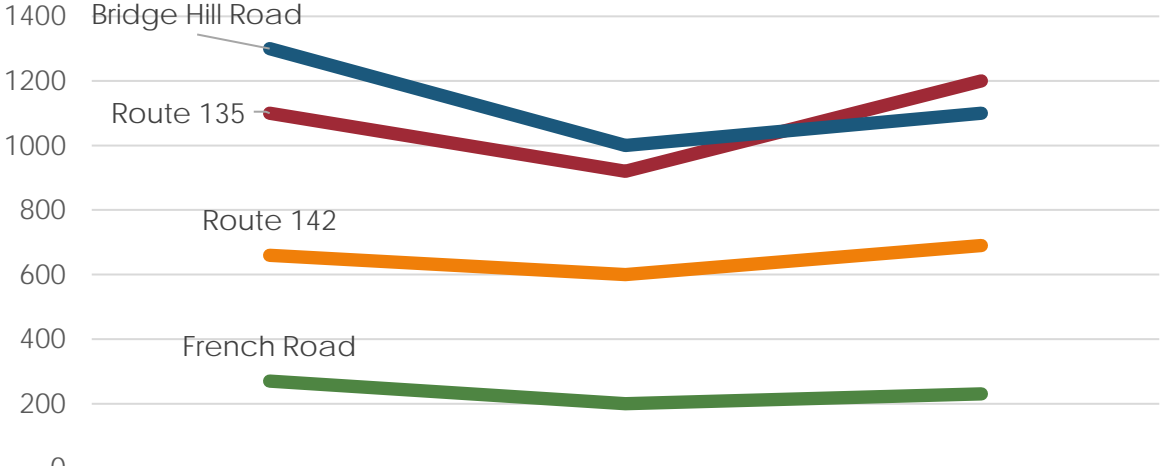
State Aid Classification of Roads in Dalton		
Class	Description	Miles in Dalton
Class II, Secondary State-Highway System	Consists of all existing or proposed highways on the secondary state highway system, excepting portions of such highways within the compact sections of towns and cities. All sections improved to the satisfaction of the Commissioner are maintained and reconstructed by the State. All unimproved sections, where no state and local funds have been expended, are maintained by the Town or city until improved. All bridges improved to state standards with state-aid bridge funds are maintained by the State. All other bridges are maintained by the city or town.	11.6 miles (20.2% of roads)
Class III, Recreational Roads	Consists of all such roads leading to, and within state reservations designated by the Legislature. The NH DOT assumes full control of reconstruction and maintenance of such roads.	0.7 miles (1.2% of roads)
Class V, Rural Highways	Consists of all other traveled highways which the Town or city has the duty to maintain regularly.	33.5 miles (58.3% of roads)
Class VI, Un-maintained Highways	Consists of all other existing public ways, including highways subject to gates and bars, and highways not maintained in suitable condition for travel for five years or more.	5.2 miles (9.0% of roads)

Functional Classification System (Federal)	
Function	Description
Principal Arterial	Provides corridor movement suitable for statewide or interstate travel and provides continuity for all rural arterials which intercept the urban area. Serves the major traffic movements within urbanized areas such as between central business districts and outlying residential areas, between major inter-city communities or between major suburban centers.
Minor Arterial	Serves trips of moderate length at a lower level of mobility than principal arterials. Provides access to smaller geographical areas. Provides continuity within a community but doesn’t cut through neighborhoods.

Collector	Collects traffic from local roads and channels it into the arterial system. Provides land access and traffic circulation within residential neighborhoods and commercial and industrial areas.
Local	Comprises all facilities not on higher systems. Provides access to land and higher systems. Through traffic usage is discouraged.

Traffic Volume Data. Dalton’s roads experience modest volumes of traffic along major roads. The most recently available NHDOT traffic counts in Dalton were conducted in 2015. Typically, traffic counts are conducted by NHDOT every 3 years.

Traffic Volumes of Dalton Major Roads



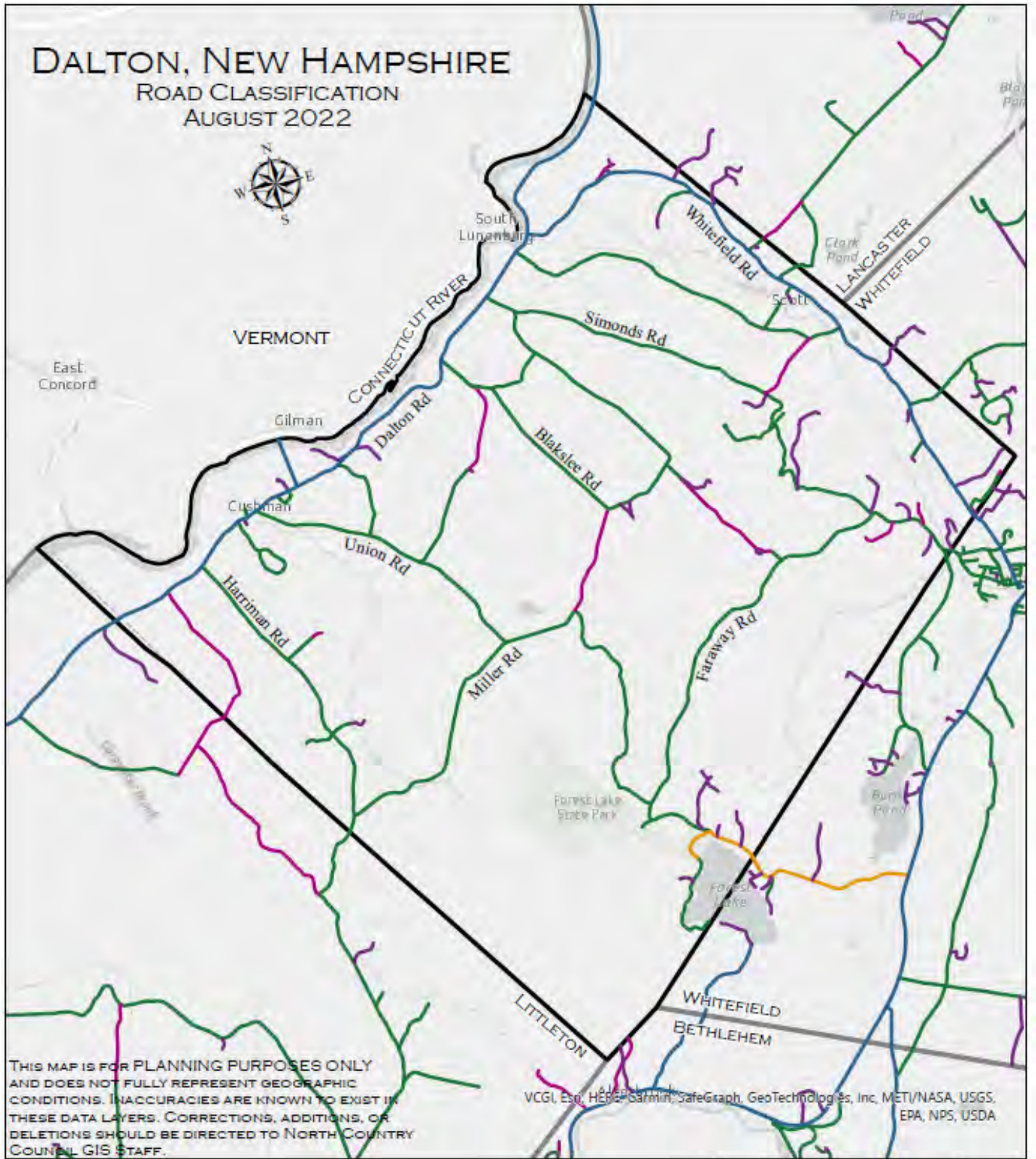
	2009	2012	2015
Route 142	660	600	690
Route 135	1100	920	1200
Bridge Hill Road	1300	1000	1100
French Road	270	200	230

Route 142 Route 135 Bridge Hill Road French Road

DALTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

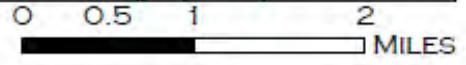
AUGUST 2022



THIS MAP IS FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY AND DOES NOT FULLY REPRESENT GEOGRAPHIC CONDITIONS. INACCURACIES ARE KNOWN TO EXIST IN THESE DATA LAYERS. CORRECTIONS, ADDITIONS, OR DELETIONS SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO NORTH COUNTRY COUNCIL GIS STAFF.

VCGI, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, USDA

- ROAD CLASS**
- V
 - 0
 - VI
 - I
 - VII
 - II
 - III
 - IV
 - DALTON TOWN BOUNDARY
 - NEIGHBORING TOWNS



Roadway and Bridge Condition Data.

Bridges

Dalton's transportation network does not include any known deficient bridges as identified by the NHDOT. This is a benefit to the Town, as many bridges within the NH road network have known deficiencies in need of repair.

State Planned Projects

State of NHDOT projects are identified and listed in various transportation planning documents, such as the Ten-Year Transportation Improvement Plan. This plan identifies projects on state-aid roadways which are proposed or planned for construction using NH state and Federal highway transportation funds.

No current projects are listed in Dalton on the most current (2023-2032) Ten-Year Plan, which can be viewed online here: https://www.nh.gov/dot/org/projectdevelopment/planning/typ/documents/0_2023-2032TYPProjectBook7.22.2022DraftApproved-copyforweb.pdf

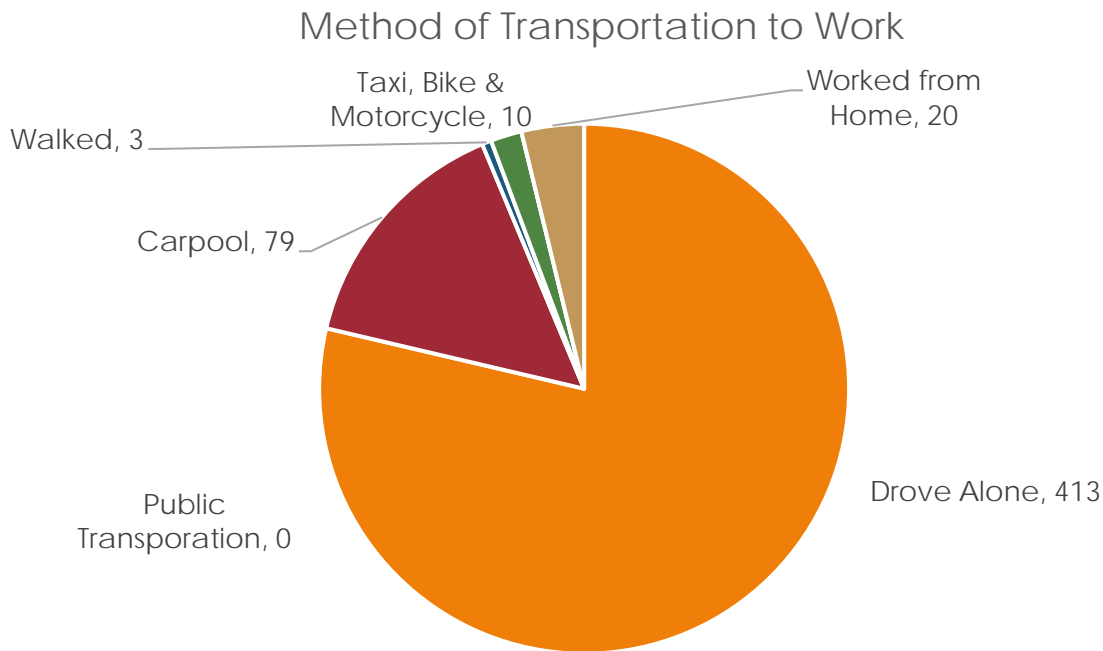
Local Roads

At a meeting with Dalton's Road Agent the Town's transportation needs and opportunities were discussed with this key stakeholder's point of view. The following topics and concerns were identified.

