

City of Barre, VT
Regular Meeting of the
Barre City Planning Commission – Special Meeting
Thursday, July 25, 2024 AT 5:30 PM

Participation: Hybrid (in-person and remote)
Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86995495650?pwd=70zjwY0CSd58T6yOPVcL6yEyJ8kuWw.1>

Meeting ID: 869 9549 5650

Passcode: 026663

AGENDA

Page No.	Agenda Item #	Description
	1	Call to Order
	2	Adjustments to the Agenda
	3	Public comment (for something not on the agenda)
2	4	Approval of Minutes for the June 13, 2024 meeting
	5	Warned Public Hearing
5		Proposed Flood Hazard Area Regulations: changes to the definition of substantial improvement; adding the ability to use an appraisal as a structure value; and revisions to fuel tank requirements
	5	Old Business
12		Hazard Mitigation Plan Actions Table – commission review
16		Hazard Mitigation Plan – Staffing & Funding Table – commission review
20		Municipal Plan – review Economic Development Section
	6	New Business
	7	Confirmation of next meeting date of August 8, 2024
	8	Staff updates – as needed
	9	Roundtable
	10	Adjourn

Barre City Planning Commission

June 13, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Present: David Sichel (Chair), Becky Wigg (Vice Chair), Joe Reil (Secretary), Rosemary Averill, Caitlin Corkins, Raylene Meunier

Absent: None

Staff: Janet Shatney (Director of Planning, Permitting & Assessing)

Visitors: None

1. Call to Order.

5:30pm.

2. Adjustments to the Agenda.

Sichel suggested moving Old Business to after New Business to make better use of guests' time.

3. Approval of Minutes.

a. May 9, 2024.

Wigg moves to approve, Averill seconds, unanimous in favor.

4. Public comment (for something not on the agenda).

None.

5. Old Business.

Shatney asked City Manager Storellicastro to schedule the public hearing for the Interim Zoning Changes, scheduled for the July 16 meeting of the City Council.

A public hearing on changes to flood hazard rules in City Ordinance, at a Planning Commission is also required, to be warned for our next meeting.

a. Review of Section 2 of the Municipal Plan - Strategic Plan

Review of the Economic Development portion of the City's Strategic Plan. The Key Points and Issues and Challenges were discussed, suggesting further thought about how these have changed or stayed the same and how we may reconsider them in the future.

6. New Business.

a. Barre City Infill Study

Shatney introduced Brian Voigt from Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC) for an Infill Study Presentation (previously given to City Council) looking at development potential and presentation is a starting point.

Presentation included contributions from Barre City Staff, the Barre Housing Taskforce, and the CVRPC itself. The objective is to support development of housing to mitigate flood losses, prioritizing areas already served by City infrastructure.

Deliverable 1 is an inventory vacant municipally-owned properties.

Deliverable 2 is a look at subdivision opportunities under current Zoning and the HOME Act.

Both enabling and limiting factors were considered to determine eligibility. An example parcel was shown, demonstrating how these factors impacted potential development.

A summary of available development in various properties was provided and discussed, along with some example parcels to explain the process.

Some discussion followed, about how to use the data and considering other factors that may impact development. There will be further discussion to come.

b. Hazard Mitigation Plan: Public Meeting for Mitigation Actions Ranking

Shatney introduced Keith Cubbon, CVRPC's Emergency Management Planner, to give the presentation on updated Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.

City plan needs to align with the State plan and meet STAPLEE (Social, Technical, Administrative, Political, Legal, Economic, and Environmental) criteria. Purpose of this presentation is to review the mitigation standards within the STAPLEE framework.

Review will require each disaster type and the mitigation actions be ranked. There was some discussion about the ranking and who to approach it. Consensus was to have a sub-committee of the Planning Commission review and create initial rankings for the full Planning Commission to review. Averill, Corkins, and Reil volunteered to form the sub-committee to meet within the next few weeks.

7. Confirm Date of Next Meeting.

a. July 11, 2024.

8. Staff Updates.

Many property sales, not slowing down. Monthly table shows high costs.

Assessors working on draft of the abstract grand Have made about \$2.5 million in changes to grand list. Most properties are still listed at 2006 values.

9. Round Table.

None.

10. Adjourn.

07:00pm, **Corkins moves to adjourn, Reil seconds, unanimous in favor.**

Janet Shatney

From: Swanberg, Ned (he/ki) <Ned.Swanberg@vermont.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, June 26, 2024 9:48 AM
To: Janet Shatney
Subject: RE: Question on revising our flood hazard ordinance

Hello Janet, The changes proposed meet the requirements of the NFIP.

