

# 8. Transportation



As is the case in most of rural America, any consideration of transportation in Waitsfield is largely dominated by a discussion of the automobile and the impacts of an automobile-dependent culture on our community. The town is not directly served by rail, a commercial airport, or any regional bicycle and pedestrian network other than public roadways. Recognizing this dependence on the automobile, the town has attempted to coordinate land use planning with traffic and transportation policies as a means of providing pedestrian opportunities, promoting transit, and ensuring traffic safety and efficiency throughout the community.

This chapter examines the town's transportation network, including state and local roads, traffic safety, pedestrian travel and transit, and evaluates current conditions and issues relating to that network.

## ROADS & HIGHWAYS

### State Highways

Primary access to the town is provided by Route 100, which runs the length of the state and serves most tourist destinations along the main range of the Green Mountains. Route 100 links the Valley with Interstate 89 in Waterbury (exit 10) and Middlesex (exit 9), both approximately 10 miles to the north. It provides access to passenger rail service in Waterbury, as well as commercial air service and regional population and employment centers in Chittenden County and Montpelier. Route 100 not only serves town residents, but also provides the primary access to the Valley for visitors from Montreal and southern New England.

Route 100 serves Sugarbush (Lincoln Peak) in Warren, as well as the White River Valley further to the south. Access to Waitsfield is also provided from the west by Route 17, which crosses the Green Mountain Range over Appalachian Gap in Fayston, providing a link between Route 100 and Mad River Glen and Mount Ellen.

In addition to serving as the Valley’s principal arterial highway, Route 100 functions as Main Street through Waitsfield Village and Irasville. A result of this can be high traffic volumes during peak periods, as well as potential conflicts between through-traffic and turning movements at busy commercial intersections. This raises specific concerns relative to traffic safety and efficiency within village centers, addressed in more detail below.

**Highway Improvements.** While the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) has only planned a few highway improvement projects in the coming years, several of these have a significant bearing on the community. Projects which are presently under development by the agency are summarized in Table 8.1.

Of the projects under development, the replacement of the Route 17 bridge over Mill Brook and associated improvements to the Route 100 and Route 17 intersection are the most significant. The bridge is considered deficient by VTrans due to several geometrical problems, limited capacity and severe deterioration, resulting in a low sufficiency rating of 22.2 (out of a possible rating of 100).

**TABLE 8.1 SUMMARY OF STATE HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS**

VTrans Projects	Description	Schedule
Route 17 BR 38	Reconstruct Route 17 bridge over the Mill Brook just before the Fayston Town Line (see discussion this chapter).	not scheduled (see discussion)
Route 100 BR 181	Rehabilitate/widen bridge over small stream (adjacent to Pines Rest Area)	not scheduled
Route 100—Irasville	Construct sidewalks along Route 100 from Bragg Hill Road north to elementary school.	2006/07
Route 100—North	Reconstruction, including widening and guardrail installation, of Route 100 north from North Fayston Road intersection.	2005

Source: VT Agency of Transportation



In addition, the intersection is characterized by limited sight distance (especially the northerly approach), steep grades and significant traffic delays at peak periods. The proximity of the Bragg Hill Road intersection further exacerbates the inadequacies of the Route 100/17 intersection. Existing conditions of both the bridge and intersection are described in detail in an initial scoping report prepared by VTrans in 1999. That report also evaluates several alternative bridge replacement and intersection redesign plans. The town has long maintained that replacing the deteriorated bridge on its present alignment will lock-in an inadequate intersection design for 50-75 years.

The intersection of Route 100 and Bridge Street also raises safety concerns due to the poor site distance to the south. This problem was improved several years ago when a power pole was moved from the southeast corner of the intersection, although the adjacent building, and attached porch, still limit visibility. While options to improve intersection safety should be explored, it is important that improvements not occur at the expense of the compact, historic character of the Village.

Of lesser concern, but still noteworthy, is the proposed widening of Route 100 and associated guard-rail installation north from the North Fayston Road into Moretown. This section of highway is located within the National Register Historic District (see Chapter 4). Improvements should be carefully designed to avoid negatively impacting the scenic and historic character of the area, should not interfere with existing farming operations, and should not result in excessive traffic speeds.

**Highway Maintenance.** Until 1998, the regional highway maintenance facility used by VTrans to maintain Route 100 and 17 in the Mad River Valley was located adjacent to the Lareau swimhole, approximately ½ mile south of Irasville. The 1998 flood, however, accomplished what Valley towns had attempted for at least two decades—the permanent removal of the riverside maintenance facility. A more modern facil-

ity has been relocated further to the south on Route 100, in the Limited Business District. This facility should meet the state's maintenance needs for the foreseeable future.