- 1) Width of Roads and Right-of-Way (ROW)
 - a) CONDITION: The width of roads (as physically constructed) and the ROW (available land area under or around the road) were the main topic of concern. Several roads within the Town have an unknowns or undefined ROW. Additionally, known ROWs and road widths are narrow, typically described as between 10 and 20 feet wide.
 - b) RESULT: Due to narrow ROW and road widths, the space available to address grading and drainage needs of the roadways are limited. Stormwater runoff must be handled in order to reduce road base issues related to poor drainage and standing water. Additionally, the narrow ROWs present a clear barrier to increase development in the town. Finally, narrow ROWs can limit line-of-sight and crowding issues for vehicles and other road users which lead to increased safety concerns.
- 2) Road Base Condition Areas
 - a) CONDITION: Two (2) areas along Faraway Rd were identified as ongoing trouble areas. Both sites were described as "swamp" areas which the road passes through. In these areas potholes are an ongoing concern requiring much attention without any permanent resolution. No known ledge areas or issues were identified by the Road Agent.
 - b) RESULT: The wetness of the land under and surrounding the road creates poor drainage conditions which undermine the infrastructure and an area of continued attention without permanent resolution.
- 3) Culverts
 - a) CONDITION: Culverts along Town roads are in fair condition. The Road Agent noted that many are in need of replacement due to end of life. Galvanized ones are being replaced with plastic, but the sizing of culverts must be adequate.

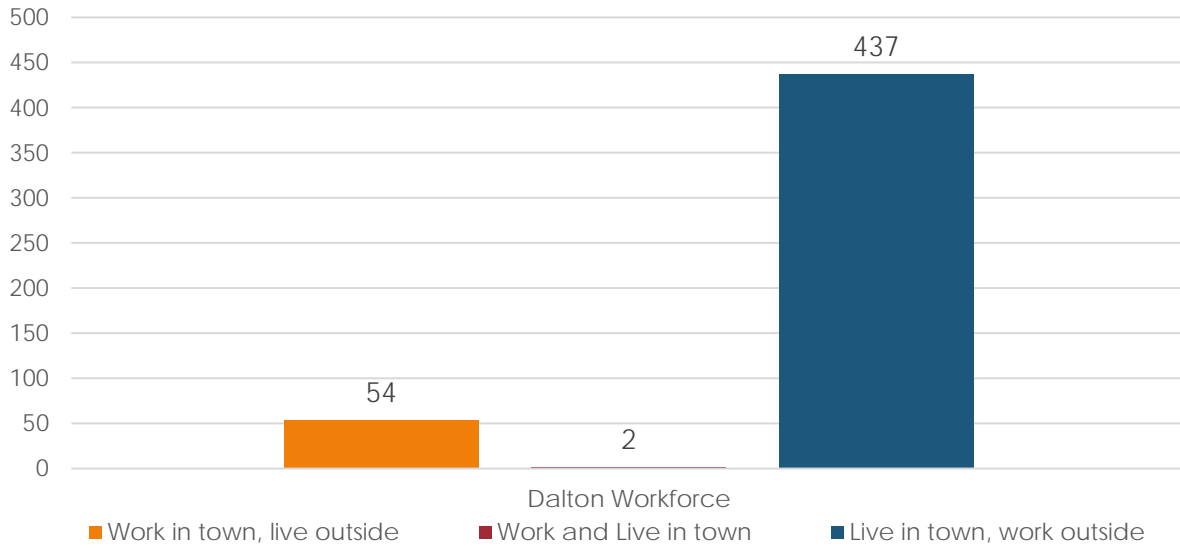
- b) RESULT: As part of ongoing maintenance of the system the Town replaces a number of culverts each year.
- 4) Equipment and Financial Resources
 - a) CONDITION: The Road Agent noted that the equipment needed to maintain the roads is provided and is in fairly new condition, as such there are no immediate unaccounted-for equipment needs. Additionally, the Road Agent noted that the budget available is tight, but enough to meet the systems greatest needs. However, in the current economic conditions, the amounts budgeted to complete work are falling short, presenting challenges with the accuracy of budget as material and labor prices are fluctuating.
 - b) RESULT: The Road Agent advocates for equipment as needed and develops a budget to meet forecasted needs and planned projects. Budgeting and planning for large equipment expenditures in the future may help reduce the impact of fluctuations, including healthy contingencies for cost of overruns in the transportation budget may be important to maintain the network.

Resident Transportation Modes. Using U.S. Census data from 2020 Dalton resident’s typical mode of transportation is driving alone, with an average commute time of 32.4 minutes, and there is 1.3% of the population that lives in a household without a private vehicle.



Workforce Travel Patterns. Using U.S. Census data from 2019 and the On The Map tool, the trend that's visualized is majority of the residents are commuting out of Dalton for employment.

Work and Home Locations



The second figure shows directionality of the travel and distance from home to work. The trend emerging travel in a southerly direction and most of the workforce traveling less than 10 miles up to 24 miles for work.

Job Counts by Distance/Direction in 2019
All Workers

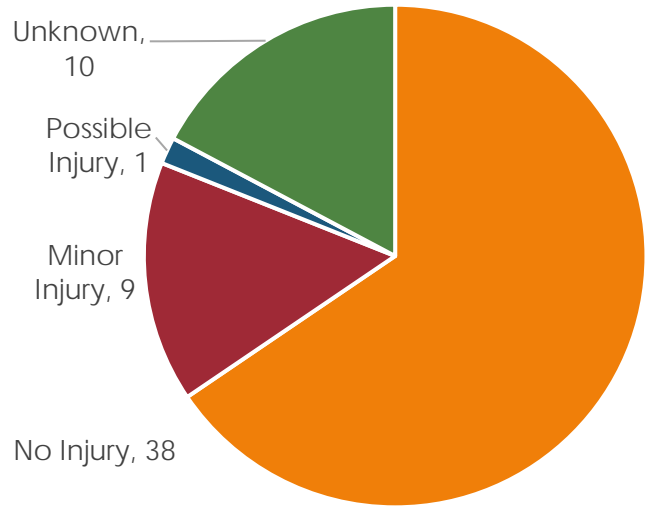


Jobs by Distance - Home Census Block to Work Census Block		
2019		
	Count	Share
Total All Jobs	439	100.0%
Less than 10 miles	143	32.6%
10 to 24 miles	127	28.9%
25 to 50 miles	50	11.4%
Greater than 50 miles	119	27.1%

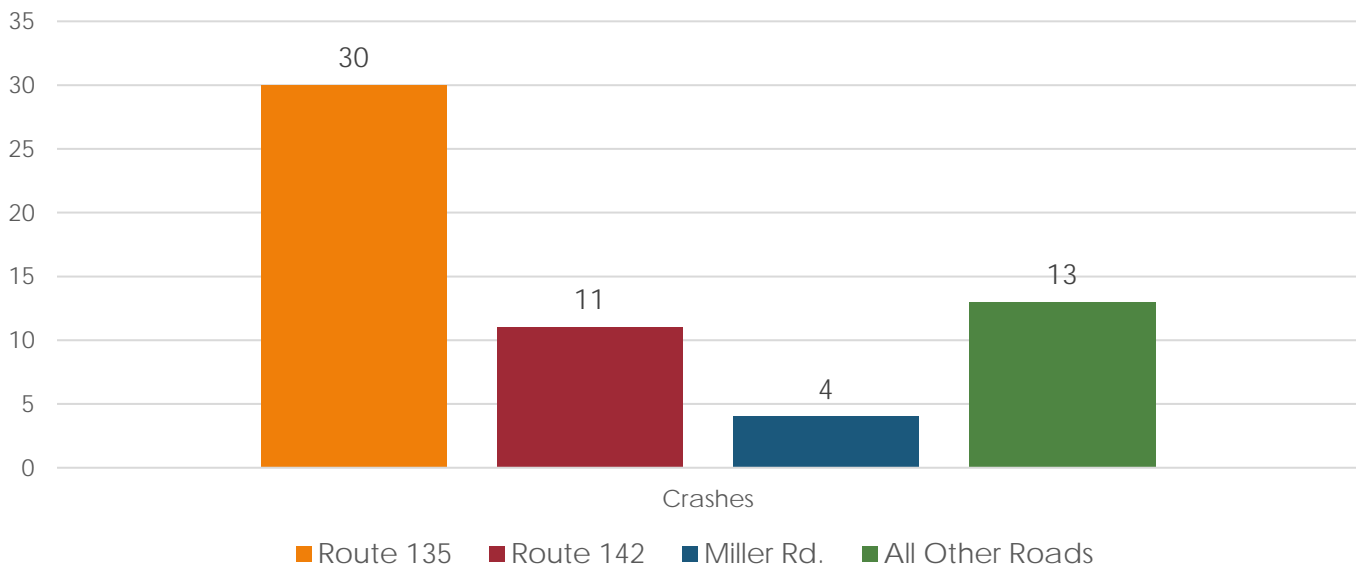
Roadway Safety and Crash Data. The following data describes crash locations from 2017 to 2020 within Dalton based upon severity. Severity of crashes is measured in terms of injury. 58 crashes were identified on Dalton roads within this four (4) year time period, the vast majority of which did not result in injuries.

Looking at the location of crashes within Dalton, Over 50% were located along Route 135 (Dalton Road), 20% along Route 142, 6% on Miller Road, leaving 22% on all other roads. Of other roads, none had more than two (2) crashes.