The state recommended model language has Substantial Improvement standards that calculate SI cumulatively over three years. bit.ly/model-regulations

“Substantial improvement” means any repair, reconstruction, rehabilitation, addition, or other improvement of a structure after the date of adoption of this bylaw, the cost of which, over three years or over the period of a common plan of development, cumulatively equals or exceeds 50 percent of the market value of the structure before the “start of construction” of the improvement. This term includes structures which have incurred “substantial damage,” regardless of the actual repair work performed. The term does not, however, include either: (a) Any project for improvement of a structure to correct existing violations of state or local health, sanitary, or safety code specifications which have been previously identified by the local code enforcement official and which are the minimum necessary to assure safe living conditions or (b) Any alteration of an “historic structure,” provided that the alteration will not preclude the structure’s continued designation as an “historic structure.”

The value of a cumulative calculation is to inform building owners early and often regarding their flood risk, their opportunity to mitigate the risk, and the legal requirement to mitigate if/when damaged for any reason. After Substantial Damage the owner is typically least able to mitigate.

The cumulative calculation is important since sometimes investments through a common plan of improvement are phased to avoid compliance.

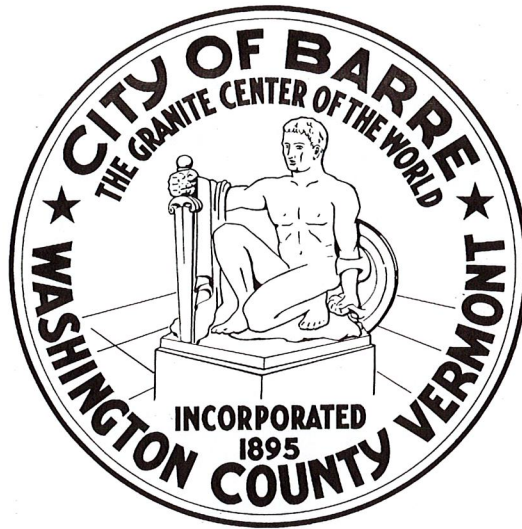
All said this change is not inconsistent with the minimum standards to maintain access to flood insurance through the NFIP.

Please send along a copy of the final text after adoption. Thank you.

Best wishes,
Ned

Resources for Municipal Officials dec.vermont.gov/after-a-flood#KeySD
Resources for the Public www.floodready.vt.gov/help-after-flooding

Ned Swanberg (he/ki) CFM
Vermont Flood Hazard Mapping Coordinator | Regional Floodplain Manager
Vermont Agency of Natural Resources | Department of Environmental Conservation
Watershed Management | Rivers
1 National Life Dr. | Davis 2 | Montpelier, VT 05620-3522
802-490-6160 ned.swanberg@vermont.gov
bit.ly/fema-map-update



CITY OF BARRE

FLOOD HAZARD AREA REGULATIONS

Version Date: August 27, 2010

DRAFT Amendments to Planning Commission April 11, 2024

Department of Zoning Inspections, Permitting, & Planning, Permitting & Assessing

City of Barre
6 North Main Street
Barre, VT 05641

802-476-0245

Section 5. Substantial Improvement/Damage Determinations

5.01 Determining Substantial Improvements

- (A) Applicability. Where development constitutes a substantial improvement to an existing structure, the existing structure shall be improved to NFIP standards and to the standards of these regulations.
1. Substantial improvement means any repair, reconstruction, or improvement of a structure, the cost of which either equals or exceeds ~~\$50,000~~ or exceeds 50 percent of the market value of the structure, ~~whichever is less~~, before the start of construction.
 2. -This term includes structures which have incurred "repetitive loss" or "substantial damage", regardless of actual work performed.
- (B) Calculating Substantial Improvements. The following shall apply when calculating substantial improvements:
1. Unless stricter rules are described in this section, FEMA NFIP guidance such as the *NFIP Flood Plain Management Requirements- Desk Reference* shall be used to guide calculation of market value of structure and costs.
 2. Where one building is attached to another through a covered breezeway or similar connection, the two buildings are considered separate and substantial improvement calculations shall be made for each structure independently.
 3. All improvements shall be counted cumulatively over 5 years to determine if a substantial improvement of a structure has occurred.
 - a. Any non-permitted improvements discovered after the fact shall be considered to have all occurred at the same time for purposes of determining substantial improvements.
 4. In general the City of Barre shall use the assessed value of the structure as the default value of the structure, and does not preclude an appraisal from being used. The value of the land should not be included in the valuation of the structure.
- (C) Substantial Improvements of Existing Structures. The following shall apply to govern structures that are substantially improved:
1. Where an application proposes to make a substantial improvement to an existing structure, that structure shall be brought into conformance with these regulations. For example a structure with the lowest floor below BFE may be required to elevate the structure.