**Highway Design Standards.** Until 1997, VTrans applied the American Association of Surface and Highway Transportation Organizations (AASHTO)



highway design standards to roads in the state (as did the transportation agency for each of the other 49 states). In response to growing concern that AASHTO standards were inappropriate for Vermont's small villages and rural settings, the state prepared and adopted *Vermont State Standards for the Design of Transportation Construction, Reconstruction and Rehabilitation of Freeways, Roads & Streets* (1997). These include standards for roads serving urban, village and rural contexts that are designed specifically for use in Vermont. The upgrade and construction of state, town and private roads in Waitsfield should be guided by these standards.

### Town Roads

Waitsfield maintains nearly 37 miles of town roads, including 9.45 miles of class 2 and 20.22 miles of class 3 roads, with an additional 7.2 miles of class 4 roads. Class 2 and 3 roads are maintained for year-round



TABLE 8.2 • WAITSFIELD ROAD CLASSIFICATIONS				
Road(s)	Mileage	Class	Function	Aid
Route 100, 17	7.83	State	Arterial	Federal/Primary
Town Highways	9.45	2	Collector	Federal/Secondary
Town Highways	20.22	3	Local Access	Local/State
Remaining Roads	7.16	4	Access/Recreation	Local
<b>Total Miles</b>	<b>44.66</b>			

travel. Class 2 roads serve as major collectors providing access between towns. These include the North Fayston Road, Bragg Hill Road, North Road and East Warren Road. Class 3 roads are all other roads except state routes that are negotiable in all seasons. A summary of road mileage by classification and function is included in Table 8.2. In most instances, regardless of classification, the town owns a 50' right-of-way (either as an easement or in fee simple) to accommodate town roads. The town road network, including road classifications, is depicted on Map 1.

Waitsfield's roads are generally in good shape and adequate to accommodate current traffic volumes. While the town does not maintain a formal, long-term road improvement program, the Selectboard, Town Administrator and Road Commissioner have attempted to schedule road maintenance in an efficient and cost effective manner which minimizes year-to-year fluctuation in the municipal property tax rate. Three significant road improvement projects have been undertaken in recent years: the repavement of the East Warren Road in 1998, the replacement of the Butternut Hill Bridge in 1999, and the repavement of the North Road and a portion of the Tremblay Road in 2002.

In 2002 there were no major road improvement projects included in the town's capital budget and program. The Meadow Road bridge over the Mad River, however, has been identified as deficient by the Selectboard and VTrans. A plan for the rehabilitation or replacement of that bridge has not been prepared, although such a plan could be expected within the next five years.

**Future Road Connections.** In addition to road improvements needed to address current deficiencies, several projects have been identified as necessary to accommodate anticipated development in accordance with

this plan. In 1997, the Planning Commission and Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission contracted with consulting engineers Lamoureux, Stone & O'Leary to prepare the *Waitsfield Circulation and Access Management Plan*. That plan identified several conceptual road connections designed to provide alternative routes to distribute local traffic and thereby improve highway efficiency, to support land use goals for Irasville and Waitsfield Village, and to enhance pedestrian and bicycle safety.

While several of the conceptual alignments are not feasible due to site constraints, others are widely viewed as offering potential benefits to the community. These include:

- ◆ **A route connecting the Old County Road with Carroll Road to the south;**
- ◆ **Extending the Slow Road and/or Mad River Canoe Road north to Carroll Road;**
- ◆ **A connection from the new Mad River Green (Northfield Savings Bank) Road south to Bragg Hill Road;**
- ◆ **A connection from Fiddlers Green to Route 100 north of Village Square shopping center; and**
- ◆ **A road running parallel to Route 100 from the Airport Road to the Old County Road.**

It is important to note that, in most instances, specific alignments for these connections have not been identified, and in many cases potentially affected landowners have not been involved in planning for possible routes. Such connections may take the form of collector roads serving through traffic, service roads creating a grid-network in village centers, or an interconnected network of rural roads providing alternative routes for local traffic. The construction of these roads could take place in response to proposed private developments on land within the potential corridor, or through the public process of laying out and constructing town roads. Should the town choose the later, an official map should be developed to provide a mechanism for acquiring future rights of way. Regardless of the mech-

anism used, future development should not occur in a manner that would eliminate the possibility of aligning a feasible route through designated corridors.

**Class 4 Roads:** Unlike other town roads, class 4 roads are not maintained for year-round travel. With important exceptions (e.g., minor portions of both Rolston Road and Old Center Fayston Road), most class 4 road mileage is located within the town’s Forest Reserve District and provides recreational opportunities and access for traditional forest-based land uses (e.g., forestry, hunting). Presently, the Selectboard has three management strategies for class 4 roads: municipal winter maintenance, although not improving the road to class 3 status (Rolston Road); allowing private winter maintenance through a maintenance agreement (Palmer Hill Road); and no winter maintenance (most class 4 roads).

Year-round development on class 4 roads may result in the need for road upgrades and additional maintenance to allow for year-round use and access by emergency vehicles. It can also interfere with recreational use. Options include regulating or prohibiting year-round development requiring such access, and/or downgrading selected class 4 roads to legal trails. These options are especially important with regard to class 4 roads which access properties located in the Forest Reserve District, where road policies should be consistent with the town’s land use policies. One exception to this, however, is the Rolston Road, which is located entirely within the Agricultural-Residential District and serves to link Route 100 with the East Warren Road. Maintaining this road for year-round traffic is important for ensuring access between these two areas of town, especially in the event of damage to the Waitsfield Covered Bridge and/or the Meadow Road bridge.