Severity of Crashes



Location of Crashes



Bicycle Route and Usage. Dalton’s road network is also used by bicyclists and pedestrians. Data on the existing bicycle usage was used from the publicly available data provided by STRAVA, which is an online bicycle and other non-motorized mode trip tracker popular with recreational cyclists. Based upon heat maps of the Dalton surface transportation systems, the roads in town are grouped into the following categories:

Popular Bicycle and Pedestrian Route (based on Strava user data)

Most Popular (strava routes)	Simon’s Rd; Loop Rd; Forest Lake Rd; Blakslee Rd; Miller Rd; Union Rd (E)
Somewhat Popular	Faraway Rd; French Rd; Martin Meadow Rd
Least Popular	Rt. 135; Rt. 142; Union Rd (W)

Transit Proximity and Ride Programs. Dalton’s transit services are provided by Tri-County Cap (Community Action Program) Transit. This organization provides a variety of special services for residents of the Tri-County region (Coos, Carroll & Grafton Counties) including ride services for the elderly, disabled, and low-income residents. Tri-County CAP services vary greatly in each community. While some fixed route bus services are available in the region, none are present in Dalton. <http://www.tricountytransit.org/coverage-map.html>

- Long Distance Medical Program: Available to Dalton residents
- Medicaid Trips: Available to Dalton residents
- Tri-Town Flex Route: Services Littleton, Whitefield, and Lancaster. It does NOT pass through Dalton but is the nearest route bus service in the area.
- Door to Door: Follows area flex route and provides services for those with mobility limitations that impact use of the bus route.
- Volunteer Driver Program: Tri-County CAP is always looking to increase the number of volunteer drivers to assist with medical appointment trips and door-to-door services. Greater numbers of volunteer drivers in a community would increase access to and awareness of these services for qualifying residents.

Input & Analysis

Trends.

When asked to share opinions on Dalton’s greatest transportation challenge or need response trends centered around:

- Road maintenance needs, particularly those of dirt roads were identified as well as areas for improvement along route 135 & 142
- A need for increased public transportation, and transportation services to meet the needs of aging seniors
- Some minor trends around increased bicycle and pedestrian conditions, improved enforcement of traffic laws, and impacts of truck traffic (both current and potentially increased in the future)

Implementation Approach

Introduction

This section of the 2023 Dalton Master Plan identifies specific activities to move forward the goals identified within it. The purpose of these implementation items is to aid the community in understanding what actions and or undertaking will help the community make actionable progress. The table below identifies items for implementation which require engagement and participation of a variety of community stakeholders from municipal boards, officials and volunteers, to residents of the community and stakeholders as large. Please note, this list is not exhaustive and there are a wide variety of actions, policies, and procedures which may move forward the goals expressed in this plan. Those listed here are for illustrative purposes and are to be explored and evaluated as necessary.

CC Action 1.1: Bring back the Mud Run, and other events to build community connection.		
Responsible Party(ies):	Assistance Needed:	Timeline:
- Community members at large (volunteers needed)	- Support from Town of Dalton for use of roads, signage, and use of Town Hall as an event gathering space.	Short-Term (1 to 3 years).
CC Action 1.2: Explore additional opportunities to host, and/or provide space for community events in the Town Center and at park and natural resources areas such as river access points, and Forest Lake State Park.		
Responsible Party(ies):	Assistance Needed:	Timeline:
- Community members at large (volunteers needed) - Conservation Commission - Friends of Forest Lake State Park	- Support from State Park Representatives - Event ideas and organizers	Short-Term (1 to 3 years).
CC Action 2.1: Invest in public spaces in and around the town center to improve vibrancy and sense of community in Dalton.		
Responsible Party(ies):	Assistance Needed:	Timeline:
- Selectboard - Town Voters	- Identify beautification, and community facility opportunities as well as funding.	Long-Term (7 to 10 years).
CC Action 2.2: Promote use of public space, such as the Town Hall and the surrounding land for informal community gatherings.		
Responsible Party(ies):	Assistance Needed:	Timeline:
- Selectboard - Planning Board - Conservation Commission - Community members at large	- Posting to notify public of ability to request use of space. Municipal board and committees should set examples by identifying initial opportunities	Mid-Term (4 to 6 years).
CC Action 3.1: Use the town website, and posting board at Town Hall, to share municipal materials.		
Responsible Party(ies):	Assistance Needed:	Timeline:
- Staff - Selectboard - Planning Board - Conservation Commissioner	- Website & physical postings expanded. Improve accuracy and ensure information is up to date.	Short-Term (1 to 3 year).
CC Action 3.2: Encourage more residents, including newcomers and long-time locals, to participate and volunteer by posting municipal, and community support volunteer opportunities on the town website and		

Town Hall. Including but not limited to: Bioblitzes, Volunteer driver program, and municipal boards and committees.

Responsible Party(ies):	Assistance Needed:	Timeline:
- Staff	- Suggested information and opportunities to get involved identified for posting.	Mid-Term (4 to 6 years).

LU Action 1.1 & NR Action 1.1: Dalton will identify a strategy for the protection of land. Such a strategy would identify priority areas for land protection based upon ecological value, access for public recreation, and eligibility for grant opportunities and other funding vehicles.

Responsible Party(ies):	Assistance Needed:	Timeline:
- Conservation Commission - Planning Board - Selectboard	- NRIs completed and cooperation between municipal boards and committees to develop a strategy and adopt it.	Mid-Term (4 to 6 years).

LU Action 1.2: Utilize a capital improvement planning process to identify needed investments in municipal assets such as town hall, road, fire and EMS, and transfer station needs.

Responsible Party(ies):	Assistance Needed:	Timeline:
- Town of Dalton	- Input from municipal service providers regarding needs, maintenance and upgrades	Short-Term Action (1 to 3 years).

LU Action 2.1: Audit the Dalton subdivision regulation to identify barriers to cost-efficiency.

Responsible Party(ies):	Assistance Needed:	Timeline:
- Planning Board	- Technical assistance may be needed to understand regulation impacts upon costs of development.	Mid-Term (4 to 6 years).

LU Action 2.2: Audit the Dalton subdivision regulations to see if lot sizes and frontage requirements could be reduced, or road construction standards adjusted to reduce costs.

Responsible Party(ies):	Assistance Needed:	Timeline:
- Planning Board	- Technical assistance may be needed to understand regulation impacts upon costs of development.	Short-Term (1 to 3 years).

NR Action 1.2: Continue to complete periodic natural resource inventories (NRIs) to inform land protection efforts and ensure transparency of local priority setting.

Responsible Party(ies):	Assistance Needed:	Timeline:
- Conservation Commission - Community members at large	- Assistance with human power to complete NRIs (volunteers)	Short-Term (1 to 3 years).

NR Action 2.1: Explore ways to promote natural resource protection through the subdivision review process by considering steep slopes, wildlife habitat areas, and reducing impervious surface areas associated with new road construction standards.

Responsible Party(ies):	Assistance Needed:	Timeline:
- Planning Board	- Assistance may be needed with a technical audit	Mid-Term (4 to 6 years).

NR Action 3.1: Use the website and visible public posting locations to show maps of Dalton's recreational assets.

Responsible Party(ies):	Assistance Needed:	Timeline:
- Staff - Planning Board - Selectboard	- Maps developed, posted, and updated on website. Local knowledge to inform.	Short-Term (1 to 3 years).

NR Action 3.2: Encourage the reinstatement of community events at parks and recreation areas to celebrate these resources and build sense of community.		
Responsible Party(ies):	Assistance Needed:	Timeline:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community members at large - Staff - Selectboard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Events identified by community members, staff and selectboard support needed for use of space, and to promote events. 	Short-Term (1 to 3 years).
ED Action 1.1: Explore the use of tax incentive programs such as Community Revitalization Tax Incentives (RSA 79-E) and similar tools to spur investment in economic activities within particular locations of the community.		
Responsible Party(ies):	Assistance Needed:	Timeline:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning Board - Selectboard - Staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning Board input needed to identify locations, Selectboard to develop and, staff needed to implement program. 	Long-Term (7 to 10 years).
ED Action 1.2: Engage with the Coos County Economic Development Corporation, a non-profit, community-based business lender to highlight technical assistance program available to support Dalton based businesses.		
Responsible Party(ies):	Assistance Needed:	Timeline:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff - Selectboard - Business owners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff and selectboard research needed to identify opportunities, business stakeholders needed to utilize. 	Short-Term (1 to 3 years).
ED Action 2.1: Participate in the Coos County Broadband Initiative, to map and extend service infrastructure county wide.		
Responsible Party(ies):	Assistance Needed:	Timeline:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selectboard appointee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outside engagement needed with larger planning group, information brought back to municipality. 	Short-Term Action (1 to 3 years).
ED Action 2.2: Explore use of Town Hall as a publicly available high-speed wifi location for persons with limited connectivity at home. Such an effort can increase education, training, and marketing opportunities for current business owners, entrepreneurs, students and residents as a whole.		
Responsible Party(ies):	Assistance Needed:	Timeline:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selectboard - Staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support for use of space, monitoring, operation and development of program details like hours of operation. 	Mid-Term (4 to 6 years).
T Action 1.1: Install "share the road," "bike route," or other appropriate signage along common (and planned) cycling routes in order to improve driver awareness, visibility of cyclists, and promote bicycling as a safe, healthy and enjoyable use of Dalton roadways.		
Responsible Party(ies):	Assistance Needed:	Timeline:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning Board - Selectboard - Road agent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning Board for location ideas, Selectboard approval of signage needed, road agent/crew for installation 	Short-Term (1 to 3 years).
T Action 1.2: Advocate for improved bicycle and pedestrian facilities along major corridors (typically state aid roadways) including designated bike lanes, routes, sharrows (shared use arrows), through NHDOT transportation funding processes such as the Ten-Year Plan and Transportation Alternative Programs.		
Responsible Party(ies):	Assistance Needed:	Timeline:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selectboard - NCC TAC Representative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selectboard needed to identify priorities and improvements, NCC TAC (<i>transportation advisory committee to NHDOT</i>) Representative to advocate and relay information. 	Short-Term (1 to 3 years).
<p>T Action 1.3: Encourage the use of unused rail corridors for multi-modal transportation for a variety of purposes, in order to preserve these rights-of-way for the future and improve off-road networks for residents and visitors alike.</p>		
<p>Responsible Party(ies):</p>	<p>Assistance Needed:</p>	<p>Timeline:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning Board - Selectboard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning Board and/or selectboard to engage with a provide support for activities of others including but not limited to the Cross NH Adventure Trail. 	Short-Term (1 to 3 years).
<p>T Action 1.4: Explore and identify preferred public parking locations for walkers, cyclists, and other users along common routes and points of interest.</p>		
<p>Responsible Party(ies):</p>	<p>Assistance Needed:</p>	<p>Timeline:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selectboard - Road Agent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify potential locations, and ensure safety of siting with Road Agent. 	Mid-Term (4 to 6 years).
<p>T Action 2.1: Scout locations and seek funding for "park and ride" facilities in Dalton. These may include formal facilities constructed with support from NHDOT or informal facilities like existing public parking at town-owned buildings.</p>		
<p>Responsible Party(ies):</p>	<p>Assistance Needed:</p>	<p>Timeline:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selectboard - Road Agent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify potential locations, and ensure safety of siting with Road Agent. 	Mid-Term (4 to 6 years).
<p>T Action 2.2: Increase awareness and promote ridesharing by publishing (and distributing) rideshare parking locations or posting a rideshare board at the Town offices or online.</p>		
<p>Responsible Party(ies):</p>	<p>Assistance Needed:</p>	<p>Timeline:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selectboard - Planning Board - Staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning Board to provide information from Master Plan, Selectboard and staff to publish, post, and promote. 	Short-Term (1 to 3 years).
<p>T Action 2.3: Encourage residents to become volunteer drivers through Tri-County CAP's volunteer driver programs as a way to give back and help seniors and people with mobility challenges by providing information about the programs on the town website.</p>		
<p>Responsible Party(ies):</p>	<p>Assistance Needed:</p>	<p>Timeline:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selectboard - Planning Board - Staff - Community Member at Large 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Board needed to highlight local need and provide referrals to Tri-County CAP, community members needed to volunteer. 	Short-Term (1 to 3 years).
<p>T Action 3.1: Encourage a healthy contingency be budgeted into the costs for all road work items included in the town budget in order to ensure completion of project during times of cost uncertainty and variability.</p>		
<p>Responsible Party(ies):</p>	<p>Assistance Needed:</p>	<p>Timeline:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selectboard - Road Agent - Voters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selectboard and road agent to ensure contingencies in budgets, voters to adopt. 	Mid-Term (4 to 6 years).