2. Where one structure is attached to another through a covered breezeway or similar connection, it is a separate structure and not an addition. Therefore, substantial improvement of a structure would require the elevation of the structure and all additions but not separate structures.
 3. Regardless of substantial improvement determination, all additions (i.e. expansions of building footprint) shall meet NFIP requirements.
- (D) Non-Substantial Improvements of Existing Structures. The following shall apply to govern structures that are not substantially improved:
1. Where a proposal is determined to be a non-substantial improvement only the improvement will be reviewed for conformance with these regulations.
 2. Non-substantial improvements to existing structures apply to existing structures on their existing footprints. Additions to structures must be compliant with all relevant requirements of these regulations.
- (E) The term 'substantial improvement' does not include the following:
1. The cost of improvements of a structure to correct existing violations of state and local health, sanitary, or safety code specifications which have been identified by the local code enforcement official and which are the minimum necessary to assure safe living conditions;
 2. Any alteration of a historic structure provided that the alteration will not preclude the structure's continued designation as a historic structure. The Administrative Officer may request from the applicant a Section 106 report, prepared by a qualified professional, to demonstrate compliance with this provision.
 - a. This exemption does not apply to additions (i.e. expansions of building footprint) to historic structures which must be built in compliance with these regulations.

5.02 Determining Substantial Damage

- (A) Applicability. Where a substantially damaged structure is proposed for redevelopment, the structure shall be redeveloped to the standards of these regulations.
- (B) Calculating substantial damage. The following shall apply when calculating substantial damages:
1. Unless stricter rules are described in this section, FEMA NFIP guidance such as the *NFIP Flood Plain Management Requirements- Desk Reference* shall be used to guide calculation of market value of structure and costs to repair.
 2. In general the City of Barre shall use the assessed value of the structure as the

default value of the structure. The value of the land should not be included in the valuation of the structure.

- (C) Substantial damage of existing structures. The following shall apply to govern structures that are substantially damaged:
1. Where a substantially damaged structure is proposed for redevelopment, that structure shall be brought into conformance with these regulations. For example a building with the lowest floor below BFE which has been substantially damaged may be required to elevate the building during reconstruction.
- (D) Non-Substantial damage of existing structures. The following shall apply to govern structures that are not substantially damaged:
1. Redevelopment of a structure which has sustained non-substantial damage shall have that development reviewed under the rules regarding substantial improvements above (Section 5.01).

6. Where an individual mobile home lot in an existing mobile home park is vacated, the lot shall not be considered discontinued or abandoned even if either the lot or park is non-conforming. Replacement mobile homes shall be regulated per section 8.14(B) of these regulations.

Subsection 8B Specific Uses & Structures Review Criteria

8.10 Alteration of a Watercourse

- (A) Alteration or relocation of watercourses. The alteration or relocation of a portion of a watercourse within the Flood Hazard Area is prohibited unless part of an overall plan (adopted by the municipality) involving river restoration, flood mitigation, or other public purpose. In these instances, the alteration or relocation may be permitted only if the flood carrying capacity within the altered or relocated portion of a watercourse is maintained or increased.

8.11 Filling and Other Earthwork

- (A) Requirements regarding filling in the Flood Hazard Area.
 1. In instances where these regulations allow fill, all fill must be properly compacted, graded, and, where appropriate, re-vegetated. All filling must be in compliance with Technical Bulletin 10-01 *Ensuring that structures built on fill in or near special flood hazard areas are reasonably safe from flooding.*
 2. Landfilling is not permitted within the stream or river setback, wetlands or wetland setback, nor in the floodway.
 3. The practice of removing unsuitable existing material (topsoil) and backfilling with structural material is not considered the placing of fill.
- (B) Where an applicant wishes to remove a property from the Flood Hazard Area by elevating the natural grade (adding fill in the flood hazard area) the applicant shall provide a CLOMR-F or LOMR-F, as appropriate to the project.

8.12 Fuel Tanks

- (A) All fuel storage tanks (e.g. liquid propane, diesel, home heating fuel, kerosene, etc.) in the Flood Hazard Area shall be placed at or above DFE (Design Flood Elevation) or a minimum of one foot above the base flood elevation and be securely anchored to prevent flotation; or storage tanks may be placed underground if securely anchored as certified by a qualified professional.
- (B) Fuel storage tanks located below the DFE must have all filler pipes and vents located at or

above the DFE.

8.13 Manufactured (Mobile) Homes

- (A) No provision of these regulations shall have the effect of excluding mobile homes, modular housing, or other forms of prefabricated housing from the municipality, except upon the same terms and conditions as conventional housing is excluded. [§4412(1)(B)]
- (B) Within these regulations, mobile homes and manufactured homes are synonymous.
- (C) In non-conforming manufactured home parks, manufactured homes shall be treated the same as conventional housing except that manufactured homes shall demonstrate that they are securely anchored to foundation system to resist flotation, collapse, and lateral movement.