**Road Maintenance:** The maintenance of the road system is the town’s second largest annual expense, next to schools. In 2003 that expense was \$468,307, with only \$64,974 (14%) of the total funded through state aid to highways. The town maintains a road department staffed with three full time employees. A current listing of road equipment maintained by the town is provided in Table 8.3. The 2004 capital improvement program includes a schedule for replacing equipment. Reserve funds have been established to fund these acquisitions. The capital improvement program also identifies the replacement of the existing salt shed—which is inadequate to meet current needs—in 2007.

**TABLE 8.4 • DESIGNATED SCENIC ROADS**

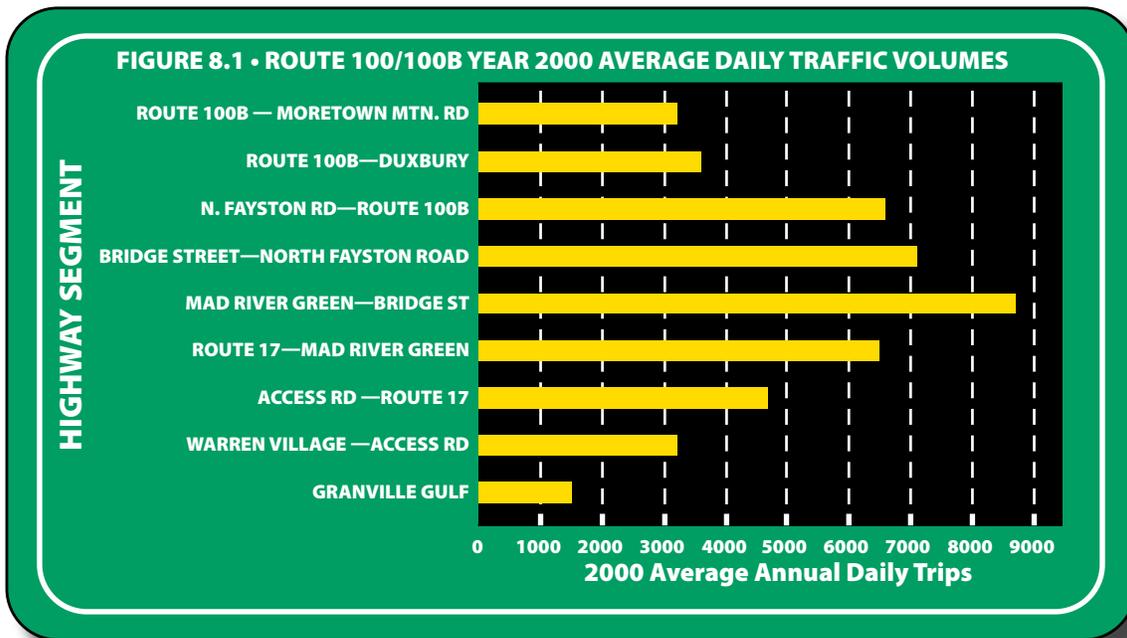
Road #	Name	Description
State Aid 1	E. Warren Rd	In its entirety
State Aid 3	North Road	In its entirety
Town Road 4	Common Road	In its entirety
Town Road 10	Floodwoods Road	In its entirety
Town Road 16	East Road	In its entirety
Town Road 20	Meadow Road	In its entirety
Town Road 26	Brook Road	In its entirety
Town Road 27	Cross Road	In its entirety
Town Road 28	Palmer Hill Rd	In its entirety
Town Road 31	Rolston Road	In its entirety
Town Road 35	Sherman Road	In its entirety
Vermont 100	Main Street	North of Waitsfield Village District to the Moretown Town Line; South of Irasville District to the Warren Town Line.

Another pressing road maintenance issue is a reliable, economical source of gravel. Should the town choose to maintain the character of its scenic roads, many of which are enhanced by gravel roads, a cost effective, long term source of local gravel must be found. Currently over \$66,000 is in a capital reserve fund to be used to option an adequate source of local gravel, should one become available. Potential gravel resources are identified on Map 6. As of the date of this plan, the Selectboard is discussing with the landowner the possible purchase of a parcel to serve as a gravel source.

**Scenic Roads:** Many of Waitsfield’s roads have been identified as “scenic” (Table 8.4). These are also depicted on Map 7. While the reasons for designating a road as scenic are specific to each individual case,

**Table 8.3 Waitsfield Road Equipment**

- 1990 Eager Beaver Brush Chipper
- 1992 Caterpillar Backhoe
- 1994 Caterpillar Bucket Loader
- 1997 International Dump Truck (plow, wing)
- 1998 Galion Grader
- 2002 International (low profile) Dump Truck
- 2004 International Dump Truck (plow, wing)



common features that contribute to a road’s scenic character, including stone walls and canopy trees, are often found within the right-of-way. As such, they are susceptible to detrimental road maintenance practices, including removal, to accommodate widening, ditching and/or paving.