T Action 3.2: Collect and compile data on the legal ownership and right-of-way of municipally owned roadways in order to better understand the land area available to make improvements to safety and condition.

Responsible Party(ies):	Assistance Needed:	Timeline:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Road Agent - Staff - Historical Society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information needed from all to complete an inventory and utilize it. 	Mid-Term (4 to 6 years).

T Action 4.1: Designate a representative to participate on the North Country Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) which is the region's formal interface with NHDOT in order to better make use of NHDOT funding in Dalton's transportation networks and to remain current on best practices and strategies to improve road networks.

Responsible Party(ies):	Assistance Needed:	Timeline:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selectboard - Volunteer to serve on NCC TAC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selectboard to appoint, volunteer to participate and share information between the Town and regional group. 	Short-Term (1 to 3 years).

T Action 4.2: Integrate transportation network improvements, including equipment needs, into Dalton's Capital Improvement Planning process. Ensure key stakeholders such as the Road Agent and NHDOT District Engineer participate.

Responsible Party(ies):	Assistance Needed:	Timeline:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selectboard - Planning Board - Road Agent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Road agent needed to identify projects, local boards needed to ensure in CIP. 	Short-Term (1 to 3 years).

T Action 4.3: Advocate for improvements to Dalton's state-aid highway system through the NHDOT Ten Year Planning Process, Regional Transportation Improvement Plan, and specific funding opportunities associated with these programs.

Responsible Party(ies):	Assistance Needed:	Timeline:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Volunteer NCC TAC Member - Selectboard - Road Agent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selectboard and road agent to identify projects, NCC TAC member to advocate for projects and gain regional resources to support. 	Short-Term (1 to 3 years).

T Action 4.4: Safety is paramount to Dalton's roadways. Explore locations to complete Road Safety Audits, particularly in common accident areas

Responsible Party(ies):	Assistance Needed:	Timeline:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Volunteer NCC TAC Member - Selectboard - Road Agent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selectboard to monitor accident trends and identify locations with road agent, NCC TAC member advocates for RSA. 	Long-Term (7 to 10 years).

T Action 5.1: Explore opportunities to create signage or improvements along the Connecticut River Scenic Byways (Rt 135) a designated Scenic Byway.

Responsible Party(ies):	Assistance Needed:	Timeline:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selectboard - Planning Board - Conservation Commission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Boards and Commission needed to identify opportunities and seek funding for signage and improvements. 	Short-Term (7 to 10 years).

T Action 5.2: Engage with the North Country Scenic Byways Committee to understand how to market a byway as an attraction for visitors and a cultural asset for local residents.

Responsible Party(ies):	Assistance Needed:	Timeline:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selectboard - NCC TAC Member 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage NCC TAC volunteer to participate and learn more, information brought to Selectboard for use. 	Mid-Term (4 to 6 years).
T Action 5.3: Identify areas for increased signage, lighting, and pull-off improvements in order to create a welcoming entrance to Dalton for those entering or traveling through.		
Responsible Party(ies):	Assistance Needed:	Timeline:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning Board - Selectboard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Board needed to identify locations, volunteers needed to clean up. 	Mid-Term (4 to 6 years).

Appendix A: Outreach and Engagement Summary

[Begins on next page.]

Dalton Master Plan Update

Outreach & Engagement Summary Report

October 18, 2021; revised 11/8/2021 per Planning Board feedback



Introduction

Outreach and Engagement Process

In August of 2021, the Dalton Planning Board began an update to the town's master plan which was last refreshed in 2011. The foundation of any community's master plan are the values and goals of its citizens and property owners. As such, the Planning Board worked with North Country Council to create multi-faceted outreach and engagement strategy intended to solicit input on the master plan from a wide representation of Dalton stakeholders. Opportunities to provided input included both in-person events and a survey available online and in hard-copy by request.

- In-Person Events:
 - Three (3) Opportunities were Provided (Town Square Fair & Dalton Transfer Station)
 - 39 people provided input
 - The events were advertised through press releases in local newspapers, shared posts on **social media, and on the Town's website.**
- Survey Responses:
 - The survey was available online and in paper format by request and remained open from August 13, 2021 until October 12, 2021.
 - 108 people completed the survey
 - The survey was advertised through press releases, shared posts on social media, the **Town's website, and through post card mailers sent to each registered voter and property owner in Dalton.**

Report Format & Outline

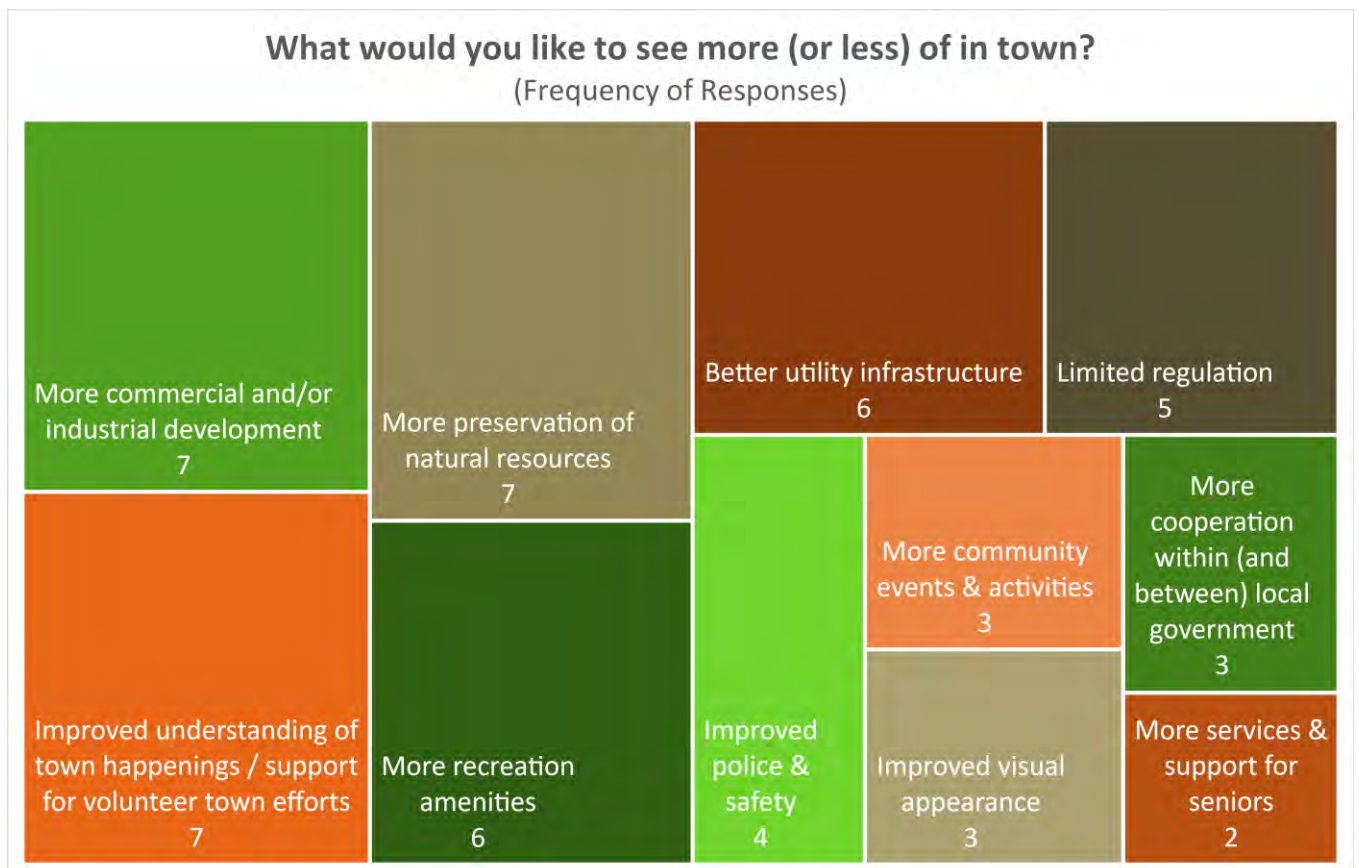
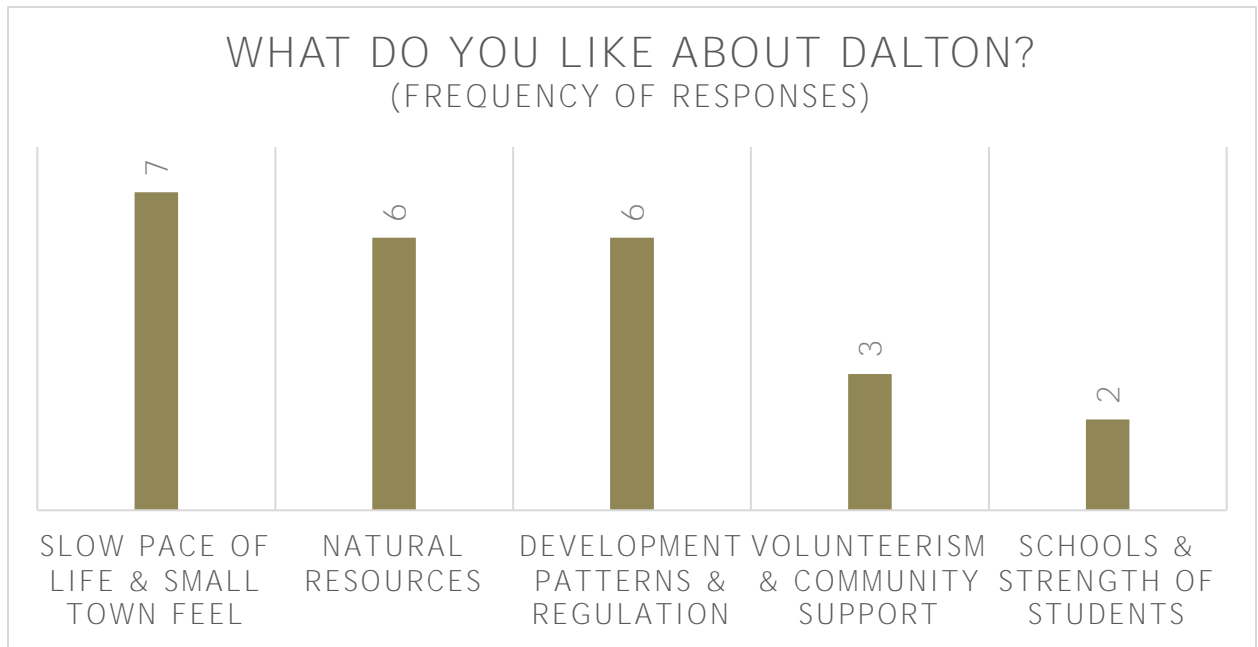
This report provided summary results of the survey and in-person input received as part of the Master Plan update. Overall, this report is broken into two (2) sections including a summary and analysis of the responses received and recommendations from North Country Council on way to consider incorporating the feedback received into the 2021 Dalton Master Plan. Scroll or click below to navigate to a section.

