



WAITSFIELD PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA

December 2, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.

Planning Commission

Beth Cook
Robert Cook
Emma Hanson
AnnMarie Harmon, Vice-
Chair
Becca Newhall
Alice Peal
Jonathan Ursprung, Chair

THE PLANNING COMMISSION WILL BE HOLDING A HYBRID MEETING. THE PUBLIC MAY ATTEND IN PERSON AT WAITSFIELD TOWN HALL OR REMOTE VIA ZOOM WITH TELEPHONE AND/OR VIDEO ACCESS. THOSE PARTICIPATING MAY SPEAK DURING THE DESIGNATED PERIODS.

To join the meeting remotely, use this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9190265312>

Meeting ID: 919 026 5312

Or call: 1 929 205 6099

Planning & Zoning Administrator

J. B. Weir

Town Administrator

York Haverkamp

Town Clerk

Jennifer Peterson

Town Treasurer

Steve Lewis

Waitsfield Town Office

4144 Main Street
Waitsfield, VT 05673
(802) 496-2218
www.waitsfieldvt.gov

1. **CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL**
2. **REVISIONS TO AGENDA, IF ANY (5 +/- min)**
3. **PUBLIC FORUM (10 +/- min)**
4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES –NOVEMBER 18 (10 +/- min)**
5. **DRAFT VILLAGE MASTER PLAN (35 +/-min)**
 - a. Review Public Comments
 - b. Next Steps
6. **WASTEWATER PLANNING PROJECT UPDATE (10 +/- min) JB/Bob**
7. **PC WORK PLAN 2026 (40 +/- min)**
 - a) Overview for upcoming year
 - b) Ag-Res District Permitted / Conditional Uses
 - c) STRs
8. **OTHER BUSINESS (10+/-min)**
9. **ADJOURNMENT**

**Waitsfield Planning and Zoning Administrators Report
Planning Commission December 2, 2025 meeting**

4. Village Master Plan

The most recent draft Village Master Plan is included in the packet. The public comment period will close on December 1st. The PZA has included all feedback in the meeting packet. The PZA is also including the packet feedback from Joshua Schwartz of the Planning District, dated 11/6/2025. SE Group updated the current draft (dated 11/10) based upon Joshua's feedback as well as that of the steering committee subsequent to the 10/30/2025 meeting.

The Village Master Plan Steering Committee will be meeting ahead of this PC meeting on December 2nd at 10:30 a.m. The meeting has been warned to include a possible majority of the Planning Commission.

The project website is up to date and can be accessed here:

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/af47fecd1e3646a8ada69138fab98b18>.

6. Wastewater Project Update

There have been no meetings of any of the wastewater teams since the last PC meeting.

The PZA and Town Administrator did meet with John Kiernan of RCAP Solutions. John was a lead engineer on the previous wastewater project attempt in 2008, as well as the project lead on the successful water system. RCAP Solutions is a non-profit organization that provides a variety of services to communities, with a primary focus on the Northeast and Caribbean. As the Northeast and Caribbean affiliate of the Rural Community Assistance Partnership (RCAP), it offers technical assistance, training, and financial resources to small and rural communities, particularly for drinking water, wastewater, and community development needs. The organization also offers extensive housing programs, including financial assistance, counseling, subsidized housing, and affordable housing management.

The purpose of this meeting was to discuss strategies for landowner outreach in the push to final design. Mr. Kiernan intends to check in periodically with the Town and assist on the project where feasible through final design.

7. PC Work Plan 2026

The most recent iteration of the 2026 PC Work Plan is included in the packet.

The PZA reached out to SB Chair, Brian Shupe, with regard to timing for recommendations on short-term rental regulations. Although no specific timeline has been identified, it appears that late winter/early spring would be ideal. The PZA recommends that the board begin drafting recommendations shortly after the new year.

At the November 4th meeting, Madhurri Barefoot and Ryan Diehl spoke with the PC about the potential for True North to operate from the Wilder Farm Inn, explaining that the current regulations in Waitsfield do not allow for a residential therapeutic wellness center (such as the one which True North operates) to be located in the Ag/Res District. The PZA believes that the board should discuss the matter at this meeting.

Included in the packet are pages 12-6 – 12-8 of the most current Town Plan. The section discusses the purpose of and policies for the Ag-Res District.

The PZA notes that this is the second time that an entity has come to the Town over the last few years with requests to operate a school within a district that does not currently allow – either as a permitted or conditional use – a school to operate. The other organization was the MYSA school.

With regard to abutting towns, Fayston does allow for a school to operate in its Rural-Residential District (see page 18 [here](#)). In Warren, an “educational facility” is *not* allowed in any of the Town’s rural districts – both in the existing land use regulations (LURs) as well as the pending updated LURs.

As a general matter, the PZA notes the following reasons pursuant to which a *school* would not be a recommended use in the Town’s Agricultural-Residential District:

- Preservation of agricultural land: The primary goal of an agricultural district is to protect and promote farming. Building a school, a commercial or institutional use, goes against this principle by taking land away from agricultural use.
- Zoning and land use conflicts: Agricultural zoning is designed to maintain a rural character and prevent urban sprawl. Introducing a school can create a precedent for other non-agricultural developments and lead to conflicts with existing farming operations, such as noise, traffic, and increased activity.
- Traffic and infrastructure strain: A school can generate significant traffic, including buses and parent drop-offs, which may not be suitable for the low-density road networks typical of agricultural areas. This can strain existing infrastructure and impact the rural environment.

- Residential focus: The "residential" part of an "agricultural residential district" is typically for very low-density single-family housing, not for large institutional buildings like schools.

It should be noted that the Town did extend the boundary of the Village Residential District in 2023 to, among other things, bring the Waitsfield Elementary School into compliance. Prior to the amendments, the school was situated within the Ag-Res district was deemed a grandfathered non-conforming use.

8. Other Business

Jonathan may have an update on the Mad River Valley Planning District.

Upcoming trainings/webinars:

VTDEC's Drop-In Discussions are informal gatherings on the third Thursday of the month from 9 – 10 am hosted by VTDEC's River Corridor and Floodplain Protection program. No registration is required. Come on by!

The discussions support the work of municipal officials who are responsible for floodplain and river corridor regulations, and others who are involved in the work of flood resilience in Vermont. To support casual dialogue the discussions are not recorded.

If you have questions about the event, or using Teams, feel free to reach out
toned.swanberg@vermont.gov or tessa.yip@vermont.gov

Future invitations to the Drop In Discussions will be posted to the Flood Resilience Listserv and also as News on www.floodready.vt.gov

And – let's talk about what's on your mind! Your feedback and suggestions are requested.

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 211 704 798 739

Passcode: N9BU9kf6

Dial in by phone

+1 802-828-7667,942347713# United States, Montpelier

Find a local number

Phone conference ID: 942 347 713#

Developing an Outreach Plan to Celebrate your Town's Woods, Wetlands and Wildlife

It can be daunting to plan the outreach for a series of events or plan an outreach strategy that may lead up to a proposed municipal change, sometimes years in the making. In this webinar you'll learn more about creating an outreach plan with multiple events, separating messages for different audiences and identifying an over-arching theme that helps tie the series together. The panel of presenters includes Elise Schadler and Jens Hilke with years of municipal technical assistance experience and Megan Davin a Communications and Outreach specialist. Join us for this exciting event to help improve your commission's communications.

Date & Time:

Repeat sessions of this webinar will be offered on the following two dates:

Session 2: Thursday, December 4th 2025, 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. [Register](#)

Presenters:

Elise Schadler, Program Manager VT Urban & Community Forestry Program, Vermont Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation; Megan Davin, Communications and Outreach Specialist, Vermont Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation; Jens Hilke, Conservation Planner, VT Fish & Wildlife Department

Open Meeting Law Basics

Every municipal board, council, commission, and committee (see examples listed below) is required to comply with Vermont's Open Meeting Law. Attend this training to learn or review the basic requirements of the law, including:

Meeting notices and agendas;

Managing public participation, including remote attendees;

Meeting minutes;

Advisory vs. non-advisory boards; and

Recording requirements.

This training is critical for elected and appointed members of all statutory municipal boards, commissions, and committees listed below – as well as all committees appointed by selectboards and other legislative bodies. Due to the great variety of locally appointed public bodies, the following lists are not exhaustive, but they do include most of the groups included in Vermont Statutes Annotated.

Presenter: Susan Senning, Staff Attorney II, VLCT Municipal Assistance Center (MAC)

Legislative (Governing) Bodies

Board of Aldermen
City Council
Board of Village Trustees
Prudential Committee
Selectboard
Boards
Board of Abatement
Board of Auditors
Board of Civil Authority
Board of Listers
Development Review Board
Library Trustees
Trustees of Public Funds
Zoning Board of Adjustment
Commissions
Conservation Commission
Planning Commission
Committees
Budget Advisory Committee
Recreation Committee
Energy Committee
Other committees by statute or appointed by selectboards (and other legislative bodies)

NOTE – This training will address the basics of the Open Meeting Law, but it does NOT fulfill the requirement (as of January 1, 2025) for chairs of legislative bodies, municipal managers and mayors to watch Secretary of State’s recorded Open Meeting Law training.

Register [here](#).

Respectfully submitted,

J.B. Weir

TOWN OF WAITSFIELD, VERMONT
Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, November 18, 2025

Draft

Members Present: Beth Cook, Bob Cook, Emma Hanson, AnnMarie Harmon, Becca Newhall, Alice Peal, Jonathan Ursprung

Staff Present: JB Weir, Zoning Administrator

Others Present: Alex Belenz (SE Group)

II. Regular Business

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm by Jonathan Ursprung. The meeting was held in person at the Town Offices and remotely via Zoom.

2. Review agenda for addition, removal, or adjustment of any items

No changes were made to the agenda.

3. Public Forum

No members of the public were present.

4. Draft Village Master Plan – Public Comment

Alex explained that recent changes made to the plan had not been substantive, but were generally made to provide more clarity. He pointed out the edits which had been incorporated, based upon PC input, to the language regarding the new homes intended to be built in Irasville, including no prescriptive amount provided other than the total of 70 for the wastewater service area. He also reviewed the changes made on page 16 regarding a new general timeline, emphasizing that there are anticipated dates for the availability of wastewater system capacity. Some of the structure of the Plan was changed to include other information on this new timeline page, and all were in agreement that these changes are beneficial.

There was some discussion of what is meant by ‘low functioning’ wetlands, and agreed that it should be emphasized in the Plan that lower functioning wetlands continue to be candidates for some level of restoration. Alex indicated that he would work with Tucker of SE Group to revisit the terminology.

JB reported that he had received feedback from Jeff Brauer of the Skatium, asking if it was possible to include some of their potential development plans in the draft Master Plan. It was also noted that Emma’s house can be depicted as recent infill, and that comments had been received from several others. All comments will be compiled and suggested changes outlined by SE Group after the comment period closes. It was outlined that the Steering Committee will meet during the day of December 2, with the PC holding a regularly scheduled meeting that evening.

Alex outlined the content included in the Plan providing justification/clarity regarding infrastructure development as it relates to the Plan, and the associated mapping. It was also agreed that other aspects of planned local development, such as the Active Transportation Corridor, could be included in this section.

There was some discussion of future work to be taken on by the PC after the Master Plan is finalized.

5. Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of November 4, 2025 were amended and approved.

It was agreed to add to the work plan a review of potential zoning changes based upon the discussion held with Ryan and Madhurri at the November 4 meeting.

6. CVRPC Update

Alice spoke of the presentation regarding the Flood Safety Act, which she had sent a recording of to PC members. She outlined that the PC could host a presentation of this information, as well as potentially having Ned Swanberg join a meeting to speak of NFIP changes and new River Corridor rules which are in development.

Alice reported that the floodplain study report has been drafted, and that Brian Voigt has noted that the project with the most potential for the least cost is the work at the Fairgrounds area. If this project meets phosphorus reduction requirements, it might be funded through this grant program.

Alice also pointed out that the Route 100/17 intersection study has not yet been funded; she is not sure at this point if it will be due to diminished funding availability.

7. Wastewater Planning Project Update

JB noted that information was included in the meeting packet, and that the design change which moves the pipe installation to the Slow Road (and avoid needing to dig near the cemetery) is being worked through. He noted that it may be necessary to engage somebody to take on public coordination efforts for items such as easements and potential changes to plumbing configurations, as it has been realized that this work is quite time consuming. Emma pointed out that it would be prudent to explore the installation of geothermal infrastructure at the same time as the wastewater line.

8. CVRPC 10.27 Presentation Recap

There was some discussion of the interaction between the CVRPC Future Land Use Map and the Act 250 Tier System, and it was agreed that some clarification is needed regarding requesting Tier 1B status, the Road Rule, and what Tier designations would be best for Waitsfield. JB explained that the current village and neighborhood designations will be absorbed into the new community designation structure.

6. Other Business

Municipal Day Recap - JB spoke of the sessions he attended regarding emergency flood response strategies and the implementation of the new Tiered Act 250 review levels.

MRVPD Executive Committee – Jonathan reported that a number of applications had been received for the Planner position, and that interviews are planned for December. He also pointed out that Joshua Schwartz's time available for Wastewater Project work would be reduced.

7. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary

IRASVILLE VILLAGE MASTER PLAN

2025



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Cover Photo: Steve Butcher

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

VILLAGE MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

AnnMarie Harmon	Josh Schwartz
Brian Shupe	Luke Foley
Kaziah Haviland	Mac Rood
Ira Shadis	Sam Robinson
Jonathan Ursprung	Sean Lawson

TOWN OF WAITSFIELD STAFF

JB Weir, Planning & Zoning Administrator
York Haverkamp, Town Administrator

COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Our sincere thanks to the residents of the Town of Waitsfield and the Mad River Valley who lent their time, energy, and ideas to this planning process.