Currently, no formal process exists for reviewing the potential impact of road improvements on the scenic features of a particular road. While the town’s road crew has been sensitive to the scenic impact of road maintenance in the past, the lack of a formal process has resulted in some loss of significant scenic features and occasional conflicts between the town road department and town residents. A process of inventorying the features that contribute to the roads’ scenic character, and the preparation of maintenance guidelines designed to protect those features, would avoid additional loss of scenic features.

Of particular relevance to the preservation of scenic roads is the question of whether existing gravel roads should be paved. This frequently involves work beyond resurfacing, including widening, ditching and upgrading the subsurface. To balance road maintenance and traffic safety needs with scenic preservation, a cost-benefit study which considers the aesthetic impacts of road improvements may be needed prior to the upgrade of a scenic road. Such analysis could be performed as part of a regular road program review.

**Covered Bridges.** Waitsfield maintains two covered bridges currently in use. Both are listed on the

National Register of Historic Places. The most heavily used bridge—which crosses the Mad River in Waitsfield Village—is reported to be the longest continuously used covered bridge in Vermont. Built in 1833, the Village bridge was last renovated in 2001. Given its 170 years of service—and the more than 2,000 cars which cross it on an average day—this bridge represents one of the better infrastructure investments made by the town over its long history. While much younger, the Pine Brook covered bridge (built in 1870) has provided similar value.

**Private Roads**

With few exceptions, roads constructed within the past 20-30 years are privately owned and maintained. This relieves the town of construction costs and long-term maintenance responsibilities; yet it is still necessary to ensure that private roads meet minimum public standards for emergency access and safety, and do not adversely affect the public road network. Standards for the development of private roads are addressed in the town’s subdivision regulations. Such roads are typically maintained by a property or homeowners association, over which the town has little control. Given that public access can also be denied, the town should consider taking over private roads within designated village areas and/or where the entire community will benefit from an expansion of the town road network. Currently, the Selectboard may take over private roads provided such roads have been constructed to town standards.

## TRAFFIC CONDITIONS AND SAFETY

### Traffic Congestion

Waitsfield historically has been concerned about the high traffic volumes in town, especially along commercial sections of Route 100 where traffic volumes are at their highest (see Figure 8.1) The town, through the memorandum of understanding with other Valley towns and Sugarbush Resort, has attempted to control traffic at key intersections during peak weekend hours throughout the ski season with the aid of traffic control officers from the Washington County Sheriff's Department. This has been an effective traffic management practice in past years.

Another strategy to ease traffic congestion is the construction of alternative routes as discussed above. The benefits of this strategy were made apparent with the construction of the alternative access to Mad River Green shopping center in 1999, which has served to reduce congestion at the access immediately across from Irasville Common. Also, maintaining a viable transit system and improving pedestrian and bicycle circulation would reduce automobile congestion within Irasville and Waitsfield Village.

Finally, reviewing development proposals to ensure that they will not overburden the capacity of existing roads and intersections is an important traffic management tool. Generally, intersections outside of the town's villages should be maintained at a level of service (los) "C" during the design hour. A reduction to a los "D" may be appropriate in some instances within the villages. Private developers that propose projects that will exceed capacity may be required to mitigate the impact of their development and/or fund necessary improvements to increase road and intersection capacity.

### Truck Traffic

Another growing controversy involving local roads is the conflict between large trucks travelling on rural town roads and the residential and scenic nature of those roads. This conflict is likely to intensify as more residential development occurs in rural sections of Waitsfield. According to the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) trip generation rates<sup>1</sup>, every single family home can be expected to generate approximately ten automobile trips per day on adjacent roads. Therefore, not only will residential de-

velopment serve to intensify the interaction of commercial trucks and automobiles, the greatest cause of increased traffic on town roads will undoubtedly be residential development. Truck traffic, moreover, raises special issues related to greater wear on public roads and the impact on the quiet character of residential neighborhoods.

Due to load restrictions on several bridges, including both covered bridges, most truck traffic uses the Tremblay Road/North Road/Common Road/East Warren Road to access most of the town east of Route 100.