- Summary of Responses
- Recommendations for Integration

Summary of Responses

In-Person Events

The Dalton Planning Board and North Country Council (NCC) prepared outreach materials and targeted questions to engage community members in a dynamic and time-limited way while they attended the Town Square Fair and Chicken BBQ (a long-standing community event) or visited the transfer station (a common and cross-cutting gathering spot). Residents were asked key questions to help update the community vision within **Dalton's 2021 Master Plan**. The results below are broken-out under each key question.



How do you picture the town in 10 years (20 years)?	
Responses	Frequency
With very limited change from today	7
Without a landfill	3
With a larger resident population	3
With areas of commercial or industrial development identified	2
With improved bipartisan problem solving	2
Lower taxes	2
With better community events	1
With many property owners unable to keep up with tax bills (due to decreased population, increasing county budgets, and fixed town expenses) and a depleted unrestricted account	1
With a Chamber of Commerce	1
With more second homeownership (due to the town encouraging it)	1
With more pride in personal property	1
With a healthy forest and a balance of conservation	1

When Looking at a Map of Dalton:	
What Needs to be Preserved?	What Needs to Be Changed?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to the river and river walk trails 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve approaches to town (gateways)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No landfill in Dalton (7 responses) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the town center
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great walking and biking trails all around (2 responses) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring back the Mud Run
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create trails in forested area at Forest Lake State Park
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the landfill is developed, center other industry in the same area (3 responses)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold more events at Forest Lake State Park like a 5K, 1st Day Plunge, Fundraisers, etc.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring back community events for families and kids like swimming lessons and arts & crafts days (2 responses)

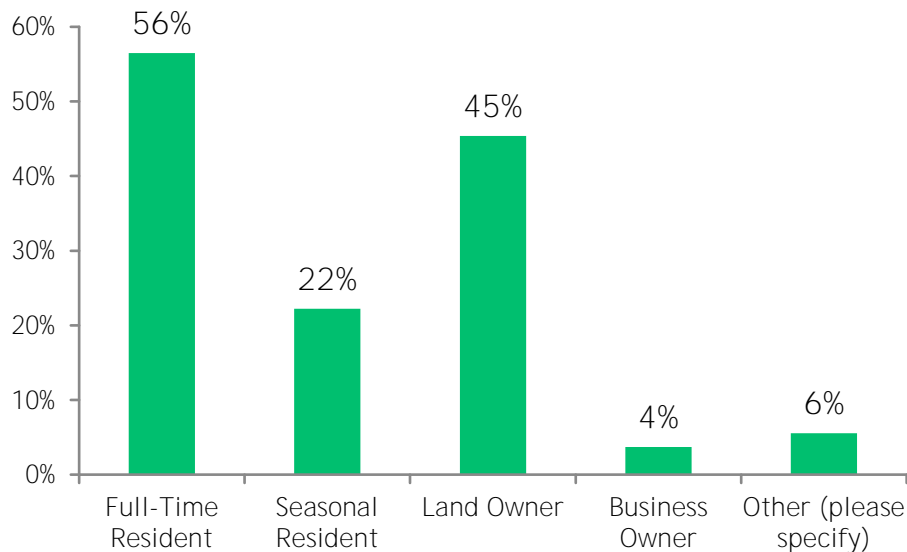
Survey Responses

To create a broad reach of participation from members of the Dalton community a survey was deployed in order to provide an opportunity for feedback to each household and/or property owner in Dalton.

The purpose of the survey will be to identify shared goals, needs, and opportunities for the town in each topic area of the 2021 Master Plan.

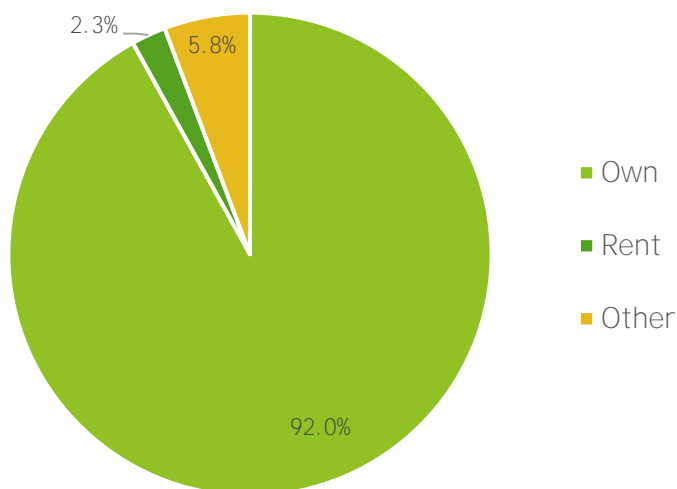
A postcard mailer was developed to inform the public about the master plan update invite people to complete the survey either electronically (preferred) or in paper format by request. An active link to the survey was also provided on the town of Dalton website and two press releases were distributed to local newspapers in order to spread the word. The results below come from analysis of the survey results completed as of October 12, 2021.

Are you a Dalton: (Select all that apply.)



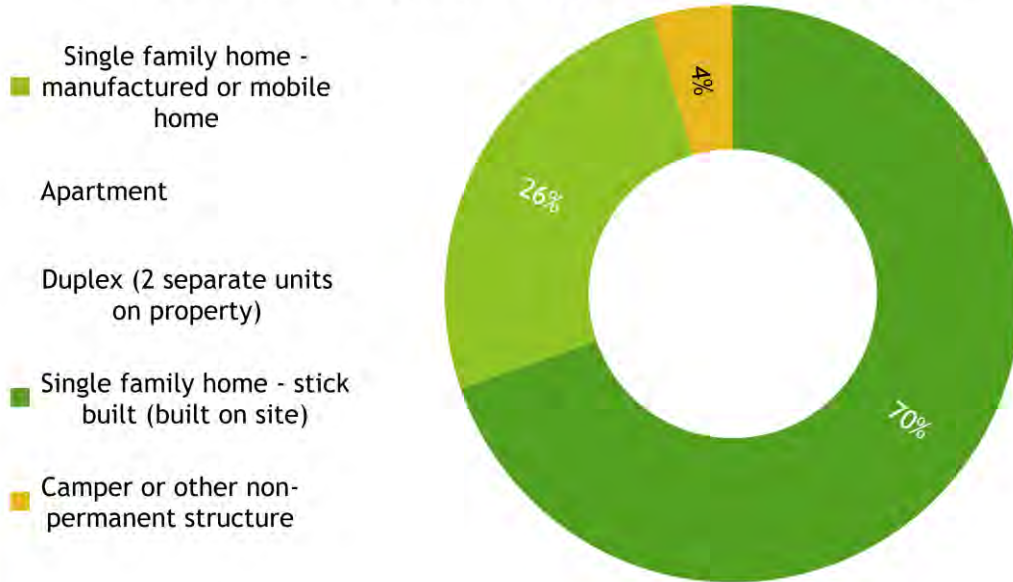
*Other responses included four (4) persons who live in Dalton more than seasonally but not year-round, and two (2) vacation home owners.

If you are a Dalton resident, do you own or rent your home?

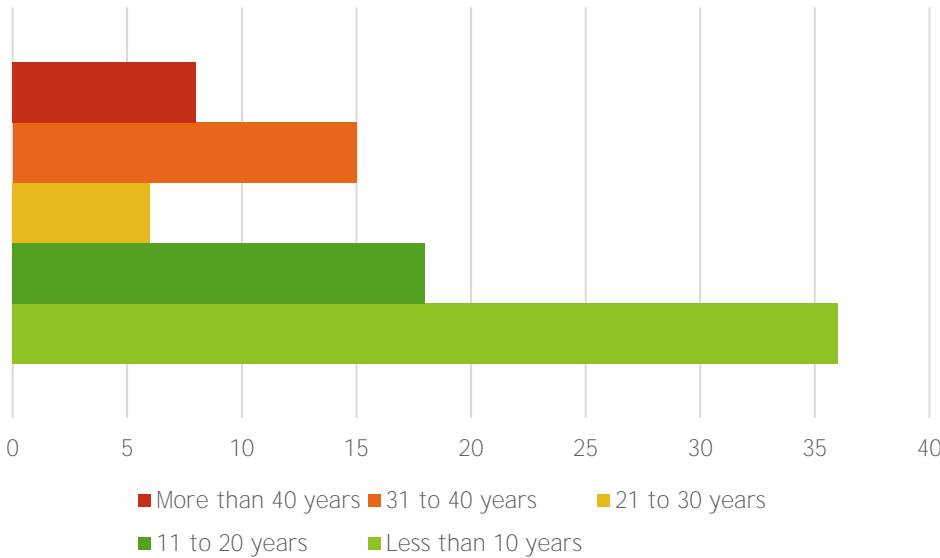


- Of the 87 resident respondents the vast majority own their homes.
- Persons who responded other included those who own land and plan to build and seasonal residents.