8.14 Manufactured (Mobile) Home Parks

- (A) Manufactured home parks are prohibited in the Flood Hazard Area.
- (B) Any manufactured homes to be replaced or substantially improved that are located in an existing manufactured home park, where elevating a replacement home to or above the base flood elevation is not possible, the lowest floor shall be supported by reinforced piers or other foundation elements of at least equivalent strength that are no less than 48 inches in height above grade and be securely anchored to resist flotation, collapse, or lateral movement.
- (C) An evacuation plan for any existing manufactured home parks and subdivisions indicating alternate vehicular access and escape routes shall be filed with the State Civil Defense Office. (See §1910.3(b)(8) of the Federal Register and the FEMA manual, "Manufactured Home Installation in Flood Hazard Areas" for anchoring standards.)

8.15 Public Infrastructure

- (A) Bridges, culverts, channel management activities, or public projects which are functionally dependent on stream access or crossing are permitted in the Flood Hazard Area provided they are part of an overall plan (adopted by the municipality).

8.16 Recreational Vehicles

- (A) Storage or use of recreational vehicles is prohibited in the flood hazard area.

8.17 Subdivisions

- (A) The subdivision of land within the Flood Hazard Area is allowed only if it can be demonstrated by the applicant that each parcel created will have some permissible use. Each new parcel, for instance, shall have sufficient areas outside of the floodway which are suitable for

Barre City	Life	Prop	Tech	Political	Admin	Other	Benefit	Est	C/B	
Mitigation Actions	Safety	Protect				Obj	Score	Cost		
Fluvial Erosion										Mitigation type
Update Road Erosion and Culvert Inventories	0	1	1	1	1		4	1	Y	Local Plans and Regulations
Plan for Permanent Emergency Operations Center location established	1	1	1	1	1		5	1	Y	Local Plans and Regulations
Increased regulation on stormwater runoff from neighboring communities	0	1	0	-1	0		0	1	N	Local Plans and Regulations
Cobble Hill Road water main in brook needs buried	1	1	1	1	1		5	3	Y	Structures and infrastructure
Stabilize Outfalls to prevent erosion	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	1	Y	Structures and infrastructure
Routinely Clean and Repair Stormwater Infrastructure	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	1	Y	Structures and infrastructure
Stabilize Stream Banks where necessary	1	1	1	1	1		5	2	Y	Natural Systems
Floodproof Critical Facilities	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	3	Y	Structures and infrastructure
Adopt VT 2019 Bridge and Roads standards to maximize City ERAF score	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	1	Y	Local Plans and Regulations
Education program about rain gardens and what individuals can do to lessen runoff	0	1	1	1	0	0	3	1	Y	Outreach and Education

Barre City	Life	Prop	Tech	Political	Admin	Other	Benefit	Est	C/B	
Mitigation Actions	Safety	Protect				Obj	Score	Cost		
Inundation Flooding										Mitigation type
Hydrologic and Hydraulic study of large culverts under downtown and listed structures in SGA reports	1	1	1	1	1		5	3	Y	Local Plans and Regulations
Plan for registering flood recovery groups and process for them working in the community	0	0	0	1	1	1	3	1	Y	Local Plans and Regulations
Develop fuel retailers ordinance for anchoring fuel and propane tanks	1	1	1	1	1		5	1	Y	Local Plans and Regulations
Elevate Roads Above Base Flood Elevation to Maintain Dry Access	1	1	1	1	1		5	3	N	Structures and infrastructure
Elevate structures to Base Flood Elevation	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	3	Y	Structures and infrastructure
Remove trestle # 308	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	3	Y	Structures and infrastructure
Install debris catcher on Edgewood Brook near Delmont Ave.	1	1	1	1	1		5	3		Structures and infrastructure
Floodproof downtown businesses	0	1	1	1	1		4	3		Structures and infrastructure
Elevate Berlin Street Bridge to increase flow capacity	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	3	Y	Structures and infrastructure
Remove unmaintained dams within the City	1	1	1	1	1		5	3	Y	Structures and infrastructure
Elevate and upsize bridges to increase debris passage	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	3	Y	Structures and infrastructure
Increase Drainage/Absorption Capacities with Green Stormwater Management Practices	0	1	1	1	1	1	5	3	Y	Natural Systems
Remove Existing Structures from Flood-Prone Areas	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	3	Y	Structures and infrastructure
Floodproof downtown businesses							0	3	Y	Structures and infrastructure
Install River gauge by Prospect Street bridge	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	2	Y	Structures and infrastructure
Dry flood proofing non-residential structures by strengthening walls, sealing openings, or using waterproof compounds or plastic sheeting on walls to keep water out.	0	1	1	1	1		4	3	Y	Structures and infrastructure
Install flood gates on East Barre Dam to regulate flow	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	3	Y	Structures and infrastructure
Elevate Route 302 corridor to increase capacity	0	1	1	1	1		4	3	N	Structures and infrastructure
Snow										Mitigation type
Protect Power Lines and Roads by Inspecting and Removing Hazardous Trees in Road ROW	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	2	Y	Local Plans and Regulations
Bury Power Lines	1	1	1	1	1		5	3	Y	Structures and infrastructure
Educating homeowners on the importance of carbon monoxide monitors and alarms	1	0	1	1	1		4	1	Y	Structures and infrastructure
Ice										Mitigation type
Protect Power Lines and Roads by Inspecting and Removing Hazardous Trees in Road ROW	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	2	Y	Structures and infrastructure
Educating homeowners on the importance of carbon monoxide monitors and alarms	1	0	1	1	1		4	1	Y	