### Access Management

The frequency, location and design of highway accesses—or curb cuts—has a direct bearing on the safety and efficiency of both town roads and state highways. Issues associated with access management were addressed in detail in the aforementioned Waitsfield Circulation and Access Management Plan. That plan identified several techniques for managing highway access, most of which may be applied through the town's zoning and subdivision regulations, and road policies and ordinances. These include requirements for:

- ◆ **Minimum sight distances at driveway or street intersections,**
- ◆ **Maximum number of driveways per lot,**
- ◆ **Mandatory shared driveways,**
- ◆ **Maximum curb-cut widths,**
- ◆ **Minimum and maximum driveway lengths,**
- ◆ **The installation of turning lanes,**
- ◆ **Easements to allow for future road extensions or connections to adjoining lots,**
- ◆ **Minimum or maximum on-site parking, shared-parking, and parking design,**
- ◆ **Minimum areas for loading and unloading, and**
- ◆ **Curbing, landscaping, and buffers to visually define and enhance access points.**

Approval by the Selectboard is required for access onto town roads, and by VTrans for access onto state highways. To receive approval, the access also must be consistent with local land use regulations. The Waitsfield Planning Commission has successfully applied several of the above tools through the site plan review process in recent years, especially along Route 100 in Irasville and Waitsfield Village. Continued attention to access management by the Board of Adjustment will balance the needs of motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists and improve safety and highway efficiency.

<sup>1</sup>The ITE trip generation rates are the commonly accepted standard for projecting traffic generation from various land uses.

### Traffic Calming

Techniques to maintain relatively slow traffic speeds in settled areas, enhance pedestrian safety, and improve the overall environment are often referred to as “traffic calming.” Such techniques include narrow vehicle traffic lanes, wide sidewalks, medians, on-street parking, roundabouts, raised and/or textured pedestrian crosswalks, bulb-outs, street-tree plantings and street furniture. Traffic calming is important in a variety of contexts:

- ◆ **At busy intersections where pedestrian crossings may conflict with traffic flow and turning movements,**
- ◆ **Along Main Street (Route 100) within Waitsfield and Irasville, where traffic volumes are high, but pedestrian traffic and circulation is encouraged, and**
- ◆ **Along neighborhood or rural residential roads, to reduce traffic speeds and maintain the road surface.**

The Waitsfield Street Tree Master Plan, prepared by Broadleaf Design in 2000, establishes detailed planting plans for the Route 100 corridor through Irasville and Waitsfield Village. Sidewalks, crosswalks, curbs, and on-street parking areas need to be more clearly defined in Waitsfield Village, and established in Irasville, as called for in the Irasville Master Plan currently in development. Traffic calming measures will be incorporated in the town’s sidewalk project, described below, and should be considered in any improvements to Route 100 and connecting side streets within designated village areas.

### PEDESTRIAN & BICYCLE TRAVEL

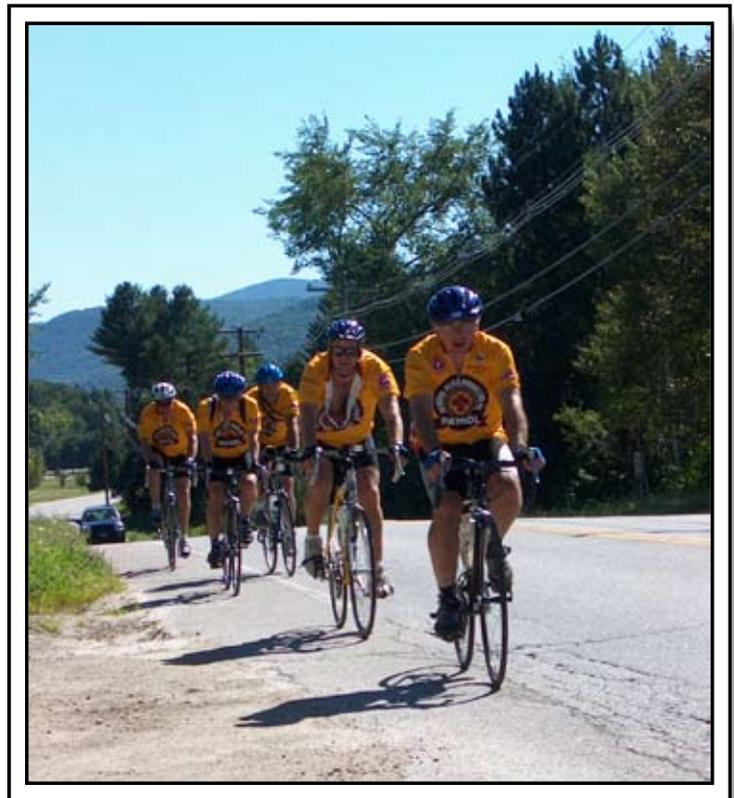
Despite the focus on the automobile, walking has been the principal mode of human transportation since the beginning of humankind. Enhancing local pedestrian—and bicycle—opportunities offers many benefits to the community. These include reducing traffic congestion, air pollution and our collective reliance on non-renewable fossil fuels, fostering healthy living, providing recreational amenities for residents and visitors and reinforcing historic, pedestrian-scale settlement patterns.

Waitsfield has encouraged efficient and safe pedestrian travel within Waitsfield Village and Irasville. In 1993, the town began planning with VTrans to upgrade and extend existing sidewalks, and to pave bicycle lanes, along Route 100 from Bragg Hill Road to the elementary school. Construction is anticipated in 2006/07. Additional extensions to link this

sidewalk with nearby commercial and residential uses should be pursued, as called for in the draft Irasville Master Plan. As Irasville develops, pedestrian facilities—including interconnecting sidewalks, and a non-motorized “greenway,” should serve as dominant organizational elements. To support this, it is important that safe pedestrian crosswalks be installed at appropriate locations along Route 100.