What best describes your Dalton home?



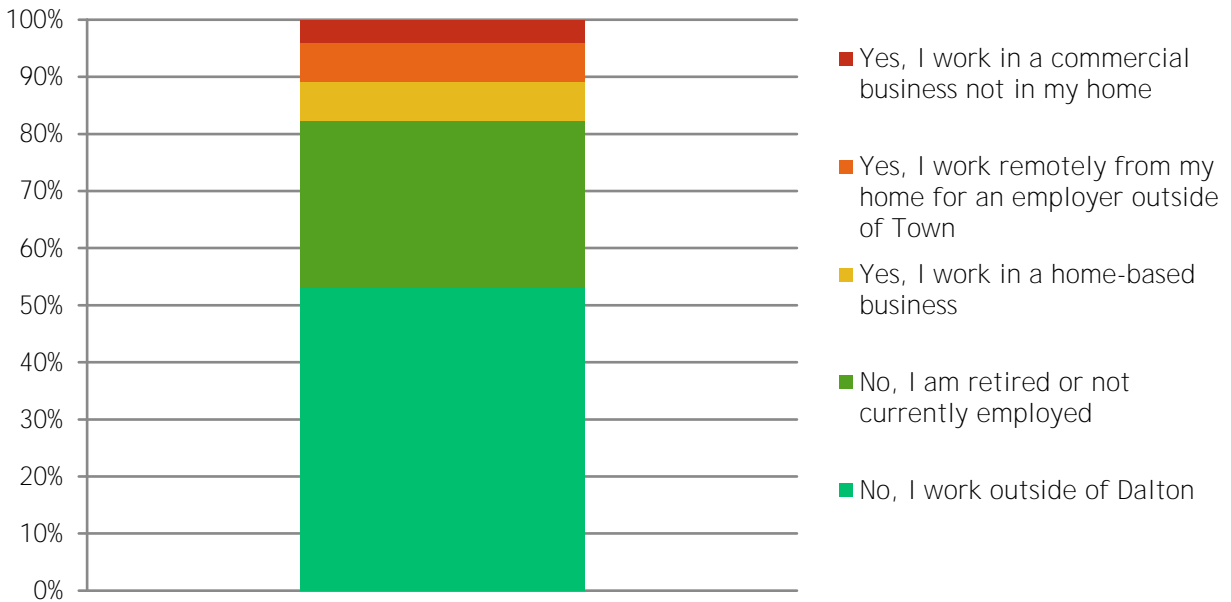
How long have you lived in Dalton?



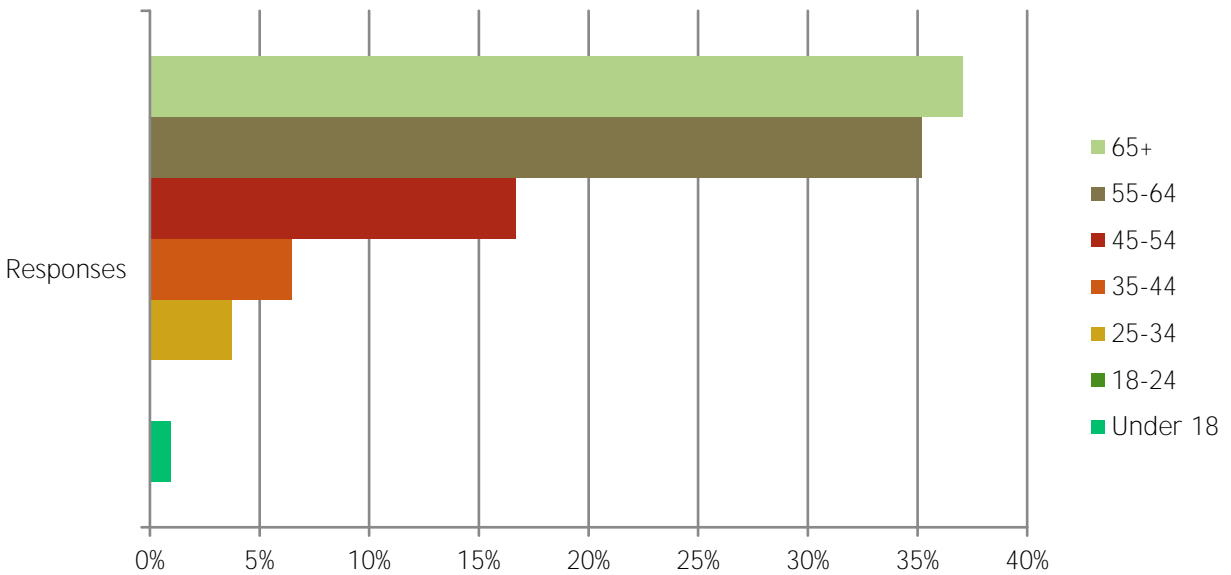
- The average respondent has lived in Dalton for 19 years.
- 43% of respondents have lived in Dalton for less than 10 years.
- 26% have lived in Dalton for less than 5 years.

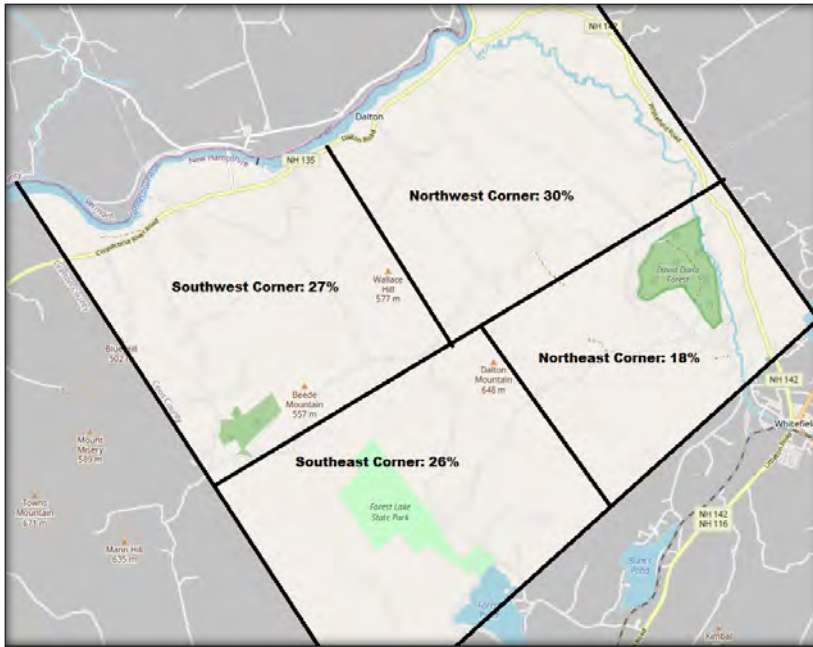
14 respondents operate businesses within the Town of Dalton. Of those 14 respondents more than 50% have operated their business for more than 20 years and more than 25% have started that business within the last three (3) years.

Do you work in Dalton? (Select the option that best describes your work location.)

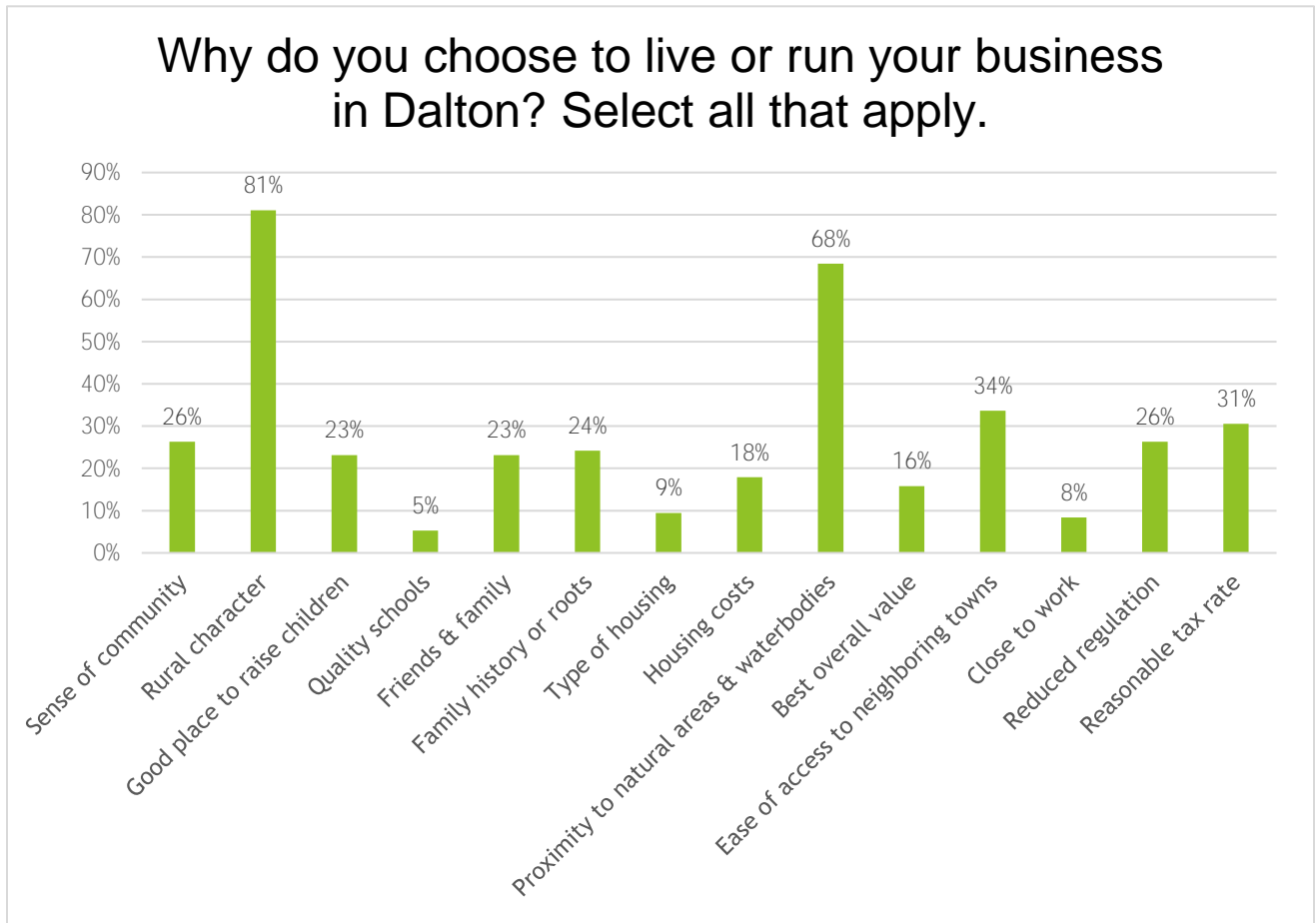


What is your age group?