CONSULTING TEAM



Alex Belenz
Elena Juodisius
Patrick Olstad
Amelia Chandler
Mark Kane

CHAPTER 1

A Village of Potential: The Story of Irasville

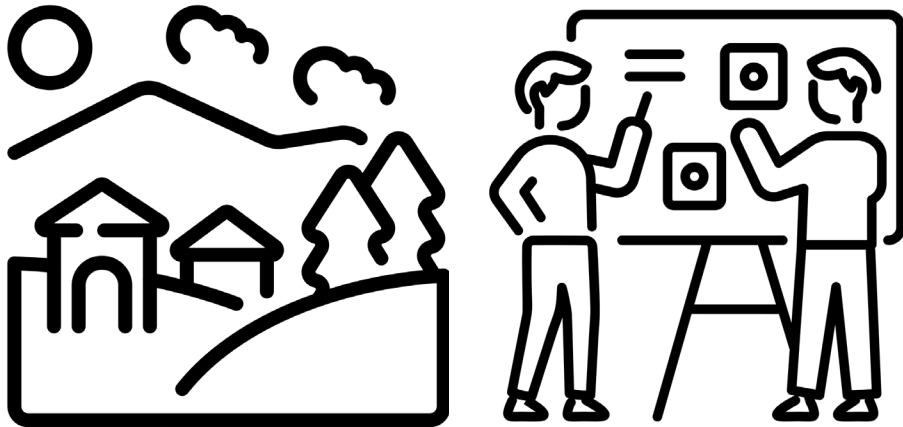
Project Focus Area: The Irasville Village District, as identified on the Town of Waitsfield Zoning Map.



Community gathering place. Hub of the Mad River Valley. Jumping off point for the great outdoors.

Irasville is where the Mad River Valley comes to shop, dine, gather, and play. One of two villages in Waitsfield, VT, this area has long been envisioned as a vibrant regional center, featuring a thoughtful mix of homes, local businesses, services, and recreational amenities. For years this vision has been held back, challenged by insufficient infrastructure, natural resource constraints, and a lack of planning progress.

Thanks to sustained efforts by local and regional partners, the time is ripe to reestablish an actionable, pragmatic, and forward-looking vision and action plan for Irasville. The Irasville Village Master Plan aims to do just that.



Above: Irasville from the air (credit: Steve Butcher).

Below: Waitsfield Farmers Market on a fall day in Irasville.

THEN & NOW: THE DEVELOPMENT OF IRASVILLE

1. INITIAL DEVELOPMENT

The early development of Irasville was similar to many other historic Vermont villages - a relatively dense cluster of homes and businesses surrounded by agricultural lands. Fortunately, early development was located above the floodplain of the Mad River.



Up and Away

Irasville is a rarity in the Mad River Valley - relatively level land along the base of the valley that is elevated out of the floodplain. Historically, this has made Irasville an attractive location for development.

2. AUTOMOBILE-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

In the mid-20th century, a more automobile-oriented development pattern emerged as Irasville evolved into a commercial center. During this time, local planning focused on clustering commercial development in Irasville to avoid sprawling development patterns along VT Route 100. Accompanying this commercial development was a series of roads, commercial driveways, and large surface parking areas.



3. INFILL DEVELOPMENT

In recent years, some infill development has occurred in Irasville. There has also been an increased emphasis on improving pedestrian connectivity in the village. **The lack of a centralized wastewater system for the village has been the primary limitation on further infill development.**



Infill Development

5th Quarter Butcher + Provisions (bottom right) is example of infill development - the creation of new buildings within already developed areas. Benefits include limiting sprawl and using existing infrastructure.

Regional Context

Irasville sits on the floor of Vermont's Mad River Valley, a mountainous and well-conserved watershed where headwater streams quickly reach the main stem of the Mad River. This topography supports the Valley's vaunted outdoor recreation amenities and famous scenery while presenting real constraints and threats for local infrastructure and development, such as steep slopes and flooding.

With flat and flood-resilient topography, Irasville will play a key role in the future climate and economic resiliency of the Mad River Valley.



Nestled in the Valley: Fiddler's Green as seen from Wu Ledges Town Forest.

IRASVILLE TODAY: EXISTING CONDITIONS

LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT

- » Irasville is known as the **commercial** center of the Mad River Valley; however, it contains a multitude of other land uses. There are a number of **residences** in Irasville, with clusters of multi-family homes in the southern part of the village as well as **mixed-use buildings** with apartments located above commercial establishments. There are also several industrial operators in the village area.
- » **Irasville is far less densely developed than Waitsfield Village.** The median lot size in Irasville is 1.1 acres, compared to Waitsfield Village's zoning districts: Village Business (0.32 acres) and Village Residential (0.71 acres).

TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

- » Irasville's transportation network consists of roads, parking areas, sidewalks, and recreational trails.
- » Historically, Irasville has had an **automobile-oriented development pattern** featuring roads, driveways, and large surface parking areas. There has been work in recent years to improve pedestrian access and trail connections; however, there are still **significant gaps in the pedestrian network**, with limited sidewalks and crosswalks.

NATURAL ASSETS & CONSTRAINTS

- » Irasville is nestled above the banks of the Mad River at the base of a steep valley wall. Most of the village area is elevated above the 100-year floodplain. **Irasville is one of the few larger areas of flat topography in the Mad River Valley with minimal flood risk.** Historically, this has made Irasville an attractive location for commercial and residential development.
- » Irasville's flat topography supports a **significant wetlands complex**, with approximately 25 acres of wetlands. These range from low-function wetlands with little ecological value to higher-function wetlands that provide important habitat and help mitigate flooding. Historical development in Irasville has impacted these wetlands, with nearly an acre of wetlands impacts since 1992.
- » Located on the floor of the Mad River Valley, Irasville is bounded by (and contains) areas of **steep slope**. These steep areas are typically unsuitable for future development. Clearing and developing steep slopes can accelerate flood events and erosion.
- » While Irasville has significant existing development, there are also areas of **unfragmented forest and habitat** in and around the village.



(1) Northfield Savings Bank in Irasville is an example of a mixed-use building, with residential apartments above the ground-floor bank.



(2) Recent pedestrian safety improvements along Route 100. There is now a continuous sidewalk connection between Waitsfield Village and Irasville, as well as integration with the Mad River Path.



(3) A boardwalk installed by Mad River Path along Carroll Rd forms a key linkage in the transportation and recreational path network in Irasville.



(4) Wetlands along Slow Road. A 2021 study by Arrowwood Environmental found that these wetlands have little ecological value, while wetland complexes near Carroll Rd provide important habitat and flood mitigation functions.

A Four-Season Outdoor Recreation Hub

The Mad River Valley has long been a haven for outdoor recreation, anchored by prominent ski areas. In recent years, there has been a concerted effort to broaden the Valley's year-round outdoor recreation offerings - improving quality of life for residents and enhancing the tourism economy. Significant effort has been applied to expanding the Valley's multi-use trail networks, improving trail access through trailhead and signage improvements, and enhancing promotion of warm-weather recreation opportunities.

Irasville is the emerging center of four-season recreation for the Valley. The Mad River Valley Recreation Hub, located in Irasville, serves as the primary trailhead for the popular mountain bike trails in Camel's Hump State Forest while also hosting the Mad River Valley Welcome Center, a bike shop, and restaurant and brewery. The Mad River Path connects the Hub to destinations throughout Irasville.



BUILDING ON PLANS & STUDIES: PAST & PRESENT

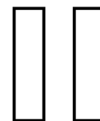
HELD IN CHECK: PAST EFFORTS

Community and regional partners have explored visions for a vibrant Irasville for decades. Irasville has always held potential, attracting visionary ideas and creative designs from a variety of community members and organizations. Themes from past plans for Irasville included rethinking the village's relationship to Route 100, finding opportunities for a vibrant mix of homes and businesses, and improving pedestrian access.

Unfortunately, past planning efforts for Irasville largely did not gain traction.

Amongst other factors, insufficient infrastructure and mixed community support contributed to a stalling out of progress. In 2008, Town voters declined to support a bond measure for the development of a community wastewater system, which had been identified as an essential step to enable infill development in Irasville while protecting water quality.

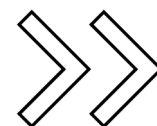
Without community wastewater infrastructure in place, redevelopment efforts in Irasville have been significantly hindered.

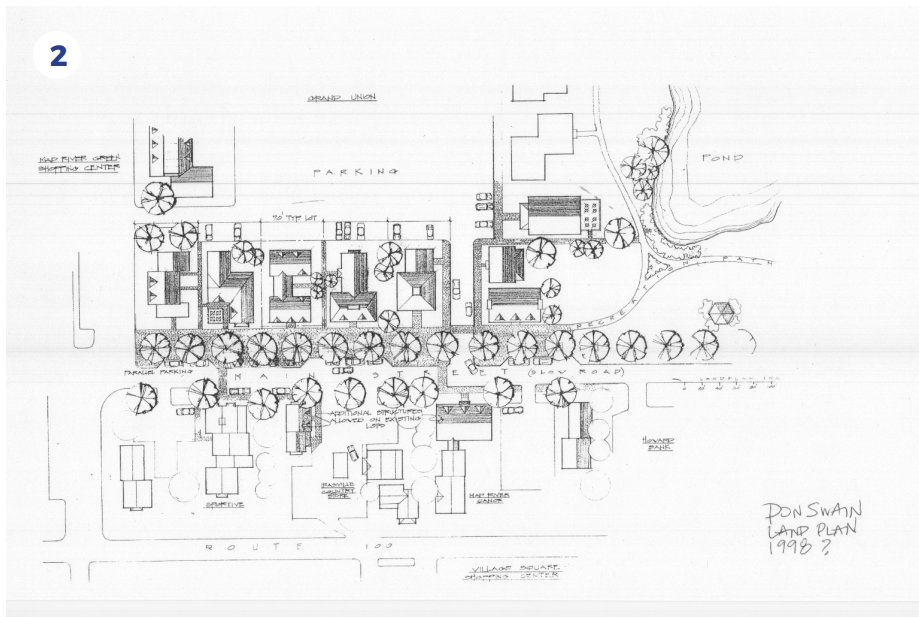
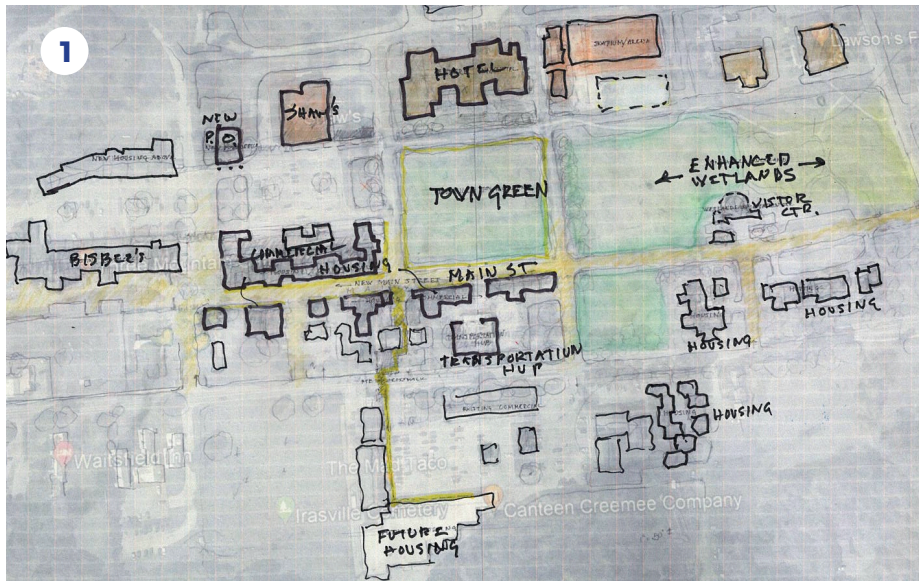


RECENT PROGRESS & MOMENTUM

In recent years, efforts to plan for a vibrant Irasville have regained steam, catalyzed by thoughtful, iterative planning and a commitment to community engagement.

- ✓ **Waitsfield Community Wastewater Project:** a project to support environmentally responsible infill development in Waitsfield's village areas (construction expected to commence in late 2026).
- ✓ **Mad River Valley Active Transportation Corridor:** an initiative to connect the villages of the Mad River Valley with pedestrian and bicycle paths (scoping study completed in 2025).
- ✓ **Vibrant Villages Initiative:** a comprehensive update of zoning bylaws to support walkable infill development in Waitsfield's village areas (completed in 2024).
- ✓ **Waitsfield Town Plan Update:** a thorough rewrite of the Town's guiding document, identifying Irasville as the regional growth center for the Mad River Valley (completed in 2023).





(1) & (2) Past planning concepts for infill development and village vibrancy in Irasville. Many past planning efforts have explored similar ideas, such as Slow Road becoming a “Main Street” for Irasville.

Irasville Focus Areas (1/2)

3

Rate your level of support for the following potential land use strategies in Irasville:

Current regulation: Lots in Irasville are required to be at least one acre in size.

Potential Strategy: Reduce the minimum lot size in Irasville to one-quarter acre or smaller to allow for a greater variety of development opportunities (Town Plan Goal 4.G-6).

Current challenge: It is difficult to walk around Irasville due to a lack of sidewalk connections and jumbled development pattern.

Potential Strategy: Require new developments in Irasville to include sidewalks (where appropriate) or contribute funds to the Town towards the creation of new pedestrian connections (Town Plan Goals 8.F-12; 8.F-13; 9.I-19.a).

Current challenge: A large portion of Irasville already has some level of development.

Potential Strategy: Enable additional housing development in areas directly adjacent to Irasville (Town Plan Goal 4.G-6).

Potential Strategy: Adjust development standards to concentrate “infill” development within already-developed areas of Irasville (Town Plan Goal 4.H-1; 9.I-19.a).

VIBRANT VILLAGES OPEN HOUSE | MARCH 2023



(3) Feedback on potential zoning bylaw changes for Irasville at a 2023 open house event for the Vibrant Villages Initiative.

(4) Community discussions at an event for the Mad River Valley Active Transportation Corridor in October 2025.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER: GOALS FOR IRASVILLE

The following goals represent the highest-priority needs, opportunities, and desires from decades of planning, dreaming, and strategizing for Irasville. These planning goals were developed by the Village Master Plan Steering Committee and refined using feedback received at a community open houses in November 2024 and March 2025.