In addition to Irasville and Waitsfield Village sidewalks, the town holds several pathway easements and temporary licence agreements in conjunction with the Mad River Path Association. The Path Association is pursuing the establishment of an inter-connected network of walking, hiking and bicycling paths in the Mad River Valley, including a system of paths linking the Valley’s villages and schools. A key element of this network is the Mad River Greenway, a 4-5 mile long path parallel to the Mad River in Waitsfield. If extended, the Greenway could serve as an important pedestrian and bicycle connection from Waitsfield Village to Moretown Village and Harwood to the north, Fayston Elementary School and area ski resorts to the west, and Warren Village to the south.

Waitsfield also is fortunate to possess many miles of informal walking paths and trails. Class 4 roads provide excellent walking opportunities, especially in the Northfield Range where class 4 roads such as the



Bowen, Palmer Hill, East and Sherman Roads offer access to the largely undeveloped mountains. Also, the Dana Hill Road serves the Howe Block of the Camels Hump State Forest.

In addition to class 4 roads, many miles of private logging roads and trails are available to the public through the generosity of landowners. However, private roads are often at risk of being posted; public access may be prohibited as landowner-user conflicts arise. In the future the town may choose to explore the potential for formalizing many of these informal trails through the dedication of permanent easements. The continuing subdivision of land poses both a risk to this informal network and an opportunity to obtain path easements as a condition to subdivision approval. In addition, public education to discourage inconsiderate recreational use of private trails (e.g., littering, leaving gates open), is important if local residents are to continue to benefit from the generosity of landowners.

Another method of formalizing trails on private property is the use of temporary easements; a practice the Vermont Association of Snow Travelers (VAST) has used with much success. The VAST network includes a number of winter-use trails along the Mad River north of Waitsfield Village, with links to the Green Mountain Range in Fayston and over Northfield Gap east of the River.

The Mad River Path Association is pursuing the creation of a permanent walking path along the Mad River to link the towns of Warren to the south with Moretown to the north. Approximately 4 miles of this pathway running north from the Tremblay Road is in place and is a widely used transportation and recreation resource. A section of this path and the parking area at the Meadow Road are protected through easements held by the town. Extending the path, through acquisition, easements or landowner agreements, from Moretown to Warren by the Path Association is encouraged.

## PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

### Local Transit

Waitsfield, together with other Valley towns, has long supported the operation of an effective transit service. Between 1993 and 1998, Sugarbush Resort operated a shuttle service between Lincoln Peak and Mount Ellen. This was the only transit service avail-

able in the Valley. In 1999, the Valley “T” service was established through funding through the federal “Congestion Management & Air Quality (CMAQ) program and local sources (most significantly Sugarbush).

The Valley T (renamed Madbus in 2001), was operated by Wheels Transportation until 2002. The service was specifically designed to provide transportation options within the Valley for residents and visitors, including those lacking access to an automobile. Goals of the service include:

- ◆ **Improving links within the Valley, including transit connections between growth centers on the Valley floor (e.g., Irasville, Waitsfield Village) and the ski resorts;**
- ◆ **Improving links between the Valley and employment and residential centers in Waterbury, Montpelier and Barre;**
- ◆ **Reinforcing local land use policies of compact villages surrounded by rural countryside;**
- ◆ **Encouraging motorists to park their automobile to use alternative transportation modes; and**
- ◆ **Integrating different transportation modes by providing connections to Amtrak, Vermont Transit stops and Burlington Airport.**

Other benefits include reducing congestion on Route 100—thereby avoiding the need for costly improvements to increase highway capacity, alleviating parking demand and enhancing tourism. The 1998 Short Range Transit Plan for the Mad River Valley outlined the T service. Overall, the plan recommended 5 routes, two of which (a spine from Warren to Waitsfield and a commuter link) were year-round. The three other routes provide seasonal service to the ski resorts.

The Madbus service initially suffered from operational shortcomings of Wheels Transportation, who declined to continue in the role of operator beyond 2002. In late 2002, the Mad River Valley Planning District and Sugarbush Chamber of Commerce sought a different service provider better equipped to address local needs. With considerable assistance from VTrans, Alpha Transit of Morrisville contracted to provide the service. In addition, nine new buses were purchased by the Chamber with a combination of federal and state funds and matching contributions from Waitsfield, Warren and Fayston. The service was expanded during the 2002/2003 ski season. Through ongoing support of the Chamber and local businesses, the outlook for the Valley’s transit service is better than at any time since its inception.

**Rail & Air**

Amtrak passenger rail service to several New England cities, New York City and Washington D.C. is available in Waterbury Village and Montpelier. The nearest air passenger and freight services are located at the Burlington International Airport in South Burlington, and the state-owned E.F. Knapp Airport in Berlin. The Warren Airport—a private, seasonal airport in Warren used primarily for recreational purposes, including commercial soaring—also provides air transportation options.