Barre City	Life	Prop	Tech	Political	Admin	Other	Benefit	Est	C/B	
Mitigation Actions	Safety	Protect				Obj	Score	Cost		
High Winds										Mitigation type
Bury Power Lines	1	1	1	1	1		5	3	Y	Structures and infrastructure
Update Zoning Ordinance to Require New Subdivision Development to Bury Power Lines	1	1	1	1	1		5	1	Y	Local Plans and Regulations
Protect Power Lines and Roads by Inspecting and Removing Hazardous Trees in Road ROW	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	2	Y	Structures and infrastructure
Wildfires										Mitigation type
Educate property owners on the use of smoke detectors and fire extinguishers	1	1	1	1	1		5	1	Y	Local Plans and Regulations
Public education campaign on fire permits and possible handout.	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	1	Y	Outreach and Education
Landslides										Mitigation type
Applying soil stabilization measures, such as planting soil stabilizing vegetation on steep, publicly owned slopes.	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	2	Y	Natural Systems
Study Parkside Ave and other landslide potential areas	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	3	Y	Local Plans and Regulations
Infectious Disease Outbreak										Mitigation type
Educate the Public About the Risks of Infectious Disease and vectors such as lyme disease, West Nile Virus	1	1	1	1	1		5	1	Y	Outreach and Education
Train with VDH emergency Specialist staff for outbreak response	1	1	1	1	1		5	1	Y	Local Plans and Regulations
Invasive Species										Mitigation type
Outreach on programs for managing and care of aging and diseased trees by Tree Warden to prevent power outages and road debris	1	1	1	1	1		5	1	Y	Outreach and Education
Outreach and education program on invasive pests and risks of ticks	1	1	1	1	1		5	1	Y	Outreach and Education
Outreach/education program on native plants and invasive plant removal	1	1	1	1	1		5	1	Y	Outreach and Education
Heat										Mitigation type
Install backup generator at Aldritch library for heating and cooling shelter use.	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	3	Y	Structures and infrastructure
Hot Weather Planning	1	1	1	1	1		5	1	Y	Local Plans and Regulations
Cold										Mitigation type
Cold Weather Planning	1	1	1	1	1		5	1	Y	Local Plans and Regulations
Install backup generator at Aldritch library for heating and cooling shelter use.	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	3	Y	Structures and infrastructure
Drought										Mitigation type
Outreach program on water efficiency opportunities	0	1	1	1	1		4	1	Y	Outreach and Education
Research possible impoundment/water storage within or closer to the City	0	1	1	1	1	1	5	2	Y	Structures and infrastructure

Barre City	Life	Prop	Tech	Political	Admin	Other	Benefit	Est	C/B	
Mitigation Actions	Safety	Protect				Obj	Score	Cost		
All Hazards										Mitigation type
Generator for Spaulding High School for back up shelter capacity	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	2	Y	Structures and infrastructure
Integrate Mitigation into Capital Improvement Programs and Planning	1	1	1	1	1		5	1	Y	Local Plans and Regulations
Adopt public works mutual aid agreement with other municipalities within Central Vermont Regional Emergency Management Committee area.	0	1	1	1	1		4	1	Y	Local Plans and Regulations
Develop 10 yr. strategic or capital plan with climate focus	0	1	1	1	1		4	1	Y	Local Plans and Regulations
Add emergency management fund as budget item to City budget with yearly rollover to save for large mitigation projects	0	1	1	1	1		4	2	Y	Local Plans and Regulations
Install Back-up Generators at the town garage	1	1	1	1	1		5	2	Y	Structures and infrastructure
City Hall generator upgrade to power whole building	0	1	1	1	1		4	2	Y	Structures and infrastructure
Complete secondary exit from public safety building	1	1	1	1	1		5	2	Y	Structures and infrastructure
Purchase or develop new public works building	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	3	Y	Structures and infrastructure
Install generators at water plant sub stations	1	1	1	1	1		5	3	Y	Structures and infrastructure