1. COMMUNITY DESIGN

- » Promote **village-style development** within already-developed areas of Irasville.
- » Establish a true “**Main Street**” area for Irasville as the future hub of community development.
- » Encourage a **mix of two and three story buildings** in future development.

2. NATURAL ASSETS & CONSTRAINTS

- » **100% of higher-function wetland areas in Irasville remain undeveloped in perpetuity and at least 85% of total wetland areas in Irasville remain undeveloped in perpetuity**, with all development impacts occurring in lower-function wetlands.
- » There is **no net loss of stormwater management and flood mitigation function of wetlands** in Irasville affecting the main stem of the Mad River.

3. HOMES

- » Accommodate new residents in Irasville by adding **new homes** in the service area for the planned Community Wastewater System (anticipated as up to 70 homes across the entire service area).
- » Encourage a **variety of types of homes** - apartments, townhomes, mixed-use development - including below-market-rate rentals aimed at younger households and seniors and homes for first-time homebuyers.



Main Street areas can be the hub of community gathering and events, as seen above in Steamboat Springs, CO.

Understanding Wetland Function

The Vermont DEC has identified ten beneficial **functions and values of wetlands**, including wildlife habitat, flood mitigation, erosion control, recreational value, and water quality protection. For brevity, this plan uses the term “function” to refer to wetland functions and values.

A 2021 Irasville wetlands study performed by Arrowwood Environmental identified a range of wetland functions in Irasville. Some wetlands received higher scores for providing important habitat and flood storage functions; others received very low scores for offering minimal ecological value.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER: GOALS FOR IRASVILLE (CONTINUED)

4. BUSINESSES

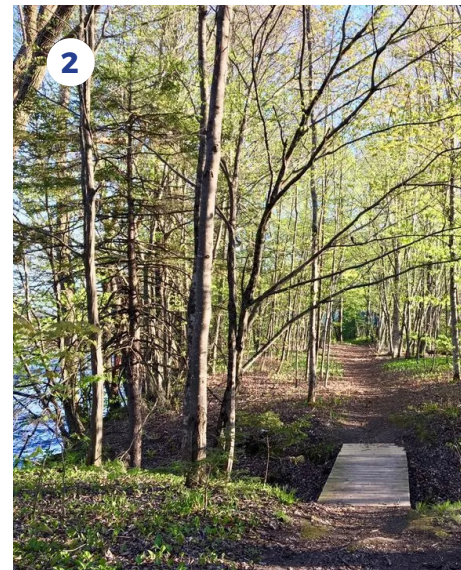
- » Encourage **mixed-use development** (e.g., ground level retail with upper story apartments) with local-serving, customer-facing commercial uses.
- » Evaluate opportunities for **redevelopment of shopping plazas** and other properties with redevelopment potential.
- » Preserve and **sustain key commercial services** in Irasville (e.g., grocery stores) and explore pathways for needed services.

5. TRANSPORTATION

- » Plan for new roadway connections to support the **creation of village blocks**.
- » Aim for a seamless, safe, and convenient **pedestrian and bicycle network**.
- » **Limit new surface parking** to the extent possible, including evaluating opportunities for consolidate or share parking facilities.
- » Encourage **slow vehicular speeds** and increase driver awareness of pedestrians and bicyclists on all roads in Irasville, including Route 100.
- » Promote a “**park once and walk**” experience for visitors to Irasville.

6. OUTDOOR RECREATION ECONOMY

- » Position Irasville as a **jumping off point** for year-round outdoor recreation pursuits.
- » Integrate **recreational trails** into the pedestrian and bicycle network.



(1) A mixed-use building in downtown Bellows Falls, VT with ground-floor commercial businesses and upper-floor residences..

(2) The Fiddler's Walk trail connects central Irasville to the banks of the Mad River and the new MRV Recreation Hub.

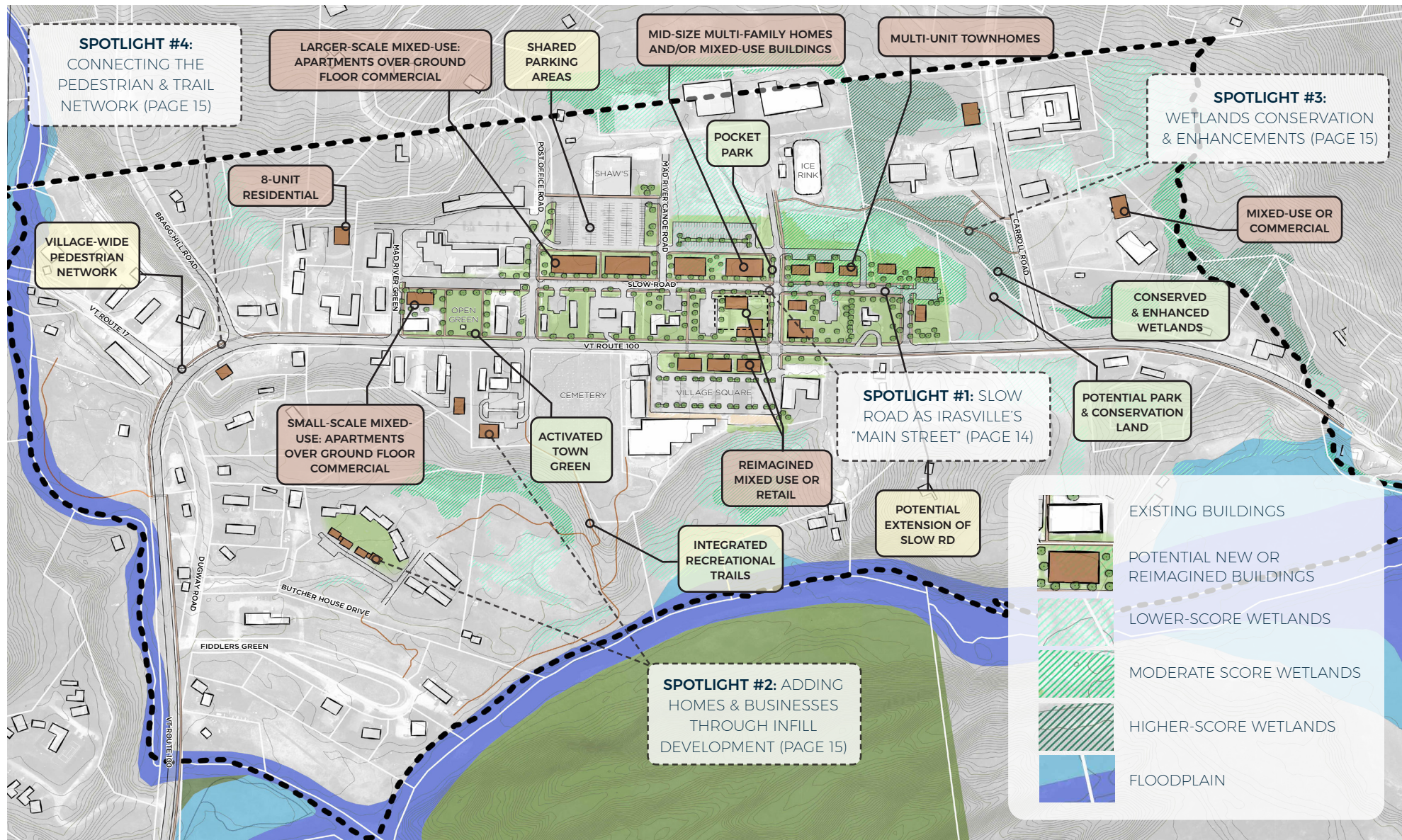
CHAPTER 2

Vibrant Village: The Vision for Irasville



Irasville should be developed and maintained as the area's downtown core with a mix of uses that include a full range of commercial services, civic and cultural facilities, offices, multi-family housing, and upper-story dwellings where practical. - Waitsfield Town Plan, 2023

THE LONG-TERM VILLAGE-WIDE VISION FOR IRASVILLE



The Vision for Irasville, Visualized. This conceptual vision aims to demonstrate what is possible in Irasville through planning, regulation, public-private partnerships, and infrastructure investment. While the form of future residential and commercial development will be up to private property owners and developers, Town leaders and municipal partners will play an active role in encouraging and facilitating desired infill development, pedestrian safety improvements, and other village enhancements.

SPOTLIGHTS: KEY ELEMENTS OF THE VISION

SPOTLIGHT #1: SLOW ROAD AS IRASVILLE'S "MAIN STREET"

Great villages are anchored by great Main Streets. Slow Road has long been envisioned as a Main Street for Irasville - a hub of future development to create homes, spaces for community gathering and events, and places of business.

Key elements of this vision include:

- 1 New **mixed-use development** with public-facing, ground floor businesses and upper floor homes, as well as multi-family **apartments** and **townhomes**.
- 2 A low-speed, inviting, **pedestrian-friendly streetscape** with wide sidewalks, protected crosswalks, street trees and greenspace, and flexible spaces for outdoor dining, public art, and pop-up events.
- 3 Auxiliary driveways parallel to Slow Road provide access to additional parking areas and **enable the periodic closure of Slow Road to traffic for community events**.
- 4 A potential extension of Slow Road enables the **creation of new village blocks**.
- 5 **Shared use of existing parking areas enables** a compact, walkable development pattern with less space dedicated to new parking lots.



Looking down
Slow Rd from the
driveway of the
Irasville Country
Store.

SPOTLIGHTS: KEY ELEMENTS OF THE VISION (CONTINUED)

SPOTLIGHT #2: ADDING HOMES & BUSINESSES THROUGH INFILL DEVELOPMENT

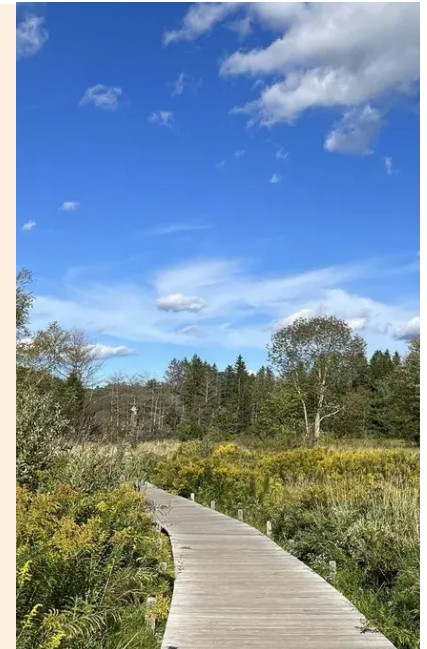
Infill development opportunities will be plentiful in Irasville once the community wastewater project is complete. Under Town zoning bylaws revised in 2024, new homes and businesses in Irasville can be created on lots as small as 1/5 acre - well below the current median lot size of 1.1 acres in the village.



- (1) A single-family home on a small lot in Shelburne, VT.
- (2) Townhomes integrated into the pedestrian network in South Burlington, VT.

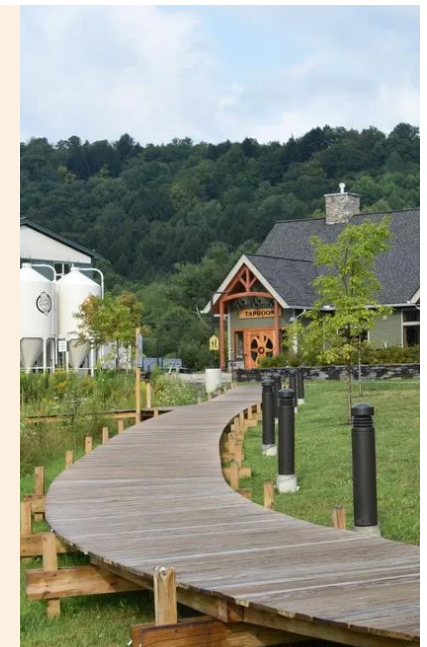
SPOTLIGHT #3: WETLANDS CONSERVATION & ENHANCEMENT

The development of the Slow Road “Main Street” will require some impacts to wetlands that have been identified as having little ecological value in previous studies. Higher value wetlands will be protected and improved using a variety of strategies, including land protection, plantings, and other enhancements to wetlands and wetland buffers.