**PARKING**

The town, through its zoning regulations, requires that most land uses provide off-street parking. In some areas, including some properties in Irasville, this has resulted in excessive paved area. To alleviate this, the town’s zoning was revised to provide local boards with greater discretion regarding the amount of parking required. While ensuring that private developments are able to accommodate the resulting

demand for parking, greater use of shared parking facilities, including municipal lots, and on-street parking would create a more efficient development pattern. It may be appropriate to further reduce parking requirements where shared parking and/or transit service is provided.

Waitsfield Village, to a much greater degree than Irasville, has benefitted from municipal parking (adjacent to the Masonic Lodge), shared parking (Bridge Street Marketplace) and on-street parking (on Bridge Street and Route 100). Additional opportunities for public parking should be explored in Waitsfield behind the Joslin Library and Federated Church, and behind the Village Grocery on Parsonage Lane. In Irasville, greater use of on-street and shared parking, coupled with an expanded sidewalk network, should be incorporated into future master planning. In both village centers, better information signs and improved sidewalk connections would make better use of existing parking areas and reduce the need for additional parking associated with new development.

In addition to local parking needs, no formal commuter lot exists in the Valley, although several informal areas are used. The development of a safe, convenient commuter lot in an appropriate location should be explored. The Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission could likely assist with this effort.

**TRANSPORTATION  
GOAL:**

**To provide a safe, efficient and convenient transportation network for all Waitsfield residents, visitors and businesses.**

**TRANSPORTATION  
POLICIES:**

- 1) The town shall pursue a program of transportation planning which integrates road and infrastructure improvements with land use, housing, economic development and resource protection goals and policies, and which is coordinated with surrounding towns and the region.
- 2) Replacement of Route 17 Bridge #38 over the Mill Brook shall not occur in its present alignment. Rather, replacement of the bridge should occur concurrently with the reconstruction of the Route 100/Route 17 intersection in accordance with alternative 5 contained within the 1999 VTrans scoping report, or a variation of that alternative which results in the relocation of the intersection further to the south.
- 3) Maintenance and reconstruction of state highways’ town roads and private roads constructed to accommodate new development shall be designed in accordance with the Vermont State Standards for the

**Design of Transportation Construction, Reconstruction and Rehabilitation of Freeways, Roads & Streets.** As provided in those standards, road and highway improvement projects shall be designed in a manner that is sensitive to the setting and context of the highway segment. Improvements within village centers shall be designed in a manner that reinforces the scale and character of the village(s), promotes pedestrian circulation and safety and incorporates traffic calming.

- 4) The safety and efficiency of state highways and town roads shall be maintained through appropriate traffic control strategies and devices, including continued use of traffic control officers during peak periods provided by Sugarbush Resort during peak ski days and/or other entities during large events and activities that generate high traffic volumes.
- 5) Town roads shall be maintained and improved on an as-needed basis determined by the Selectboard and Road Commissioner. Significant capital improvements shall be scheduled in advance through the capital budgeting process.

- 6) The safety and efficiency of state highways and town roads shall be maintained through, in part, strict access management provisions administered through local land use and development regulations.
- 7) Development and land uses that would adversely impact traffic safety, the condition of town roads or over-burden road capacity shall be prohibited unless appropriate mitigating actions can be implemented.
- 8) Covered bridges shall be maintained for continued use in their present locations.
- 9) The expansion of the town's road network should occur in an integrated and coordinated manner; specific road connections, described in this plan, should be pursued by the town in conjunction with private developers. Wherever feasible and/or called for in this plan, new or expanded roads serving proposed subdivisions should be configured to provide connections to adjacent properties.
- 10) Scenic roads shall be maintained to protect, to the extent possible, those features located within the right-of-way which contribute to the roads scenic features (e.g., canopy trees, stone walls); pavement of gravel roads should only occur if necessary to ensure road safety and if no economic alternative exists.
- 11) Development within scenic road corridors shall be designed so as to protect the identified scenic features within those corridors (e.g., open fields, ridgelines and hilltops, historic structures or districts). Protection measures shall be implemented through the town's land use and development regulations.
- 12) The reclassification of Class 4 roads, or substantial upgrade to make such roads accessible to automobiles on a year-round basis, should only occur if such upgrade does not result in the loss of existing recreation values. The upgrade and/or reclassification of Class 4 roads shall not be permitted to allow year-round vehicular access and land development within the Forest Reserve District.
- 13) Irasville and Waitsfield Village should be served with an interconnected network of sidewalks and other pedestrian and bicycle paths, including incorporation of identified road and sidewalk connections into development and subdivision plans. New development shall provide such sidewalks and paths to be connected to existing or planned facilities.
- 14) The creation of an integrated walking path network—through acquisition, easements or use of landowner agreements—linking Waitsfield Village and Irasville with the Valley schools, and the village centers of Warren to the south and Moretown to the north, and other community centers and resources, including the Lareau Swimhole, Skatium and Harwood Union High School, is part of the transportation and recreation plan for Waitsfield and the Valley. To this end, the efforts of the Mad River Path Association are strongly endorsed.
- 15) The continued operation of a transit system linking Waitsfield Village and Irasville with the Valley's ski areas and regional population and employment centers should be maintained and expanded. To this end, shelters and designated stops, sidewalks and park & ride facilities within village centers should be created and/or expanded.
- 16) Safe, well marked bicycle lanes should be installed and maintained along Route 100, Route 17 and, to the extent practical, along paved class 2 town roads.
- 17) Continue to require that new development provide on-site parking in accordance with the town's zoning regulations, although the amount of parking area required should be based upon the actual demand likely to be created by the land use. Alternatives to on-site parking should be allowed in appropriate circumstances, including village centers. Such alternatives include shared and phased parking, credits for adjacent on-street parking, and payments in lieu of parking to fund public parking areas in the vicinity of the site.
- 18) Explore, with appropriate landowners, the creation of a municipal parking lot in Waitsfield Village behind the Federated Church/Joslin Library, off Parsonage Lane and/or other appropriate locations.
- 19) Continue to coordinate transportation planning with other Valley municipalities and the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission.
- 20) Landowners likely to be affected by major transportation construction projects should be involved early in the project planning process.