Barre City	Who	Funding	Timeline
Mitigation Actions			
Fluvial Erosion			
Update Road Erosion and Culvert Inventories	CVRPC	CVRPC	2026
Plan for Permanent Emergency Operations Center location established	EMD, Fire & Police	City	2024
Cobble Hill Road water main in brook needs buried	Public Works	Grants, City	2025
Stabilize Outfalls to prevent erosion	Public Works	Grants, City	2024-2029
Stabilize Stream Banks where necessary	Public Works,	Grants, City	2024-2029
Floodproof Critical Facilities	Public Works	Grants, City	2025
Adopt VT 2019 Bridge and Roads standards to maximize City ERAF score	Planning, Public Works	City	2024-2025
Education program about rain gardens and what individuals can do to lessen runoff	Conservation Commission	City	2024-2025

Inundation Flooding			
Hydrologic and Hydraulic study of large culverts under downCity and listed structures in SGA reports	Public Works	Grants	2025
Plan for registering flood recovery groups and process for them working in the community	Planning	City	2024
Develop fuel retailers ordinance for anchoring fuel and propane tanks	Planning	City	2025
Elevate structures to Base Flood Elevation	Planning, Property Owners	Grants	2024-2026
Remove trestle # 308	Planning, City administrator	Grants	2025-2026
Install debris catcher on Edgewood Brook near Delmont Ave.	Public Works	City	2024-2025
Floodproof downCity businesses	Planning, Property Owners	Grants	2025-2026
Elevate Berlin Street Bridge to increase flow capacity	Planning, CVRPC	Grants	2026
Remove unmaintained dams within the City	Friends of the Winooski	Grants	2026-2027
Increase Drainage/Absorption Capacities with Green Stormwater Management Practices	Planning, Public Works	Grants	2025-2029
Remove Existing Structures from Flood-Prone Areas	Planning, City administrator	Grants	2025-2029
Floodproof downCity businesses	Planning, Property Owners	Grants	2025-2029
Install River gauge by Prospect Street bridge	Fire Dept.	Grants	2025
Snow			
Protect Power Lines and Roads by Inspecting and Removing Hazardous Trees in Road ROW	Public Works, GMP	City, Grants	2024-2029
Bury Power Lines	GMP	GMP, Grants	2025-2029
Educating homeowners on the importance of carbon monoxide monitors and alarms	Fire Dept.	City, Grants	2024-2029
Ice			
Protect Power Lines and Roads by Inspecting and Removing Hazardous Trees in Road ROW	Public Works, GMP	City, Grants	2024-2029
Educating homeowners on the importance of carbon monoxide monitors and alarms	Fire Dept.	City, Grants	2024-2029

High Winds			
Bury Power Lines	GMP	GMP, Grants	2025-2029
Update Zoning Ordinance to Require New Subdivision Development to Bury Power Lines	Planning	City, Grants	2025
Protect Power Lines and Roads by Inspecting and Removing Hazardous Trees in Road ROW	Public Works, GMP	City, Grants	2024-2029
Wildfires			
Educate property owners on the use of smoke detectors and fire extinguishers	Fire Dept.	City, Grants	2024-2029
Public education campaign on fire permits and possible handout.	Fire Dept.	City, Grants	2024-2029
Landslides			
Applying soil stabilization measures, such as planting soil stabilizing vegetation on steep, publicly owned slopes.	Public Works	City	2024-2029
Study Parkside Ave and other landslide potential areas	Planning, Public Works	City, Grant	2026
Infectious Disease Outbreak			
Educate the Public About the Risks of Infectious Disease and vectors such as lyme disease, West Nile Virus	Health Officer	City, VDH	2024-2025
Train with VDH emergency Specialist staff for outbreak response	Fire Dept., Health Officer	City, VDH	2024-2029
Invasive Species			
Outreach on programs for managing and care of aging and diseased trees by Tree Warden to prevent power outages and road debris	Tree Warden	City, Grant	2025
Outreach and education program on invasive pests and risks of ticks	Health Officer	City, VDH	2024-2025
Outreach/education program on native plants and invasive plant removal	Tree Warden, Conservation Commission	City, Grant	2025-2029