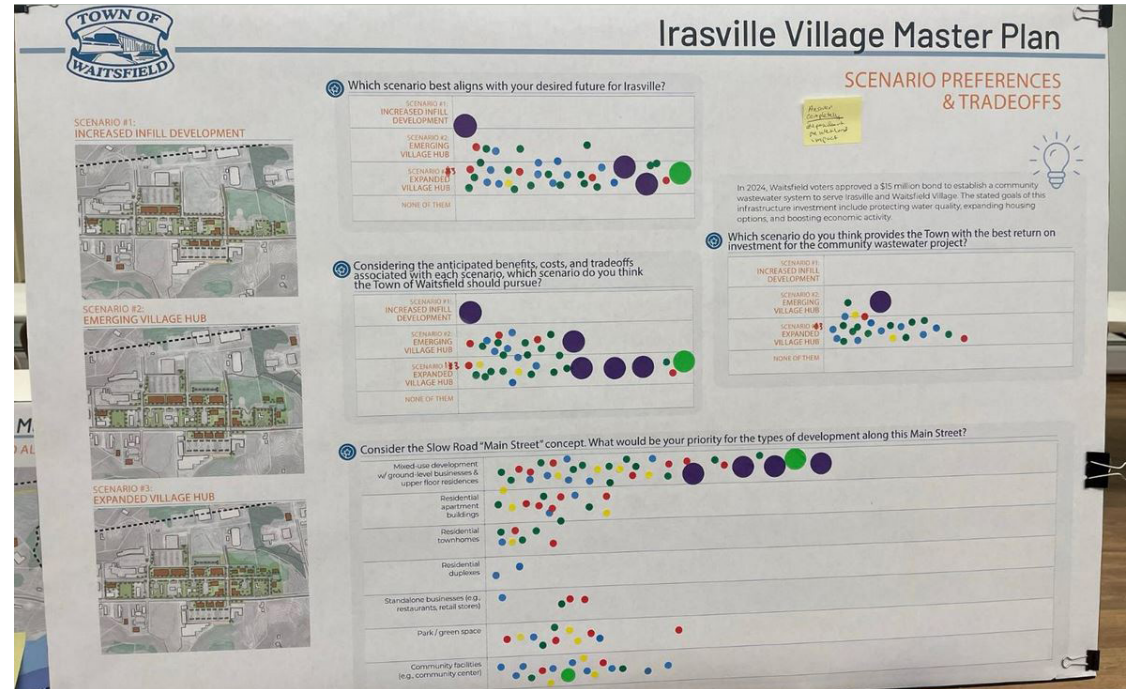
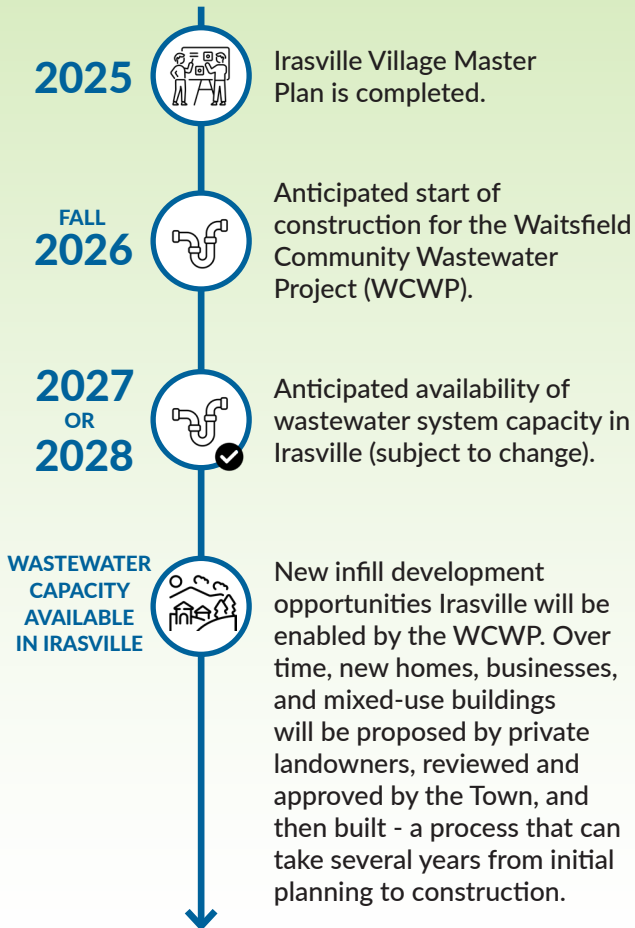


SPOTLIGHT #4: CONNECTING THE PEDESTRIAN & TRAIL NETWORK

Through long-term efforts, sidewalks have been constructed along VT Route 100 and natural surface paths connect directly into Irasville village. There is an opportunity address gaps in these networks to create seamless connections between homes, businesses, and outdoor recreation destinations and deliver a “park once and walk” experience for visitors.



Envisioned Timeline for Future Development in Irasville



Public Input Highlight: Building Irasville

At a March 19th, 2025 community open house, attendees wanted Waitfield to think big. Amongst the different potential future development scenarios presented for Irasville, there was the strongest support for the creation of a "Main Street" along Slow Road that extends multiple blocks with a mix of new residences and businesses.

"Compact, mixed-use development, as envisioned for Irasville, can reduce reliance on the automobile, vehicle miles traveled, & inherent system energy costs—including energy costs associated with maintaining roads & related infrastructure. Targeting economic & residential growth within areas intended for more concentrated development allows people to walk or bike to their destinations & creates opportunities for public transit services between growth centers." - Waitfield Town Plan, 2023

CHAPTER 3

Three Key Actions to Move Irasville Forward



IDENTIFYING THE KEY CATALYSTS FOR A VIBRANT IRASVILLE

There is no shortage of ideas, opportunities, needs, and challenges for implementing the vision for Irasville. To move forward on this vision, the Town of Waitsfield and its partners will need to prioritize where time, effort, and money are applied. The following **Key Actions** were identified as the most critical implementation steps with the potential to advance village vibrancy in Irasville.

- » **Action A: Implement the Community Wastewater System (p. 18).**
- » **Action B: Implement a Local & Regional Wetlands Strategy (p. 19).**
- » **Action C: Establish Slow Road as Irasville's Main Street (p. 20-21).**

Action A: Implement the Community Wastewater System

A centralized wastewater system is needed to enable the creation of new homes and businesses in Irasville while protecting public health and water resources.

WHAT TO KNOW:

The Town of Waitsfield is actively pursuing the implementation of the Waitsfield Community Wastewater System, with construction expected to commence in late 2026.

The system will be built and operated with no impact on the Waitsfield municipal tax rate. Grants and state and federal financing will cover implementation cost; fees paid by users of the system will cover ongoing operating and maintenance costs.

KEY GOALS & OUTCOMES:

- ✓ *Irasville is able to grow with sustainable, walkable infill development.*
- ✓ *Local water quality and public health are protected.*
- ✓ *Cost of development for new homes and businesses is reduced and predictability of development is enhanced.*

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- » The planned wastewater system is expected to serve approximately 70 new homes and provide capacity for future commercial development, with the potential to secure additional wastewater capacity for new development in the future.
- » While there is a defined wastewater service area for the planned system, encompassing Irasville and Waitsfield Village, there is currently no policy governing how much future capacity may be allocated to any particular development or sub-area.
- » There may be opportunities to align wastewater system implementation with improvements to other infrastructure, such as **roadways and sidewalks**, in areas where wastewater utility lines will be constructed and buried. Aligning complementary infrastructure projects can save time and money.

KEY STEPS

- » **Continue to move forward with financing and implementation planning for the planned wastewater system serving Irasville.**
- » **Identify combined wastewater & transportation infrastructure projects.** Wastewater system construction plans should consider opportunities to phase in roadway and pedestrian improvements that could be completed in a single project. For example, wastewater lines are planned to run under Slow Road, where additional improvements to the streetscape are envisioned (see p. 14 & 20).
- » **Develop wastewater allocation policies.** These policies can reserve wastewater capacity for a sub-area of Irasville (e.g., the area around Slow Road) and/or limit that amount of wastewater capacity allocated to any single project.

Public Input Highlight: Community Wastewater Project

In June 2024, following years of planning and community discussions, Waitsfield voters overwhelmingly approved a \$15 million bond measure to fund the construction of the community wastewater system serving Irasville and Waitsfield Village.



Action B: Implement a Local & Regional Wetlands Strategy

A comprehensive strategy is needed to balance the growth of Irasville as the flood-resilient hub of the Mad River Valley with protections for critical ecological functions provided by local wetlands.

WHAT TO KNOW:

Irasville contains approximately 25 acres of wetlands, ranging from low-functioning wetlands with little ecological value to higher-function wetlands that provide habitat and help mitigate flooding. Since 1992, there have been over an acre of direct impacts to wetlands in Irasville.

KEY GOALS & OUTCOMES:

- ✓ *Irasville is able to grow with flood-resilient, walkable infill development.*
- ✓ *100% of higher-function wetland areas in Irasville remain undeveloped in perpetuity.*
- ✓ *At least 85% of total wetland areas in Irasville remain undeveloped in perpetuity, with all development impacts occurring in lower-function wetlands*
- ✓ *Critical local wetland functions and scenic values are permanently conserved, including no net loss of flood mitigation function affecting the main stem of the Mad River.*

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- » Wetland functions in Irasville range from very low to moderately high. Envisioned infill development sites along Slow Road would result in impacts to wetlands with low or very low wetland functions.
- » Irasville does not have a centralized stormwater system and is believed to have a high groundwater table. Both conditions present uncertainties for how future infill development will impact wetlands, even in areas of low wetland function.
- » Wetlands impacts from development are potentially subject to permitting through the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation and the US Army Corps of Engineers. In September 2025, Governor Phil Scott issued Executive Order 06-25. Under this order, housing development in Irasville could be exempt from some state wetlands permitting requirements if the development were to impact unmapped Class II wetlands.
- » Waitsfield's zoning bylaws permit wetlands impacts, provided that the impacts conform to Vermont Wetlands Rules and the development includes a vegetated buffer between wetland areas. For proposed developments going through Conditional Use Review, the Town's Development Review Board retains some discretion to limit wetland impacts.

KEY STEPS

- » **Coordinate with state and federal wetlands permitting agencies** to ensure clarity on the location, type, and scale of development that will require wetlands permits.
- » **Conserve remaining wetland areas** through conservation easements, negotiated conditions of development approvals for projects impacting lower-function wetlands, and fee-simple acquisition of targeted properties. Continue to engage with local property owners who have expressed interest in putting wetland areas into conservation.
- » **Enhance flood mitigation functions of remaining lower-functioning wetlands** through plantings, reduced channelization, improved wetland buffers, and other restoration efforts. Work with Friends of the Mad River to engage property owners and identify projects.
- » **Enhance the flood mitigation function of the Town-owned pond** at the intersection of Carroll Road and Route 100.
- » **Commission further studies** to model the localized effects of potential wetlands impacts and identify opportunities for wetlands enhancements and flood mitigation projects upstream of Irasville in the Mad River watershed.

Public Input Highlight: Wetland Conservation

Attendees at a November 2024 open house were supportive of a balanced approach to wetlands in Irasville: preserving critical wetland functions while permitting impacts to low-functioning wetlands if those impacts result in significant community benefit.



Action C: Establish Slow Road as Irasville's Main Street

A Main Street provides a walkable central hub for community development - homes, businesses, gathering places, and events. It also promotes the orderly and efficient development and maintenance of critical infrastructure (e.g., roads, sidewalks, water/wastewater service lines) by limiting scattered development.

WHAT TO KNOW:

Slow Road is well-positioned to serve as Irasville's Main Street, with a central location and ample development sites.

KEY GOALS & OUTCOMES:

- ✓ A dense mix of homes and public-facing businesses extending at least two blocks.
- ✓ A traffic-calmed, pedestrian-friendly street with on-street parking that can be closed for events. Keep Slow Road slow!
- ✓ Community gathering places, indoors and outdoors.
- ✓ Parking is shared with existing nearby parking lots, reducing the amount of new parking that is needed.
- ✓ Clear signage identifies parking areas and walking routes.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- » Future infill development along the block between Mad River Green Road and Mad River Canoe Road will necessitate retiring of the septic mound adjacent to the Shaw's parking area. This is planned to occur as part of the Community Wastewater System Project.
- » Development impacts to wetland areas along Slow Road north of Mad River Canoe Road may be subject to state and/or federal wetlands permitting, depending on the location, type, and scale of development (see Action B).
- » There will need to be coordination for the timing for new development and supporting infrastructure (e.g., wastewater, road/streetscape improvements, sidewalk).
- » The planned community wastewater system service area will cover all of Irasville and Waitsfield Village. Policies should be considered to ensure there is sufficient wastewater capacity reserved for future development along Slow Road (Action A).

KEY STEPS

- » **Evaluate the use of a public-private partnership** through the forthcoming Community and Housing Infrastructure Program (CHIP) through the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD). Under this program, a municipality will be able to enter into a master development agreement with a private landowner to approve the creation of new homes or mixed-use buildings, and then use the anticipated property tax revenues from that development to finance the costs of new infrastructure that serves the development, such as road improvements, sidewalks, and planned wastewater infrastructure. The program is scheduled to go live in January 2026.
- » **Pursue phased development.** Phase 1 of development would cover the existing section of Slow Road between Post Office Road and the Skatium Driveway, with a subsequent Phase 2 for the new northward extension of Slow Road.

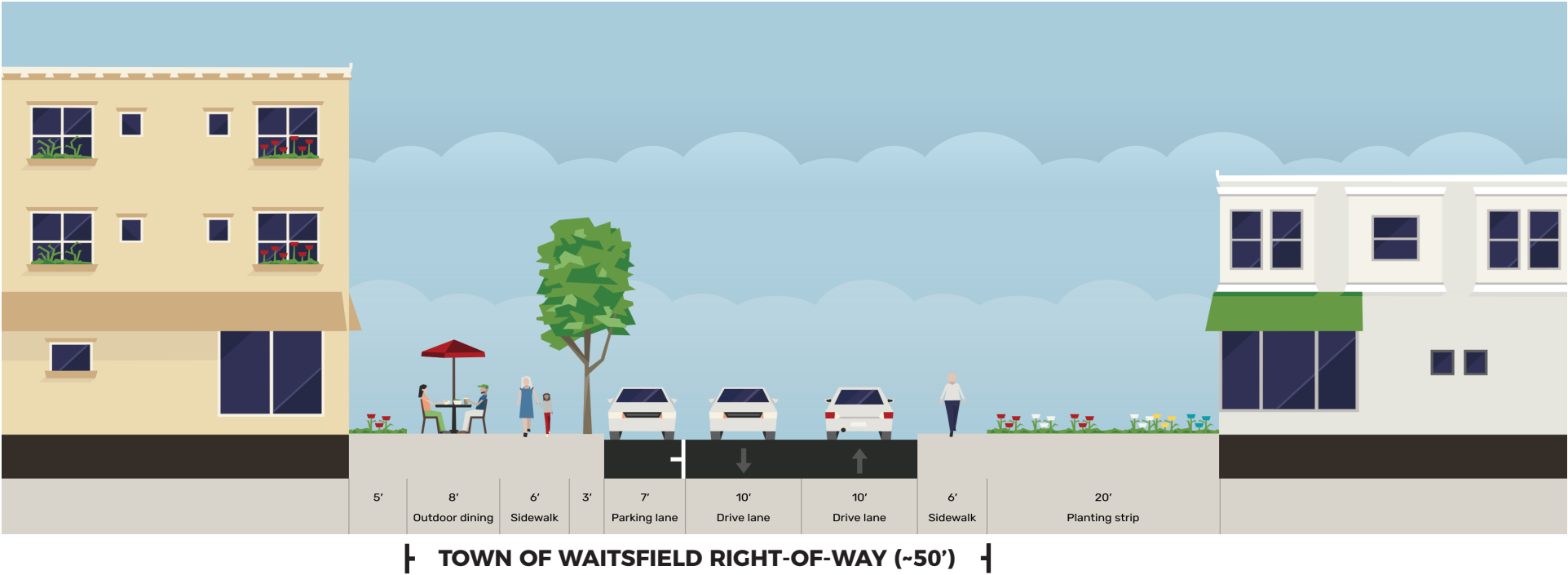
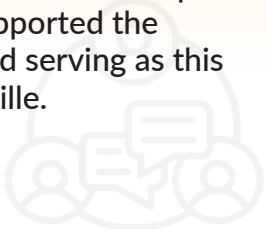


KEY STEPS (CONTINUED)

- » **Conduct preliminary engineering for streetscape improvements along Slow Road.** Evaluate approaches for stormwater retention and mitigation within the streetscape. This can potentially be supported with Municipal Planning Grant funds.
- » **Establish an Irasville Main Street organization or coalition** to educate community members about the project. Conduct events and pop-up demonstrations to showcase the potential of Slow Road as the future hub of the community.
- » **Maintain the Mad River Path trail corridor** along Slow Road using sidewalks, signage, and/or trail relocation.
- » **Create an official Town Map for Waitsfield** that shows a desired right-of-way for a potential extension of Slow Rd, as well as other desired pedestrian connections. Having this infrastructure represented on an official map can help with capital improvement planning and development approval negotiations.