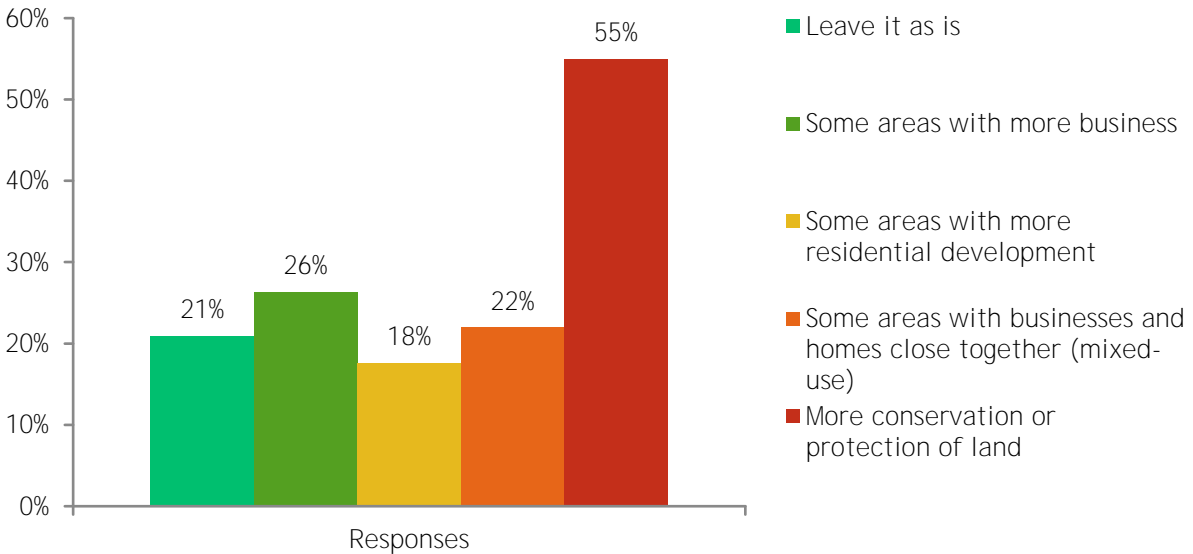


Survey responses appear fairly well distributed across the community

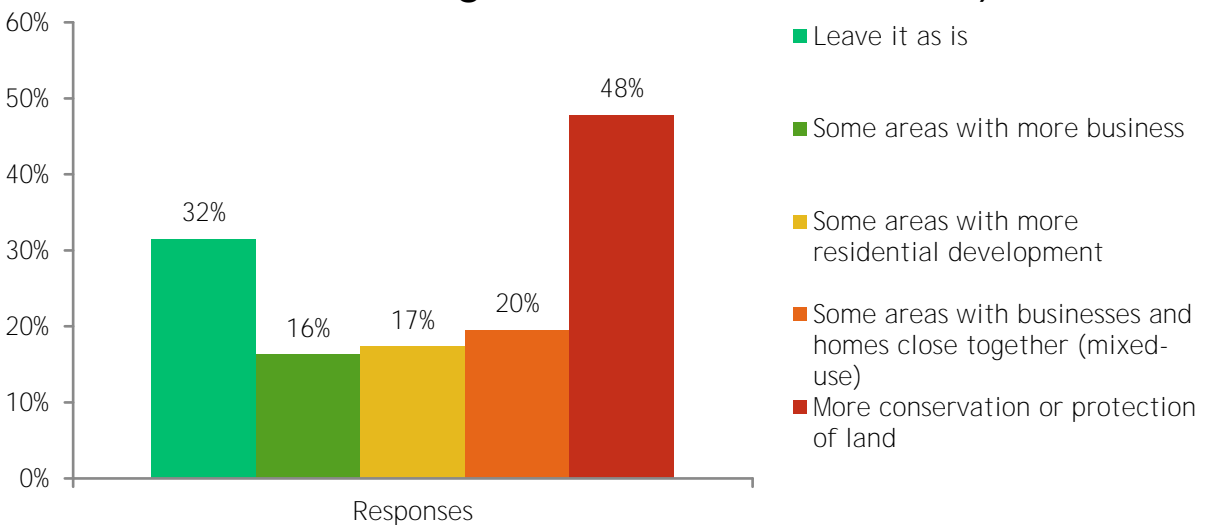


** Of respondents who discussed zoning as a “concern,” 3 were concerned about a lack of zoning (2 from the SW quadrant and 1 from the NW quadrant); 4 were concerned about adopting zoning (3 from the SW quadrant and 1 from the NW quadrant).

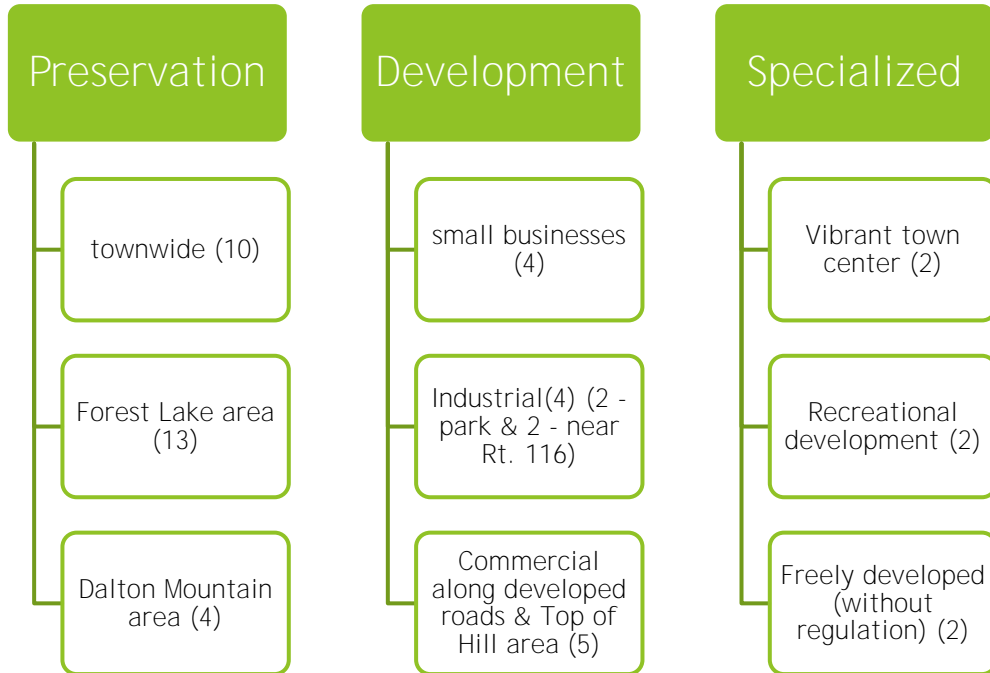
What would you like to see happen to the Rt. 135 corridor? (The 135 Corridor is Dalton Road connecting to Littleton and Lancaster.)



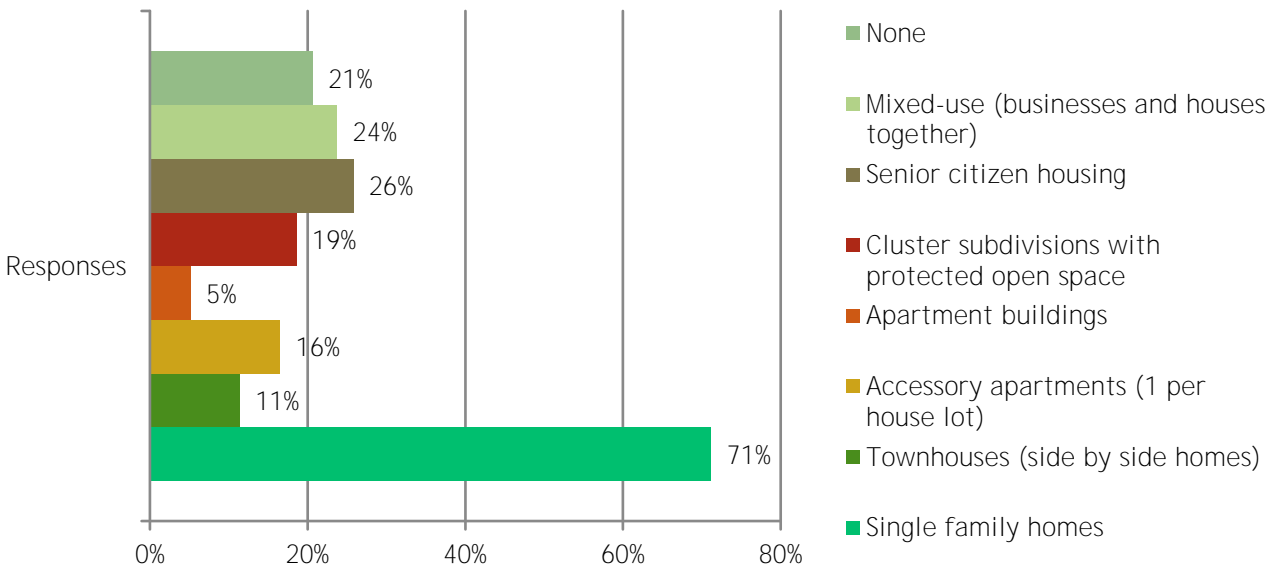
What would you like to see happen to the Rt. 142 corridor? (The 142 Corridor is Whitefield Road connecting to Dalton to Whitefield.)