**TRANSPORTATION  
TASKS:**

- 1) Continue regional transportation planning through the Mad River Valley Planning District and Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission. *[Planning Commission, TAC representative, town MRVPD representatives, Selectboard]*
- 2) Prepare and adopt an official map which depicts future road and sidewalk connections as outlined in this plan. *[Planning Commission]*
- 3) Continue to plan for the regular replacement of road maintenance equipment through the capital budget and program, and reserve funds. *[Selectboard]*.
- 4) Acquire a long-term source of gravel, including the possible purchase and operation of a municipal gravel pit, in accordance with applicable local and state regulations. *[Selectboard]*
- 5) In conjunction with Sugarbush Resort, review on an annual basis the need for traffic control officers and/or devices during peak traffic periods at the Route 100/Route 17 intersections and the entrance to Mad River Green and Village Square shopping centers. *[Planning Commission, Selectboard]*
- 6) Continue to regulate traffic access, circulation and parking for all proposed non-residential land uses through conditional use and subdivision review. *[Planning Commission, Board of Adjustment]*
- 7) Require, through conditional use review and/or subdivision review, that new private roads meet the town's road standards. *[Planning Commission, Board of Adjustment]*
- 8) Complete the planned construction of the Route 100 sidewalk, and plan for the extension of the sidewalk and path network in Irasville and Waitsfield and connected to neighboring communities. *[Planning Commission, MRVPD representatives, Selectboard, Mad River Path Association\*]*
- 9) Through curb cut permits and subdivision regulations, continue to require that all new roads and all private road and driveway intersections with Town roads meet minimum safety and design standards. *[Selectboard, Road Commissioner, Planning Commission]*
- 10) Prepare a scenic road inventory and subsequent scenic road maintenance and improvement plans for specific road segments. *[Planning Commission]*
- 11) Work with other Valley towns, CVRPC and VTrans to ensure that the function of Route 100 as a primary arterial is not diminished and that corridor issues are addressed in a cooperative manner. *[Planning Commission, Town TAC representative, Selectboard]*
- 12) Develop a clear class 4 road policy which identifies under what circumstances such roads may be upgraded, maintained and/or reclassified in accordance with the policies set forth above. *[Selectboard, Planning Commission]*
- 13) Encourage, through the subdivision review process, the dedication of easements to permanently protect pathways and trail connections for non-motorized use. *[Planning Commission]*
- 14) Work to ensure that the Valley transit system, initiated in 1999, is continued and expanded as needed. To this end, other policies and tasks which support the transit system, such as reinforcing compact growth centers, creating adequate parking areas (to serve as park and ride facilities) and improving pedestrian opportunities, should be pursued in an integrated manner. *[Planning Commission, Town TAC representative, MRVPD\*, Selectboard]*
- 15) Review proposed road and highway improvement projects and encourage the incorporation of dedicated bicycle lanes wherever possible. *[Planning Commission, Selectboard]*
- 16) Evaluate truck circulation within the community and consider policies or actions to prevent or mitigate adverse impacts, including designated truck routes and regulating the use of Jake (engine) brakes. *[Road Commissioner, Selectboard]*
- 17) Conduct a parking study of Waitsfield Village and Irasville to evaluate improvements to parking management (e.g., directional signs, dedicated employee parking areas), the need for additional public parking, opportunities for on-street parking, and parking standards under zoning. *[Planning Commission]*
- 18) Notify potentially affected landowners in instances in which major transportation projects, including road connections outlined in this plan, are being planned.
- 19) Prepare and implement a traffic calming plan for Waitsfield Village and Irasville *[Planning Commission, Selectboard, Tree Board]*

*\*Participation strongly encouraged*