Public Input Highlight: Slow Road

Attendees at the November 2024 community open house event expressed strong support for establishing a Main Street in Irasville. At the subsequent March 2025 open house, attendees supported the concept of Slow Road serving as this Main Street for Irasville.



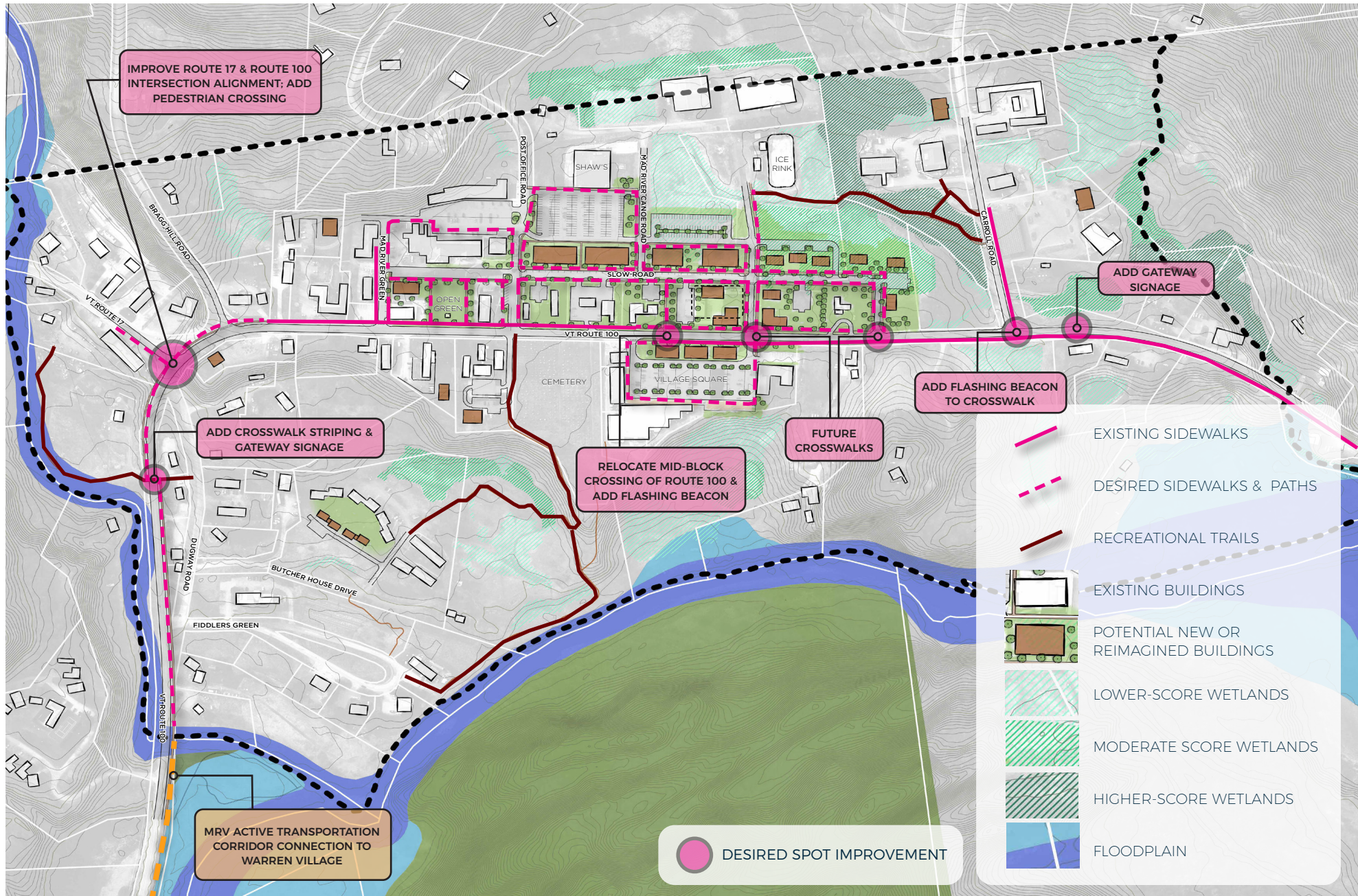
Future Slow Road Cross Section: The Town of Waitsfield owns an approximately 50-foot right-of-way along Slow Road. This right-of-way is envisioned to host sidewalks, flexible outdoor spaces, and street trees and other greenery, in addition to travel and parking lanes.

CHAPTER 4

Comprehensive Strategies to Complete the Vision



TRANSPORTATION: ENVISIONED PED-BIKE NETWORK & SPOT IMPROVEMENTS



TRANSPORTATION: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

EXPANDING THE PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE NETWORK

Creating a seamless and convenient network of sidewalks, paths, and trails (as envisioned on page 22) will be a long-term endeavor. Building out this network will involve both strategic planning to address priority network gaps and taking advantage of potential opportunities as they arise.

- » **Incorporate wayfinding signage.** Pedestrian-scale wayfinding signage will support a convenient “park once and walk” experience for visitors to Irasville. Wayfinding signage can also help establish linkages between the sidewalk network and the recreational path network by describing how sidewalks can be used to connect to recreational trails and destinations, such as the Mad River Path and the MRV Recreation Hub. There already exists an standardized trailhead kiosk system throughout the Mad River Valley, including many large and small kiosks in Irasville - these existing kiosks should be incorporated into the future village wayfinding system.
- » **Evaluate potential bicycle path connections within Irasville.** The MRV Active Transportation Corridor project has identified potential pedestrian and bicycle connections from Irasville to other villages but did not explore connections within the village. The Stowe Recreation Path in Stowe, VT provides a potential case study for how to route a bicycle path through a developed village area while minimizing potential conflicts and road and driveway crossings.
- » **Create a Village Sidewalk Policy or Ordinance for future development.** As recommended during the 2024 Vibrant Villages Initiative, this policy or ordinance would establish where public sidewalks or paths would be required to be constructed with future development and provide relevant design and accessibility standards for developers.
- » **Create a Capital Reserve Fund for sidewalks.** A capital reserve fund will provide a consistent source of funding to implement sidewalk provide matching funds for grants, and cover the costs of ongoing maintenance as the sidewalk network expands.

- » **Develop an Impact Fee Policy or Ordinance.** As recommended during the 2024 Vibrant Villages Initiative, this policy or ordinance would provide the Town with the authority to levy fees on proposed developments for the purposes of contributing to the capital cost of constructing public sidewalk and/or shared use path facilities that will serve the proposed development and neighborhood area. This could also be expanded to apply to other types of needed capital infrastructure projects. Such a policy can also provide a means for developers to contribute to public pedestrian facilities in lieu of constructing facilities themselves.
- » **Pursue grant funding.** Potential grant funding opportunities include:
 - VTrans Bike/Ped Grant Program
 - FHWA Transportation Alternatives Program
 - ACCD Downtown Transportation Fund



Stowe Recreation Path. This multi-use path winds along the VT Route 108 corridor, connecting behind businesses and agricultural fields through a densely developed area. A similar approach could be explored in Irasville (credit: Town of Stowe).

TRANSPORTATION: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

CREATING SAFE STREETS FOR ALL USERS

As Irasville develops, use of the transportation network by all users - bikes, motor vehicles, pedestrians - will grow. In addition to expanding the network of pedestrian and bicycle facilities, planning for transportation system in Irasville should include measures to promote safe driving speeds, increase driver awareness, and reduce potential for conflicts at intersections and crossings.

- » **Install curb extensions at key pedestrian crossings** in Irasville village. Incorporate curb extensions into streetscape planning for Slow Road. In the short-term, deploy temporary curb extensions using materials like bollards or large concrete planters. Along Route 100, where the use of curb extensions may not be permitted by VTrans, evaluate alternative pedestrian crossing treatments, such as high-visibility crosswalk paint and rectangular rapid flashing beacons.
- » **Maintain and enforce a speed limit of 25 MPH** on all roads in Irasville - the lowest allowed by state law.
- » **Install prominent gateway signage** at the entrances to Irasville village along Route 100 and Route 17.
- » **Pursue grant funding.** Potential grant funding opportunities include:
 - VTrans Bike/Ped Grant Program
 - FHWA Transportation Alternatives Program
 - ACCD Downtown Transportation Fund
 - AARP Community Challenge Grant (for temporary improvement projects)
- » Long-term, the Town could explore the possibility of taking ownership of Route 100 in Irasville as a Class 1 Town Highway, which is currently owned and maintained by VTrans. This would allow the Town to pursue more aggressive traffic calming and pedestrian safety measures in exchange for taking on increased roadway maintenance activities and costs.



- (1) Quick-build curb extension in Burlington, VT (credit: City of Burlington).
(2) Curb extensions help reduce pedestrian crossing distances and calm vehicular traffic speeds.

OUTDOOR RECREATION: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Part of what makes Irasville special is its connection to the outdoors - mountain views, trail connections, and green spaces that support community events. As Irasville grows, special attention should be paid to sustaining this tradition of outdoor spaces and access.

PARKS & OUTDOOR SPACES

- » **Pursue the creation of a conservation-oriented park** along Route 100 south of Carroll Road. This park would protect higher-functioning wetlands and host low-impact recreational amenities, such as trails and boardwalks that connect to existing boardwalks and outdoor classroom features.
- » **Develop a partnership or agreement to permanently establish the Irasville Town Green**, which is currently privately owned. Improve parking and pedestrian access through the Green.
- » **Encourage the development of pocket parks and flexible outdoor spaces along with infill development**, particularly along Slow Road as it is developed into the village's Main Street.
- » **Explore potential improvements to the Skatium Recreation Center**, including potential four-season outdoor amenities that are connected to the adjacent recreational trail network.

RECREATIONAL TRAILS

- » **Maintain the Mad River Path trail corridor through Irasville**, including along Slow Road, using sidewalks, signage, and/or trail relocation where needed.
- » **Activate the connection to the MRV Recreation Hub** through physical infrastructure improvements (sidewalks, crossing, signage) as well as promotional efforts.
- » **Identify “park and hike” and “park and bike” locations in central Irasville** where trail recreationalists can be encouraged to start and end their outings, increasing patronage of village center businesses.



- (1) Flexible outdoor spaces in village areas provide the infrastructure for community events and gathering.
- (2) The MRV Recreation Hub provides in-town access to vast multi-use trail systems, plus many of the amenities a recreationalist might want or need. (Credit: Mad River Valley Chamber of Commerce).

LAND USE: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

CHANGES TO LAND USE REGULATIONS

The 2024 Vibrant Villages Initiative resulted in changes to zoning bylaws in Irasville that support compact residential and commercial development as envisioned in this plan, while maintaining thoughtful limits on the scale and form of development to ensure consistency with the character of the area. Further changes will need to be considered to advance plan goals and ensure alignment with state law.

- » **Update zoning bylaws to reference the Irasville Village Master Plan**, including in the purpose statement for the Irasville Village District and in the provisions for Planned Unit Developments.
- » **Adopt required density bonuses for affordable housing.** Act 47 (the HOME Act), passed in 2023, requires Vermont municipalities to include a density bonus of 40% more units and a bonus of one habitable floor above the height maximum for affordable housing development in areas served by municipal water and sewer. Once the Town's wastewater system is implemented, the Town will be required to revise zoning bylaws to meet this state requirement.
- » **Encourage or require additional on-site stormwater mitigation measures for new developments.**
- » **Continue to limit building heights to three (3) stories** to align with historic development character and to limit the ability for any single development to use an excessive amount of wastewater capacity.
- » **Create a Village Sidewalk Policy or Ordinance.** (see p. 24).

Changes to State Land Use Law & Regional Land Use Planning

Act 181, passed in 2024, included reforms to Act 250 (Vermont's land use law) to make it easier to build housing near existing village centers and areas that are planned for growth. Interim rules under Act 181 exempt most new housing in these areas (including Irasville) from Act 250 permitting. The next Regional Plan update by the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission will include proposed designation areas for permanent Act 250 exemptions, with final approval by the State Land Use Review Board.

GOVERNANCE: RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

MUNICIPAL CAPACITY & FINANCIAL HEALTH

This plan envisions significant new investments in infrastructure and community facilities to support the desired growth of Irasville as a vibrant hub for the community and region. With these investments come increased long-term maintenance obligations, which will need to be planned for. While increased property tax revenues from future development should help address ongoing costs, the Town should consider supplementary strategies and revenue sources to ensure financial health and the delivery of municipal services amidst increasing costs for goods and services.