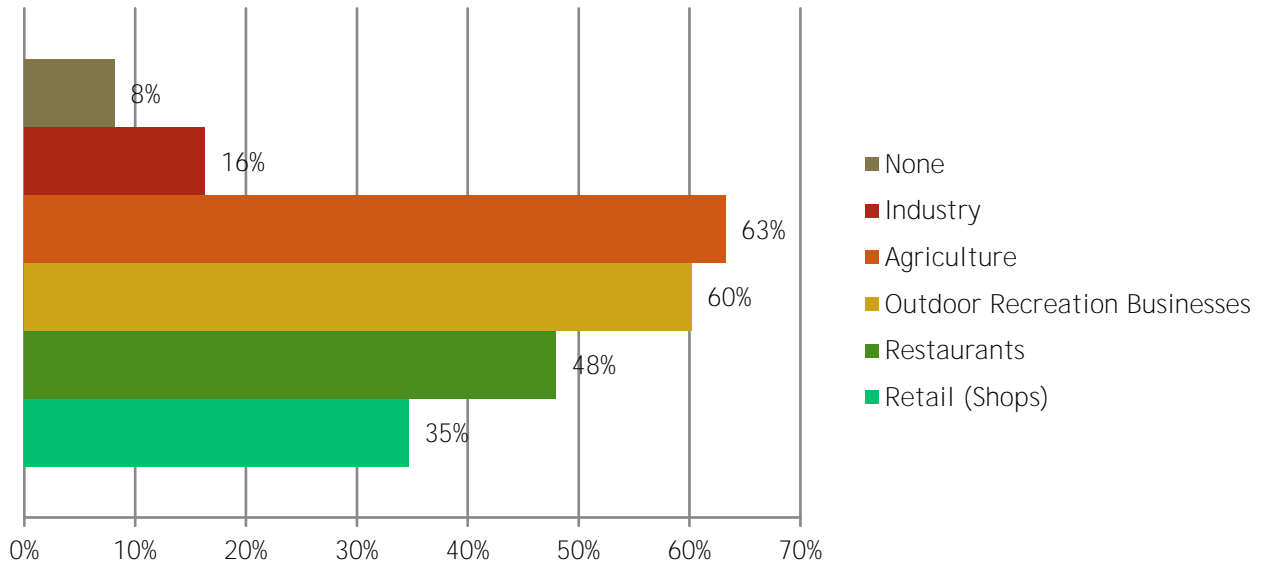
In addition to the corridors specifically asked about in the survey, respondents identified others areas of Dalton in which they would like to see more development or preservation as follows:



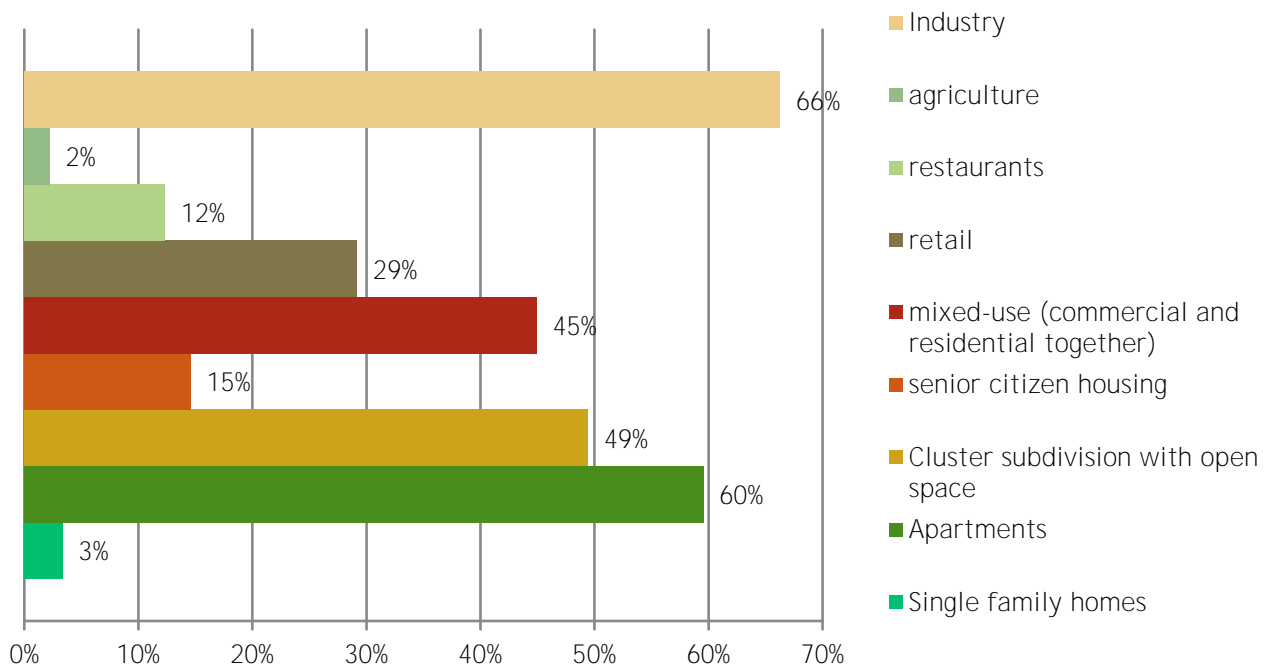
What kind of new residential development would you like to see in the future? (Select all that apply.)



What kind of non-residential development would you like to see in the future? (Select all that apply.)



What kinds of new development would you not like) to see in Dalton? (Select all that apply.)



When asked to share opinions on Dalton's greatest natural resource challenge and/or needs response trends centered around:

- A need for increased or continued preservation of natural spaces, including forested areas, water resources, wetlands, wildlife habitats and the Forest Lake State Park area
- The challenges of the proposed landfill, increased business development, climate change, loss of property owner control, and lack of zoning

When asked to share opinions on Dalton's greatest economic development (or business) challenge or need response trends centered around:

- A need to increase the tax base for the community in order to stabilize taxes and reduce residential tax burdens
- A need to increase opportunities for businesses Dalton. Primarily focused around small businesses with limited impacts to the area. Environmental, recreational, and tourism based businesses were highlighted, as well as business that provide employment for Dalton residents
- A few respondents called out the lack of high-speed internet as a challenge

When asked to share opinions on Dalton's greatest transportation challenge or need response trends centered around:

- Road maintenance needs, particularly those of dirt roads were identified as well as areas for improvement along route 135 & 142
- A need for increased public transportation, and transportation services to meet the needs of aging seniors
- Some minor trends around increased bicycle and pedestrian conditions, improved enforcement of traffic laws, and impacts of truck traffic (both current and potentially increased in the future)

When asked about expanded or new social, or community services response trends centered around:

- More services or activities for seniors
- More services and activities for children & families
- Increased volunteerism
- Use of town center for community events
- Improved/maintained trails
- Police
- *(a trend also emerged around no new or expanded services)*

When asked to identify any specific issues in neighboring town which are of importance to Dalton response trends centered around:

- Communities with which water resources are shared, including those upstream and downstream along rivers were identified. The development there impacts things in **Dalton and Dalton's development impacts the waters downstream as well.**
- Increased development in Littleton, Whitefield, and Lancaster were identified as **impacting Dalton's affordability, and future community** development in Gilman and Whitefield was called out as another impact to Dalton.
- The impact of recreation and trails based development in the area was identified as a topic which could impact Dalton.
- The town of Bethlehem and its operational landfill were identified as impactful and an opportunity to coordinate and learn from neighbors. Additionally, a potential future landfill in town was identified as a way in which Dalton may impact its neighboring communities.

Recommendations for Integration

Master Plan

The information collected through this outreach and engagement process provides valuable direction on how the desires, concerns, and needs of Dalton community have changed and remained the same since the Master Plan was last updated in 2011. Below are a series of recommendation on how the 2011 Master Plan may be revised based upon the input received and summarized here.

- Data collected affirms **Dalton's rural setting and reasonable property values as features which** retain existing and attract new residents including both year-round and part-time or second homeowners.
- Data collected demonstrates a growing need to determine what scales and locations of **businesses are acceptable to Dalton's community members. While there is** continued support for disbursed small-scale and home-based businesses; a wide range of opinions were expressed regarding the larger commercial and industrial operations, with some expressing an interest in identifying areas for such development, some looking to prohibit it entirely, and some who do not wish to see any land use regulation. The 2011 plan can be enhanced by further discussing this topic as it relates to industry or commercial land uses in the town.
- Data collected provides some indication that Dalton stakeholders may be interested in seeing a more vibrant and active town center. The 2011 plan describes the building present in the town center however this statement could be enhanced by explaining the possible roles and uses of the town center as a place for civic engagement, community events, and volunteerism.
- Data collected affirms the 2011 **plan's emphasis on the importance Dalton's rural character.** Residents continue to desire new residential development to be primarily single-family construction, however this statement would be updated by including discussion of senior housing needs. Additionally, language around resident interest in strict property maintenance standards should be softened to describe a balance between regulating residential properties and allowing property owners to use residential lots as desired.
- Data collected further supports the discussion in the 2011 Vision Statement & Land Use element regarding the impact of part-time residents, second homeowners, and increased tourist populations as an area of impact. This section can be strengthened by identifying opportunities to improve civic engagement and the need to knit new community members moving to the community into the historic cultures and traditions of Dalton in order to improve civic health, community trust, and cooperation.
- Data collected highlights the concerns of Dalton taxpayers upon the diversity, stability and size of the municipalities tax base. Many residents are concerned about increasing tax rates due to new or expanded services.
- **Data collected continues to support the value placed upon Dalton's natural resources** and landscapes. Continue efforts for preservation and protection of key resources is important to both residents' quality of life and the possible growth of recreation and tourism based economic ventures.

Other Possible Uses of this Information

While the primary purpose of the community input survey and in-person engagement events were to provide direction to the 2021 Master Plan Update often the information shared by participants relates to topics of municipal services offered, public safety, community connections, and regulations. Trends **observed by NCC staff planners within these categories are described above for Dalton's consideration.**

- Municipal Services:
 - Increased hours of operation at Town Hall, increased access to formal municipal documents and agenda materials, increased (and continued) digital streaming and participation of board meetings, increased information regarding day-to-day town operations were mentioned by multiple respondents.
 - Increased sense of trust and connection to local government representatives was discussed by multiple respondents.
- Public Safety:
 - Concerns regarding public safety were expressed by multiple respondents. This topic included opinions on past and current performance of police services. While there are a wide range of views on municipal policing costs as compared to benefits, the importance of a robust public safety program was observed as a trend.
- Community Connections:
 - Desires for more community activities were expressed by a wide range of respondents. Events and **activities that celebrate Dalton’s natural resources, promote trail and waterway use**, and provide opportunities for children and seniors were the most often desired.
 - A need for more community members to contribute to volunteer and community efforts was expressed by multiple respondents.
- Regulation:
 - Opinions regarding the role of zoning, or land use regulation in Dalton were expressed by many respondents, however there was not a clear trend or majority interest regarding such a topic. Respondents opposed to regulation fear loss of property rights, interference with existing operations and land uses, and increased costs of development and municipal services. Those in favor of regulation are largely in favor of limiting heavy land uses such as waste disposal and landfill within the community. However, several stakeholders noted a desire to see heavy land uses located in specific areas of town if they will be permitted. Opinions regarding regulation of residential properties and accessory land uses were greatly mixed.