- » **Evaluate a 1% local option tax (LOT).** A 1% LOT can be applied to any or all of the following: sales (with exemptions for essential household goods), meals and alcoholic beverages, and/or rooms. LOTs have been adopted in many Vermont towns that serve as regional hubs and/or tourist destinations, including towns like Waterbury, Stowe, Middlebury, Woodstock, Killington, and Ludlow, .
- » **Plan ahead for maintenance operations and associated capital expenses.** Consider needs such as increased road and sidewalk repairs and snow removal.
- » **Evaluate the use of public-private partnerships** for major capital projects through the forthcoming Community and Housing Infrastructure Program (CHIP) (see p. 20).
- » **Create a Capital Reserve Fund for sidewalks.** (see p. 24)
- » **Develop an Impact Fee Policy or Ordinance.** (see p. 24)

CHAPTER 5

The Process: How We Built This Plan



March 2025 Open House: ideas for Irasville from the next generation of community planners.

HOW WE GOT HERE

The vision and plan for Irasville was developed through an iterative process that involved community engagement, research, analysis, and design.

RESEARCH & ANALYSIS

The early part of the planning process included a site visit, a thorough analysis of existing development, infrastructure, and natural resources, and a review of past plans, studies, and current land use regulations.

COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The planning process included two key community open house events. An initial open house in **November 2024** saw community members weigh in on overall project direction and goals. A subsequent open house in **March 2025** provided an opportunity for members of the public to share input on initial vision, conceptual design ideas, and master plan recommendations. Individual **interviews** with key community organizations and stakeholders provided additional perspective on needs and opportunities to be addressed by the plan.

The process was overseen by the **Village Master Plan Steering Committee**, which met over a dozen times during the process to shape the development of the Master Plan. Additionally, the project team coordinated extensively with Wetlands Program staff at the VT Department of Environmental Conservation at key milestones in the planning process.

PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The project team used the key takeaways from research, analysis, and community engagement to prepare and revise draft conceptual designs and planning recommendations, forming the Irasville Village Master Plan.

A 1.5-year process, built on decades of planning and dreaming.

The vision for Irasville did not emerge overnight - it is the product of many plans, community meetings, leaders, and lessons learned. Key plans and studies that informed the development of the Irasville Village Master Plan include:

- ✓ **Waitsfield Town Plan (2023)**
- ✓ **Waitsfield Vibrant Villages Initiative (2023)**
- ✓ **Waitsfield + VTrans Tiger Team Collaboration: Pedestrian Safety Improvements along Vermont Route 100 (2021)**
- ✓ **Mad River Valley Housing Demand and Market Analysis (2020)**
- ✓ **Waitsfield Water Management Mapping Project (2018)**
- ✓ **Mad River Valley Active Transportation Plan (2016)**
- ✓ **Master Development Plan for the Irasville Growth Center (2002)**

Additionally, conceptual plans and designs for infill development and improved pedestrian connectivity prepared over the years by a variety of planners and designers - Dave Sellers, Jim Sanford, Don Swain, Rennselaer Polytechnic Institute students, and others - provided essential inspiration for the designs presented in this plan.

COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE EVENTS: KEY TAKEAWAYS

NOVEMBER 2024 OPEN HOUSE

Over 50 Mad River Valley residents attended the first Open House event for the Irasville Village Master Plan on November 18th, 2024. The event featured remarks from representatives of the Waitsfield Planning Commission, Waitsfield Selectboard, and Mad River Valley Planning District. Project consultants from SE Group provided an overview of initial findings and takeaways from the planning process. Residents were invited to provide feedback on initial community planning objectives using sticker dot polls placed around the room.

KEY THEMES FROM THE EVENT

- » **Attendees were both excited and concerned about the future of Irasville.** The recent loss of businesses and community services Irasville was top of mind for many participants. At the same time, many expressed that Irasville holds great potential as a vibrant village center for Waitsfield and the Mad River Valley.
- » **Attendees were supportive of an infill development approach** for future redevelopment in Irasville, with a focus on housing, local-serving businesses, and mixed-use development.
- » **Attendees were supportive of a balanced approach to wetlands in Irasville** that preserves critical wetland functions while considering possible impacts to low-functioning wetlands if those impacts result in significant community benefit.
- » **Attendees were supportive of exploring transportation infrastructure improvements** to enhance and facilitate walkable development in Irasville, such as improved pedestrian connections and possible new roadways to create village blocks.
- » **Attendees wanted the planning process to explore enhanced recreational and community facilities**, such as a year-round recreation or community center and community gathering spaces.
- » **Attendees were supportive of exploring a mix of building heights for future development**, with a minimum building height of two stories.



Josh Schwartz, Executive Director of the Mad River Valley Planning District, addresses attendees at the November 2024 community open house event.

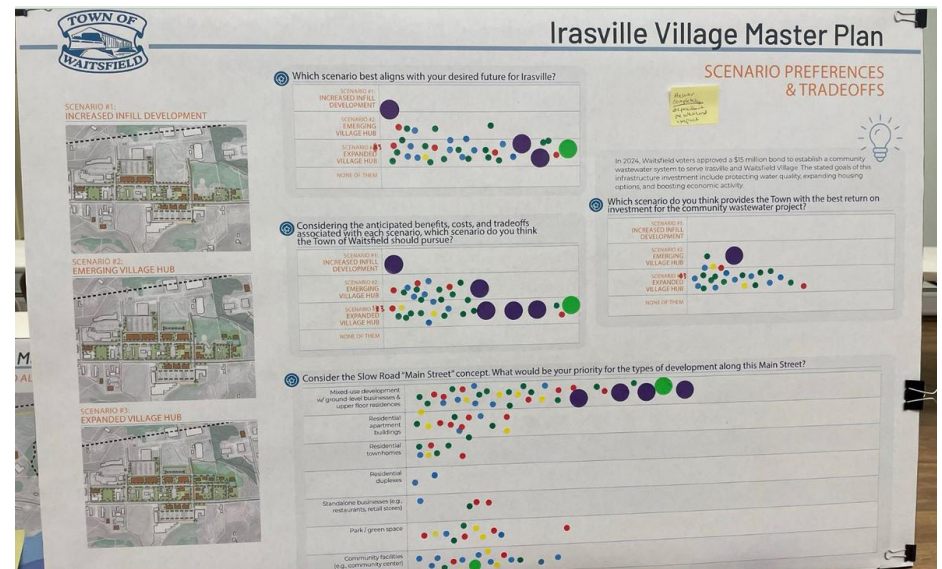
COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE EVENTS: KEY TAKEAWAYS

MARCH 2025 OPEN HOUSE

More than 70 Mad River Valley residents attended the second Open House for the Irasville Village Master Plan on March 19, 2025. To support the Town in developing an actionable plan to meet community needs, Open House attendees provided feedback on different potential scenarios and forms for future development in Irasville, focused on possible infill development opportunities along Slow Road. Through conversations, sticker dot voting, and written comments on poster boards, attendees provided their feedback and ideas while being asked to consider the benefits, costs, and tradeoffs associated with different forms and scales of development.

KEY THEMES FROM THE EVENT

- » **An opportunity to think big.** Amongst the different potential future development scenarios presented, there was the strongest support for the creation of a “Main Street” along Slow Road that extends multiple blocks with a mix of new residential and commercial development.
- » **Mixed-use development is wanted.** An example three-story design with ground-level retail and upper-floor residences received the most support of all types of development presented, with the highest number of votes to encourage or incentivize this style of development.
- » **Wetland considerations** play an important role in determining suitable development locations, preserving ecological functions, and guiding planning decisions. This theme remained consistent across both open house events.
- » **Improving pedestrian connectivity** and **providing community gathering spaces** were both top of mind for many attendees.



Input recorded from March 2025 open house attendees.

Appendices

IRASVILLE VILLAGE MASTER PLAN**Summary of Public Comments Received as 11/30/25****Public comment period to close on 12/1/25**

Your Name	Jeff Brauer
What is your relationship to the Town of Waitsfield?	President of the SKATIUM Board of Directors
What do you like about the draft Irasville Village Master Plan?	This plan is impressive. Super comprehensive, with a clear and compelling case and a plan for the revitalization of Irasville. I really appreciate the idea of Irasville being a "four season outdoor recreation hub," and the Skatium is excited to play an integral part in that vision!
What could be improved in the draft Irasville Village Master Plan?	<p>The Skatium has new Board leadership in place who view the facility as a community resource and ourselves as its steward. We recognize that any revitalization efforts of our facility will require the kinds of public/private partnerships discussed in this master plan. We are excited to discuss with the Town how our land might best serve this overall vision while also staying true to our non-profit mission to provide outdoor sports recreation to the residents and visitors of the Valley.</p> <p>As members of the community who understand the immense need for affordable housing, we have been considering how we can help. We have envisioned a partnership where a mixed use building is erected in the general location of the current skate office. The bottom floor would be used for Skatium purposes (office, rental shop, restrooms, snack bar), and above would be 1 or 2 floors of affordable apartments. Given we are a non-profit with a desire to use our land for this purpose, we believe the Skatium is a perfect candidate for the CHIPS program mentioned on page 20.</p> <p>Additionally, we believe our land can accommodate non-wetlands expansion of our parking lot to the south and east (down the driveway), and we would certainly be open to parking lot use that serves the broader vision for the community in addition to skaters and potential new residents.</p> <p>We look forward to continued engagement in this conversation as the master plan unfolds. Please let us know if we can answer any questions or if you would like to speak further in person or on the phone.</p> <p>Warm regards, Jeff Brauer</p>

Your Name	Jack Crivici-Kramer
What is your relationship to the Town of Waitsfield?	Resident of another town in the Mad River Valley
What do you like about the draft Irasville Village Master Plan?	I like that it's walkable. One park + walk is a great idea.
What could be improved in the draft Irasville Village Master Plan?	More housing units, please! More floors, if necessary. The more people who live there, the better for The Valley and for Vermont. If there's ways to ensure they're for full-time or 6-mo min rentals, that'd be key so they don't just become ST rentals for skiers. We need more workers, and we won't get that without more housing.

IRASVILLE VILLAGE MASTER PLAN**Summary of Public Comments Received as 11/30/25****Public comment period to close on 12/1/25**

Your Name	Marion L Usher
What is your relationship to the Town of Waitsfield?	Seasonal/part-time resident of Waitsfield
What do you like about the draft Irasville Village Master Plan?	I love this plan. We desperately need more community spaces 2here people “bump” into each other, talk, go have a cup of coffee and enjoy each other’s company. This appears to be so well thought out and I look forward to seeing it come into being! Marion Usher 247 Horseshoe RD, Waitsfield, Vt
What could be improved in the draft Irasville Village Master Plan?	I’m good with the plan as it is being presented!

Your Name	James Sanford
What is your relationship to the Town of Waitsfield?	Resident of another town in the Mad River Valley
What do you like about the draft Irasville Village Master Plan?	Slow road concept
What could be improved in the draft Irasville Village Master Plan?	Where will the future hotel go?- a critical element in the population of the area. Could the abandoned bank become the transportation hub? Have you considered the connection with the Mad River Shopping Center, Mehuron’s et. Al.across rte.100? Have you considered housing at the bookstore/ Tiger Baird site? Please stop talking about the wetland’s contribution to the mad river. The river drains the entire valley, and this tiny part of that basin contributes very little, in proportion, to its flooding.

Your Name	Chris-Ann Lark Bauer
What is your relationship to the Town of Waitsfield?	Resident of another town in the Mad River Valley
What do you like about the draft Irasville Village Master Plan?	I think being able to place living spaces and developing safe roads are important features and will also bring back affordability and support the whole Mad River community.
What could be improved in the draft Irasville Village Master Plan?	One wish would be to keep buildings to 2 stories and do try to keep the barn type and cape styles that are already there. Last thing we want is something that ends up looking like a miniature Tafts Corner. Preserving and honoring our beautiful town using the same types of buildings we have throughout Waitsfield and The Valley would be my wish.

IRASVILLE VILLAGE MASTER PLAN**Summary of Public Comments Received as 11/30/25****Public comment period to close on 12/1/25**

Your Name	mike
What is your relationship to the Town of Waitsfield?	Resident of another town in the Mad River Valley
What do you like about the draft Irasville Village Master Plan?	Adding stores and housing as well as pedestrian access
What could be improved in the draft Irasville Village Master Plan?	<p>I don't think you have given enough attention to parking needs nor have you fully thought out the reduction in road/sidewalk width in the winter months from plowing (btw, where are you putting all the snow? Especially in the Shaws lot?)</p> <p>You might also want to consider a reserved spot or two for taxi type service. And don't go crazy with the EV stuff.</p>

Your Name	Valerie Welter
What is your relationship to the Town of Waitsfield?	Resident of another town in the Mad River Valley
What do you like about the draft Irasville Village Master Plan?	The Master Plan is an interesting proposal. In theory, it appears to add much to Irasville. I appreciate the time and effort that has been dedicated to developing the plan. I have attended past meeting about the plan in Waitsfield.
What could be improved in the draft Irasville Village Master Plan?	<p>As a resident of the Valley, and a homeowner in the residential subdivision above and adjacent to the area, I have concerns about the traffic implications associated with the current Master Plan. Travel to my home requires that I drive through the Mad River Green shopping center. In the subsection, "Putting It all Together: Goals for Irasville," item #5 addresses transportation. Importantly however, the impact of the increased traffic generated by the build-out proposed in the plan is not addressed. This is an alarming omission. The public is not being provided with the full scope of the project.</p> <p>It Is Important that residents of Waitsfield, and the Valley, are Informed about the increased traffic and any proposed mitigation efforts. For example, will the completed Master Plan require traffic lights on Route 100? What are public sentiments about the need for traffic lights or other traffic mitigation proposals? Without this information, I fear that the public does not have all of the information necessary to thoughtfully and completely comment on the Master Plan.</p>

IRASVILLE VILLAGE MASTER PLAN**Summary of Public Comments Received as 11/30/25****Public comment period to close on 12/1/25**

Your Name	Kim Phelan
What is your relationship to the Town of Waitsfield?	Resident of another town in the Mad River Valley
What do you like about the draft Irasville Village Master Plan?	<p>Kudos to the planners who have been working on this concept. It is well explained and appealing and would be a great benefit to the area. As I see it, the key to this whole design is to get the wastewater system approved and installed as quickly as possible. We have been Fayston part-time residents for the past 20 years and spend a lot of our time and money in the Irasville businesses. This would be a substantive improvement to the area and make it almost a gateway to the MRV.</p> <p>I really like the proposal for mixed use development with residential and commercial space. We have seen this successfully rejuvenate areas where we have lived in the past (such as in Washington DC) and make those areas much more desirable. When there is mixed use land, you get a much more vibrant community landscape with people around at all hours. This helps to support business (food, services and shopping). It also helps to reduce traffic (and the need for vehicles) and encourages walking and use of public transit.</p> <p>The idea of developing a “main street” is appealing as Route 100 just can’t be that. Using Slow Road is creative and forward thinking. Also, the current trail network is confusing to follow - improving this is a great idea!</p> <p>Infill development just makes sense - use the space effectively. I am excited that zoning changes have already been made to shrink the acreage needed for development. We definitely need lower cost housing and alternatives beyond large single family homes on large lots. Young people and families need starter homes that are affordable and if we don’t develop these, people will not be able to come and live and work in our community. We know several local businesses that continually struggle to hire workers due to the cost and lack of affordable housing.</p> <p>Some questions:</p> <p>Will we still have access to federal grant funding under this administration for the wastewater plant? Have we waited too long?</p> <p>How will a wastewater plant affect Waitsfield Elementary School? Is there a plan and space to grow the school if we add 70 more units of housing in this area?</p> <p>I am wondering if there are any other ideas to unify the area. I would particularly like to see better signage for business - particularly in the Mehurons shopping area. I think it would be helpful to have signs on the roofs to make them more visible and attractive. It would also be lovely to add more trees to this area with more tables and benches for people to eat at in warm weather.</p> <p>The Rec Hub signage needs improvement - it is too small for people to see easily while driving. It needs to be clear that this is an area to get community info and utilize community resources (bike paths, hiking trails, etc)</p>
What could be improved in the draft Irasville Village Master Plan?	See comments above

IRASVILLE VILLAGE MASTER PLAN**Summary of Public Comments Received as 11/30/25****Public comment period to close on 12/1/25**

Your Name	Wendell Anderson
What is your relationship to the Town of Waitsfield?	Full-time resident of Waitsfield
What do you like about the draft Irasville Village Master Plan?	It is very optimistic regarding private developers interest. Somehow, it has to become profitable to build low income housing over retail. That is not the case when facing \$400/sf construction costs.
What could be improved in the draft Irasville Village Master Plan?	I like it but (as a business owner) I consider it rather pie in the sky. The business community is in dire straights right now. The demand is just not there.

Your Name	Wendell Anderson
What is your relationship to the Town of Waitsfield?	Full-time resident of Waitsfield
What do you like about the draft Irasville Village Master Plan?	The plan looks fantastic and reads well. The right level of info--not too technical or detailed. Wholeheartedly support the vision identified in the graphic plan. This team has done excellent work.
What could be improved in the draft Irasville Village Master Plan?	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Re existing conditions, it might be worth noting that certain commercial uses are missing/lacking (e.g., pharmacy).2. Re the established goal of retaining 85% of wetlands, why that amount and not, say 90% or 65%? Suggest explaining in brief.3. Possible typos in the capital reserve paragraph (p.24). Also, not sure if "recreationist" is preferable to "recreationalist." Latter used in document.4. Additional stormwater management requirements or encouragement is a proposed action. Any specific new requirement should be preceded by a cost-benefit analysis that considers the adequacy of what's already required at the state level. More requirements will drive up costs, and we should make sure any such cost increase is worth it.5. Say, in brief, what a LOT might be used for, not just how it works.6. It would be good to see more in the implementation section on landowner/developer engagement/outreach/discussion. The coalition is a good idea, but I'd curious to hear more specifics/best practices on marketing the plan.7. A biggie: what happens if community WW doesn't pan out? I want it to work but fear it might not, and so what of this plan can be implemented without it. Is it worth mentioning this in the plan.

IRASVILLE VILLAGE MASTER PLAN**Summary of Public Comments Received as 11/30/25****Public comment period to close on 12/1/25**

Your Name	Michael Duell
What is your relationship to the Town of Waitsfield?	Resident of another town in the Mad River Valley
What do you like about the draft Irasville Village Master Plan?	<p>I think the team has done a fantastic job in clearly articulating a wonderful vision. It is clear that the team has spent a lot of time thinking through the many issues that need to be worked to achieve that vision. A big thank you, and kudos to the team that developed this plan.</p> <p>Specific things I like about this plan</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) The idea of developing homes and businesses in a village hub. This plan makes sense as it preserves the MRV natural environment and features by not causing developmental sprawl.2) The development of the Wastewater Improvement Project to make the above achievable. Excellent work here!3) The thoughtful approach to making the development pedestrian and bicycle friendly.4) The thoughtfulness about conserving sufficient critical wetlands to retain water and mitigate storm damage as articulated in 'Natural Assets and Constraints' on Page 10 and 15 of the plan. Using boardwalks that go through the wetlands is superb!5) I fully support the 'Community Design' and 'Homes' ideas on page 10 of the plan.6) I like the plan ideas on Page 117) I fully support the actions proposed in Chapter 3 of the plan. <p>In summary, I think the plan is wonderfully thought out, and I fully support. Thank you for all your hard work on this.</p>
What could be improved in the draft Irasville Village Master Plan?	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) I think careful thought about the architecture of the new buildings will be very important to retain the character of the Mad River Valley, and keep it from becoming another typical town infill center with typical building facades that one can see being built in many other towns in the USA. Specifically, the MRV is home to many architects and builders that specialize in Timber Frame construction and local farmhouse styles. I think it would be wonderful if many of the new buildings were built consistent with local styles (e.g. Northfield Savings bank, Lawsons Tap Room, Irasville Country Store, the townhomes shown on lower left of page 15, etc.), instead of the standard buildings one can see outside of the MRV, for example in many recent developments in Burlington, Williston, and many other towns outside of VT, and the strip mall look of the existing shopping center on the east side of route 100.2) Please consider including a full season rec center with a lap pool. The closest lap pools currently are in Stowe and Burlington. Including a lap pool, sauna, and hot tubs in Irasville would further entrench our area as a wonderful recreation center, and reduce trips outside of our area.3) Please ensure that the bicycle and pedestrian paths from the trail network south of Irasville through the north end of Waitsfield to Tremblay is fully separate and safe from VT 100. Riding a bicycle on VT 100 between Tremblay Road to the off-road trail network south of Irasville is very dangerous.4) I think it is very important not to neglect Waitsfield Village in this wonderful plan. Any improvements in Irasville should not take away from the businesses in the Waitsfield Village Center. Having a 10' wide dedicated multi-use path between Irasville and Waitsfield Village that is separate from VT 100 so that pedestrians and bicyclists can safely travel between the two without being exposed to vehicles would

IRASVILLE VILLAGE MASTER PLAN

Summary of Public Comments Received as 11/30/25

Public comment period to close on 12/1/25

	<p>facilitate this, as well as allow residents and visitors to safely access the business and tourist amenities of Waitsfield Village. Could you please consider including maps and plans for the Waitsfield Village and the interconnection between Irasville and Waitsfield Village in the Irasville Village plan to show the interconnectedness and interdependency?</p> <p>5) I would support the LOT in the MRV (Page 27 of the plan), and even temporary increased taxes in each of the MRV towns, if it would be used for the foundational public aspects required to implement this plan. I do not support a LOT, or additional local taxes, if the proceeds will be sent to Montpelier to be used outside of the MRV, or if they will be used to subsidize private for-profit developers.</p> <p>6) Please strongly consider placing all utilities underground. Having above ground utilities may be initially cheaper to install, but they are less reliable than below ground utilities, require increased maintenance, and detract from natural tree shapes if the trees need to be pruned to save the wires from damage. Underground utilities support the natural beauty of the area, allow trees to grow naturally, and allow wire/utility pole free sight lines to the surrounding hills.</p> <p>Please feel free to call me if you wish to discuss any of the above further. Thank you!</p> <p>Michael Duell</p>
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From: [Joshua Schwartz](#)
To: [Alex Belenz](#)
Cc: [JB Weir](#)
Subject: Re: Draft Irasville Village Master Plan Ready for Review!
Date: Thursday, November 6, 2025 3:51:14 PM
Attachments: [PastedGraphic-1.png](#)

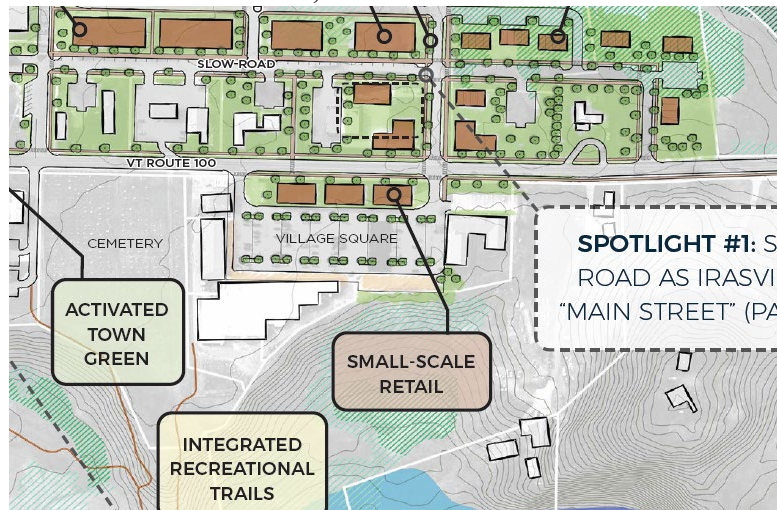
Alex,

Great job on the draft IVMP! Apologies for not meeting your deadline...but here are comments for consideration:

1. Pg. 1
 1. Cover photo
 1. Suggestion: Provide credit to Steve Butcher
2. Pg. 4 - Photo descriptions
 1. "Below: Waitsfield Farmer's Market..."
 1. Suggestion: Remove the apostrophe from "Farmer's," as it is being used as a descriptive plural noun, not a possessive.
3. Pg. 5 - Infill Development inset
 1. "The Mad River Taste Place (bottom right) is an example of infill development..."
 1. Suggestion: Change "Mad River Taste Place" to "5th Quarter Butcher + Provisions" to reflect the change in ownership (which happened earlier this year).
4. Pg. 6 - Land Use & Development section
 1. "Irasville is far less densely developed than Waitsfield Village. The median lot size in Irasville is 1.1 acres, compared to 0.32 acres for the Waitsfield Village Business Zoning District and 0.71 acres for the Village Residential Zoning District,"
 1. Suggestion: "Waitsfield" is not included in the referenced zoning districts. Potential amendment:
 1. "The median lot size in Irasville is 1.1 acres, compared to Waitsfield Village's zoning districts: Village Business (0.32 acres) and Village Residential (0.71).
 2. Suggestion: replace the comma with a period at the end of this sentence.
5. Pg. 7 - Recent Progress & Momentum
 1. "Waitsfield Community Wastewater Project: a project to support environmentally responsible infill development in Waitsfield's village areas (completion expected in 2027)."
 1. Suggestion: amend "completion expected in 2027" to "construction expected to commence in late 2026."
6. Pg. 10 - Putting it All Together: Goals for Irasville
 1. Natural Assets & Constraints
 1. I don't see a definition of "higher-function wetland areas" and "lower-functioning wetlands." I assume this is related to the 2021 Arrowwood Environmental Wetlands work.
 2. Suggestion: I think it would be incredibly beneficial to have a definition of these terms and/or a reference to where they are defined.
7. Pg. 12 - Town Plan quote
 1. "...Waitsfield Town Plan, 2024"

1. If I'm not mistaken, the date of adoption for the current Waitsfield Town Plan is 2023. If so, suggest changing 2024 to 2023.

8. Pg. 13 - A Vision for Irasville, Visualized



1. It appears that the "small-scale retail" at Village Square is identified as "potential new buildings." However, there are existing structures here that would need to be removed to accommodate the new buildings. Similarly, the site across VT100 appears to indicate that the "TD Bank" building would need to be removed to accommodate these structures. It seems to me that there's a reasonably large difference between infill of "open" land and redevelopment.
2. What is the dotted line around the "TD Bank" parcel? I don't see that identified in the key or elsewhere in the document. This image appears in several places throughout the document.

9. Pg. 14 - Spotlight #1.

1. Can the #1 in the aerial map view be moved to the building to the north in order to line up with the perspective drawing?
2. One of the key elements from my perspective is a new shared parking lot. I don't see this highlighted as a key element.

10. Pg. 16 - Intro paragraph

1. "To move forward on this vision, the Town of Waitsfield and its partners will need to prioritize where apply time, effort, and money are applied."
1. Suggestion: Remove "apply"

11. Pg. 17 - Action A: Implement the Community Wastewater System

1. What to Know: "The Town of Waitsfield is actively pursuing the implementation of the Community Wastewater System project, with expected completion in 2027. The system will be built and operated with no cost to taxpayers, leveraging grants and state financing to cover implementation costs and covering ongoing operator costs with fees paid by users of the system."
1. Suggestion: Amend "expected completion in 2027" to "construction expected to commence in late 2026," ensuring consistency with suggestion #5, above.
2. Suggestion: Amend "The system will be built and operated with no cost to taxpayers..." to "The system will be built and operated at no impact on the Waitsfield municipal tax rate..."
3. Suggestion: amend "...state financing..." to "state and federal financing..."

2. Key Goals & Outcomes

1. Suggestion: Add “Public health is protected.”
2. “Cost of development for new homes & businesses are reduced”
 1. Suggestion: “Cost of development for new homes and businesses is reduced and predictability of development is enhanced.”
3. Planning Considerations
 1. "The planned wastewater system is expected to provide capacity for approximately 70 new homes as well as additional capacity for new commercial businesses in Irasville after existing properties are connected to the system. It is possible that additional wastewater capacity for new development could be secured in the future."
 1. The system is planned to have 70 new homes and additional capacity for commercial, however, it hasn't been earmarked for Irasville. The Selectboard has not yet made that decision. This point is referenced in the following bullet.
 2. Suggestion: "The planned wastewater system is expected to serve approximately 70 new homes and provide capacity for future commercial development, with the potential to secure additional wastewater capacity for new development in the future."
 2. "While there is a defined wastewater service area for the planned system, there is currently no policy governing how much future capacity may be allocated to any particular development or sub-area."
 1. Suggestion: “ While there is a defined wastewater service area for the planned system, encompassing Irasville and Waitsfield Village, there is currently no policy...”
 3. "There may be an opportunity align wastewater system implementation with improvements to other infrastructure, such as roadways and sidewalks, in areas where wastewater utility lines will be constructed and buried."
 1. Add a “to” before align.
 4. "Public Input Highlight: Community Wastewater Project"
 1. Suggestion: add the date, June 2024, to clarify when the voters approved the bond.

12. Pg. 18 - Action B

1. Planning Considerations
 1. "Governor Phil Scott issued an executive order that would result in housing development in Irasville..."
 1. Suggestion: provide the reference for the EO number: "NO. 06-25"
 2. “For proposed developments going through conditional review, the Development Review Board...”
 1. Suggestion: Change “conditional review” to “Conditional Use Review.”

13. Pg. 19 - Action C

1. Planning Considerations
 1. "The planned community wastewater system service area will cover all of Irasville and Waitsfield Village. Policies should be considered to ensure there is sufficient wastewater capacity to reserved for future development along Slow Road (Action A)."
 - 1.
 2. Suggestion: Remove “to” in “capacity to reserved”

14. Pg. 20 - Continued

1. Key Steps

1. "Create an official Town Map for Waitsfield that shows an extended Slow Road right-of-way."
 1. I don't understand what this is. I understand official town maps, but I don't understand this strategy.
15. Pg. 22 - Transportation: Envisioned Network & Spot Improvements
 1. "Future Route 100 Alternative Transportation Corridor Connection to Warren Village"
 1. The project being referenced is the MRV Active Transportation Corridor. Suggestion: Replace "Future Route 100 Alternative Transportation Corridor" with "MRV Active Transportation Corridor."
 2. I'm surprised that the consideration/exploration of VT100 as a Class 1 Town Highway isn't recommended.
16. Pg. 23 - Expanding the Pedestrian and Bicycle Network
 1. "Incorporate Wayfinding Signage"
 1. There exists an extensive MRV Trailhead Kiosk system, with many large and small kiosks located within Irasville. Suggestion: reference the existing system and propose incorporating wayfinding signage.
 2. "Evaluate Potential Bicycle Path Connections within Irasville. The Route 100 Alternative Transportation Corridor project has identified potential pedestrian and bicycle connections from Irasville to other villages but did not explore connections within the village."
 1. Suggestion: Replace "Route 100 Alternative Transportation Corridor" with "MRV Active Transportation Corridor."
17. Pg. 25 - Outdoor Recreation
 1. "Recreation Trails"
 - 1.
 2. "Maintain the Mad River Path trail corridor through Irasville, including along Slow Road, using sidewalks, signage, and/or trail relocation where needed."
 - 3.
 4. Suggestion: add a "g" to "including"
18. Pg. 28 - How We Got Here
 1. "A 1.5-year process, built on decades of planning and dreaming."
 1. Suggestion: Might adding Waitsfield + VTrans Tiger Team Collaboration: Pedestrian Safety Improvements along VT100 (2021). I know it isn't a plan per se, but it was a study/initiative/collaborative effort that I think influenced this larger effort.
 1. In 2021, the Town of Waitsfield worked directly with the Vermont Department of Transportation (VTrans), with support from MRVPD, to identify challenges and potential pedestrian safety improvements along Route 100. This VTrans Tiger Team effort produced a pedestrian safety map identifying over ten issue areas on VT 100 through Waitsfield Village & Irasville, as well as a corresponding spreadsheet detailing the issues w/ potential solutions, related reports, etc. A couple of the solutions have been implemented to date (changing transition zone speed limits, RRFBs to be installed soon).

On Oct 27, 2025, at 11:28 AM, Alex Belenz <Abelenz@segroup.com> wrote:

Good morning all,

A friendly reminder that we will meet on Thursday, 10/30 to discuss the draft master plan (attached). To support a productive discussion, we are asking that you submit comments directly to me by **Wednesday, October 29th**. You may submit comments by marking up and returning the PDF document to me via email, or compiling your comments in an email to me (if you do this, please be specific in identifying what elements of the plan your comments refer to).

Thank you! I look forward to the discussion.

Alex

Alex Belenz (he/him)

Senior Associate, Community & Recreation Planning

[!\[\]\(3211b5d1d968fc1665909b34f9f16010_img.jpg\)](#)

802.264.0337

From: Alex Belenz

Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 10:15 AM

To: 'annmarie@madriver.com' <annmarie@madriver.com>; 'Mac Rood' <rood@madriver.com>; 'Luke Foley' <luke@friendsofthemadriver.org>; 'Ira Shadis' <ira@friendsofthemadriver.org>; 'Sam Robinson' <sam@mrvpd.org>; 'bshupe@madriver.com' <bshupe@madriver.com>; 'Joshua Schwartz' <mrvpd@madriver.com>; 'Ursprung' <ursprung@gmail.com>; 'JB Weir' <jb.weir@waitsfieldvt.gov>; 'Kaziah Haviland' <kaziah@vtrural.org>; 'Sean Lawson' <sean@lawsonsfine.com>

Subject: Draft Irasville Village Master Plan Ready for Review!

Good morning,

I'm pleased to share the first draft of the Irasville Village Master Plan for your review (attached). The plan brings together many of the ideas, needs, and opportunities discussed throughout the planning process into a comprehensive framework, while spotlight a few key areas of priority focus for implementation efforts. Throughout the document, we looked to provide sufficient detail to guide what comes next, while recognizing that a plan like this will need to remain

flexible to inevitable changes.

We will have our next VMPSC meeting on October 30th. To make the best of that meeting time, we are requesting that you review the draft and provide comments to me in advance of the meeting. I will compile all comments received and use that to guide our meeting discussion. Please provide comments by **Wednesday, October 29th**. You may submit comments by marking up and returning the PDF document to me via email, or compiling your comments in an email to me (if you do this, please be specific in identifying what elements of the plan your comments refer to). Currently, the document is a concise 30 pages (the final version will have appendices that include our summaries of existing conditions research and community engagement that are currently posted on the project website).

Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions!

Alex

Alex Belenz (he/him)

Senior Associate, Community & Recreation Planning

[<image001.png>](#)

802.264.0337

<Irasville Village Master Plan Document_DRAFT_10 17 25-compressed.pdf>



Village Master Planning Steering Committee

December 2, 2025 at 10:30 a.m.

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9190265312?omn=86770492998>

Meeting ID: 919 026 5312

Planning Commission

Beth Cook
Robert Cook
Emma Hanson
AnnMarie Harmon, Vice-Chair
Becca Newhall
Alice Peal
Jonathan Ursprung, Chair

Planning & Zoning Administrator

J. B. Weir

Town Administrator

York Haverkamp

Town Clerk

Jennifer Peterson

Town Treasurer

Steve Lewis

Waitsfield Town Office

4144 Main Street
Waitsfield, VT 05673
(802) 496-2218
www.waitsfieldvt.us

****A quorum of the Planning Commission may be present at the meeting. This item is intended to serve as a work session and no action will be taken by the Planning Commission at this meeting. Allowed pursuant to 1V.S.A. §310(3)(D)****

- A mix of uses, including upper-story dwellings where practical; and
- A density of development that is considerably higher than adjacent districts, especially the Agricultural-Residential District.

To achieve these development features, finalization of a master plan will be required, and the town's development regulations will need to be updated to reflect desired patterns.

Not only are the scale, design, location and orientation of buildings critical to Irasville's emerging settlement pattern, the location and design of open space is critical as well. Future development should incorporate two key open space features into the overall design of the district—the establishment of a public green, or common, which can be used for community events, gatherings and recreation, as well as a less formal green-way and path network that would provide a natural contrast to developed areas.

12.B Zoning Districts

To facilitate future growth that promotes the character of the town, and to continue to encourage appropriate densities and land use patterns within the town and villages, the following land use Districts are delineated in Zoning With Parcels Map.

Agricultural-Residential District (AR) The largest land use area in Waitsfield, encompassing approximately 10,860 acres containing the majority of the town's cleared land, several active farms, significant wildlife habitat (especially deer yards), the majority of the town's housing units, and a handful of small businesses. The landscape within the is a critical element of Waitsfield's rural character and special charm.

This area was established to accommodate two dominant land uses, agriculture and housing. With single-family homes on lots of varying sizes being the dominant type of housing, maintaining a balance between these two land uses, while maintaining the district's rural character, is an ongoing challenge.

The **purpose** of the Agricultural-Residential District is to provide for low density residential development; to permit the continuance and expansion of agricultural operations; to encourage clustered housing units to preserve open space; to preserve the significant scenic resources of this district, including scenic roads, historic structures, and open spaces; and to protect natural resources.

The following policies apply to the Agricultural-Residential District (AR):

- Continued support and protection of working farm and forest land and avoiding the fragmentation and development of land containing significant areas of primary agricultural soils.
- Limit land uses to agriculture, forestry, residences, land based uses (e.g., recreation, extraction) and very limited commercial or public facilities that are compatible with the rural, residential character of the district or support primary residential or agricultural uses.
- Prevent the conversion of farmland by encouraging residential development in appropriate locations or areas established for development e.g. building envelopes (see illustration that follows).



Modified from http://www.designyourtown.org/design_detail/conservation-subdivisions/

The images above represent a typical parcel in the Agricultural-Residential District in its current state featuring farm and forestland, long views and limited development (left), that same parcel following the development of a traditional subdivision (center) and a conservation-oriented subdivision designed to minimize aesthetic and ecological impacts by clustering development (right).

- Ensure through subdivision regulations that new development does not adversely impact sensitive natural areas, that adequate sewage disposal and water supplies exist, that new roads and utilities are coordinated with improvements on neighboring properties, and that farm and forest land remains available for production.
- Consider decreasing density minimums within the district. Dimensional requirements should be developed in the zoning regulations that specify minimum density in coordination with maximum lot size, and/or require clustered or

conservation subdivisions, to ensure residential development does not result in fragmentation of critical resources and maintains an overall low-density development pattern in the AR district.

- Promote clustered housing or residential hamlets with higher densities in appropriate areas, such as the areas identified in the 2005 Burnt Rock Hamlet Zoning Study.
- Discourage moderate density residential development in inappropriate areas, which include:
 - Productive farmland, especially along the Mad River/Route 100 corridor and the Common and East Warren Roads;
 - Areas with steep slopes and extensive deer yards; and
 - Higher elevation ridges and knolls which rise above the Mad River and are highly visible from Route 100.
- Ensure that commercial activities, including home-based businesses, are compatible with residential neighborhoods in rural settings. These may include small lodges and inns and certain recreation and cultural facilities.



The illustration above demonstrates how clustering of development on the least sensitive portion of the subdivided parcel minimizes the impact and fragmentation of important features.

Forest Reserve District (FR) The Forest Reserve District is defined as all land with an elevation of 1,500 feet and above, a total of approximately 4,800 acres, most of which is located in the Northfield Range. The district boundary was established due to geographic and geological characteristics which make these upland areas poorly suited for development. This is especially true at elevations above 1,700 feet, which deserve special consideration regarding land use and development. Distinguishing features of the Forest Reserve District include:

- Extensive areas of steep slopes, especially above an elevation of 1,700 feet;
- Thin, highly erodible soils;
- Over 32 miles of small, fragile headwater streams;

From: [Alice Peal](#)
To: [Jonathan Ursprung](#); [AnnMarie Harmon](#); [JB Weir](#)
Subject: Next PC Meeting and some notes on True North
Date: Friday, November 28, 2025 12:10:47 PM

I will not be at the Dec 2 PC Meeting. I will be prepping for a medical test the next day.

True North - True North is not a Mad River Valley Community Program. It is a For Profit Behavioral Business. It is very expensive and is focused on attracting offspring of the rich. Tony Shaloub's (he played Monk) daughter went to True North. She also had some very expensive Icelandic Horses and a private ride was arranged for her at Vermont Icelandic Horse Farm. True North's Program is for older teens and young adults. They do a forest camping activity and there is a history of contention with residents whose property abuts the area where True North chooses to put up their yurts.

True North is not a Hannah's House nor a Bigger Picture effort to serve the Mad River Valley.

As a business, changing the Zoning or uses allowed in AgRes changes things for the entire area. You'd be inviting sprawl.

-Alice

From: [Brian Shupe](#)
To: [JB Weir](#)
Cc: [York Haverkamp](#); ursprung@gmail.com
Subject: Re: STRs
Date: Wednesday, November 12, 2025 6:45:08 PM

JB-

The SB has not discussed a particular deadline. My advice is take the time needed to do a thorough review and come up with what the PC considers appropriate recommendations.

With bridges, LOT and wastewater we have a lot to communicate with the public between now and town meeting, and are entering budget season, so I don't see a lot of band with in the next couple of months. That said, it would be great to be able to take whatever action we agree is necessary and appropriate in late winter/early spring. That is my opinion, not the board's position.

Sent from my Pad

On Nov 12, 2025, at 4:14 PM, JB Weir <jb.weir@waitsfieldvt.gov> wrote:

Brain/York,

The PC would like to know an approximate timeline for which the SB would like to hear recommendations for short-term rental regulations. The PC has reviewed various standards from other towns in addition to other materials, having a thorough discussion at two meetings.

Is there a ballpark date for which you'd like a formal recommendation?

Thanks,

JB