Heat			
Install backup generator at Aldritch library for heating and cooling shelter use.	Public Works, Fire Dept.	City, Grant	2026
Hot Weather Planning	Planning, Fire Dept.	City,	2024
Cold			
Cold Weather Planning	Planning, Fire Dept.	City,	2024
Install backup generator at Aldritch library for heating and cooling shelter use.	Public Works, Fire Dept.	City, Grant	2026
Drought			
Outreach program on water efficiency opportunities	Public Works, Efficiency Vermont	City, Efficiency Vermont	2024
Research possible impoundment/water storage within or closer to the City	Planning, Public Works	City, Grants	2026
All Hazards			
Generator for Spaulding High School for back up shelter capacity	Planning, Fire Department	City, Grants	2027
Integrate Mitigation into Capital Improvement Programs and Planning	Planning, City Council, City Administrator	City, Grants	2026
Develop 10 yr. strategic or capital plan with climate focus	Planning, City Council, City Administrator	City, Grants	2026
Add emergency management fund as budget item to City budget with yearly rollover to save for large mitigation projects	City Administrator, City Council	City	2025
Install Back-up Generators at the City garage	Planning, Public Works	City, Grants	202
City Hall generator upgrade to power whole building	Planning, Public Works	City, Grants	2026
Complete secondary exit from public safety building	Planning, Public Works	City, Grants	2024
Purchase or develop new public works building	Planning, Public Works	City, Grants	2026
Install generators at water plant sub stations	Public Works	City, Grants	2027

SECTION 2: STRATEGIC PLAN

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

planning for economic development

Barre City recognizes the connection between the health and well-being of our local economy and of our residents. To achieve our vision for a healthy future, Barre City continues its efforts to attract and retain businesses that pay a living wage, provide health insurance benefits, and match existing levels of workforce education or provide job training.

A vital, balanced and resilient local economy is essential for community well-being. Studies have shown that a strong economy is a good indicator for the health of community residents. By strengthening the local economy, we can create and retain desirable jobs that provide a good standard of living for workers and their families. Increased business activity, personal income and wealth will increase our tax base, allowing the city to provide affordable community services and amenities.

What creates a good environment for economic development? Some common themes emerge when you ask business owners and economic development specialists that question:

- Lower taxes
- Less regulations
- Fair and efficient permitting
- Economic development incentives and programs
- Quality, availability and affordability of appropriate space/land
- Quality, availability and affordability of housing
- Quality, availability and affordability of infrastructure (transportation, water/sewer, communications, electricity, etc.)
- Workforce availability and skill, and workforce training opportunities
- Quality of life needed to attract and retain skilled/trained workers
- Level of commitment to and investment in the community's future by the municipality, residents and other business owners
- Childcare quality, affordability and resources.

key points

1. **Facilities and Infrastructure.** The contraction of the industrial and manufacturing sectors has left our city with some vacant, obsolete or under-utilized land and buildings. While clearly a challenge, these sites and buildings also present an opportunity for new uses and revitalization. The basic facilities and infrastructure needed to support a healthy local economy already exist in Barre City.
2. **Downtown Revitalization.** Downtown Barre serves as a regional commercial center. The second half of the 20th century saw changes including the decline of the granite industry, and weakening vitality of the downtown business district as retail activity shifted away from Main Street. As a

result of our sustained downtown revitalization efforts, a turnaround has begun on Main Street, which the city hopes to bolster through the completed North Main Street (“Big Dig”) reconstruction project. With the construction of the City Place building, we now have office space, a rehabilitation gym, and a professional services office. The redevelopment of Enterprise Alley with its accessory parking lot, the private Metro Way parking lot redevelopment, and future plans for further reinvestment in the downtown’s public infrastructure and spaces will continue with this revitalization.

3. **Labor Force.** Barre City’s granite heritage has resulted in a community that takes pride in and has great respect for the work of our skilled labor force. The city also has a strong tradition of entrepreneurship and successful home-grown businesses. In addition to the physical resources – infrastructure, space, transportation – needed to support economic development, the city has human resources – labor force, skills, work ethic – that are needed to re-fit and re-tool our economy. There are a number of programs offered within the city and region to assist with workforce training and education.
4. **City Government.** Barre City is business friendly — a great place to start and grow a business. City government actively supports downtown revitalization and economic development efforts, as demonstrated by our tax stabilization program and streamlined permitting process.

issues & challenges

Barre City has identified the following economic development challenges and issues that need to be addressed to achieve our vision for a healthy future:

1. **Downtown Vitality.** Some of Barre City’s downtown buildings and spaces have suffered from neglect over many years. While this trend is reversing, issues remain with property maintenance and vacant storefronts. The Unified Development Ordinance, formerly the zoning and subdivision ordinances, rewritten in 2019 should assist in maintaining the quality of the downtown, as well as the revised Vacant Building and Minimum Housing Standards Ordinances.
2. **Walkability and Parking.** Barre City is not as pedestrian and bicyclist friendly as it could be. The North Main Street Reconstruction project addressed some of these issues, but the effort needs to be continued throughout downtown and throughout the neighborhoods. There is an adequate amount of parking downtown, but it needs better management and signage as it is not always easy to find, as well as improvements to make these areas a more attractive part of our downtown. A more pedestrian-friendly City will also encourage people to park and walk from place-to-place, rather than driving to and parking at each destination. We have a bike path that has not been connected in some sections, so that access to the downtown is limited using this method. And, if using a bicycle, there are not ample opportunities to rest the bicycle so that shopping and walking around is accomplished.
3. **Building Stock.** The city has a substantial amount of historic industrial space that continues as granite sheds, or has been subdivided for use as smaller spaces for further industrial uses. Should the use of these industrial spaces discontinue, these buildings will require substantial investment to be modernized, renovated and re-fitted to suitable for new uses and occupants. The city’s industrial spaces could be redeveloped in a manner that will allow them to be easily adapted to a variety of uses as demand and economic conditions change over time. Industrial spaces need to

be able to be easily subdivided for lease as small incubator spaces and be easily converted back to larger spaces as businesses expand or markets change. Spaces also need to be flexible in their use so that they can be efficiently converted from commercial to office or to light industrial and back as the market demands.

4. **Unemployment and Workforce Development.** Barre City's unemployment rate is about the same rate as the immediate region. A portion of residents are unprepared for or not competitive in the current job market. These residents will need further training and/or education to find and keep stable employment that pays a living wage.
5. **Educational Attainment.** 23% of Barre City residents hold a Bachelor's degree or higher as compared with 37% of Vermonters on average. People with more education are likely to live longer, healthier lives. Barre City needs to support educational attainment to improve the health and well-being of our economy and our residents.
6. **Access to Healthy Food.** Barre City does not currently have a full-size grocery store, although there are a few small, neighborhood markets. This makes access to healthy foods difficult for residents, particularly those who do not have reliable transportation. Research has shown that individuals who live in environments where there are no nearby grocery stores and high concentrations of fast food alternatives have more health problems than those who live within close proximity to a grocery store. Keeping food growth, production, and sales within the city would also benefit our local economy. Every time money changes hands within a community, it boosts income and economic activity, and it fuels job creation within that community. A full-size grocery store would be an anchor business for downtown and would support our revitalization efforts.
7. **Reputation and Perception.** Barre City was often viewed from the outside as a run-down community in decline. The condition of some buildings and properties in the city also contributes to a poor impression of the community. These negative perceptions have eroded residents' sense of community pride and over the years have become self-reinforcing. However, most of these negative perceptions of Barre City are based on an apples-to-oranges comparison. When we are compared to other urban areas in Vermont it is evident that conditions in Barre City are not unusual and that the city's reputation is not deserved. We must continue to promote more positive messages about our community and counter any negative perceptions with factual information about current conditions in Barre City as compared to other urban centers in Vermont.

strengths & opportunities

Barre City has already acted to promote economic development, and there remain many strengths and opportunities we can build upon to continue those efforts as we strive to achieve our vision for a healthy future:

1. **Taxes.** Barre City implemented a local options tax in 2018, and has local tax stabilization programs for both residential and non-residential properties being substantially improved by locking-in their lower pre-renovation assessments for up to 10 years. Barre City is the only community in the state with a local tax stabilization program that applies to both the municipal property tax and the education property tax. Additionally, within the state-recognized designated

downtown, property owners may be eligible for state income tax credits for building improvements. Barre City applied for and received a tax increment financing (TIF) district in 2012, which has allowed the city to capture the increased property tax revenues generated in a portion of our downtown over the next 20 years and to use those tax dollars to fund the improvements needed to support redevelopment.

2. **Regulations and Permitting.** The city has a zoning administrator available to assist applicants with navigating the regulatory and permitting system. Barre City created a Development Review Board (DRB) in 1997 to eliminate the need for some projects to be reviewed by two separate boards; now projects that require more than one type of permit or approval can be reviewed in a combined hearing in front of a single board. Barre City has increased what development activities can be reviewed administratively by staff and be approved without requiring a DRB hearing. Since Barre City has zoning and subdivision regulations known as the Unified Development Ordinance rewritten in 2019, it is classified as a “10-acre town” under Act 250 (Vermont’s state land use law). Therefore, development on most parcels within the city will not require state review and approval under Act 250.
3. **Public Infrastructure and Services.** Unlike most Vermont municipalities, Barre City has public water and sewer infrastructure, and both systems have capacity available. Three-phase electric service is available in many parts of the city, and is already serving most existing industrial sites. Cell phone service and broadband internet service are both available throughout the city. Route 62 is a limited access highway that provides a direct connection from downtown Barre City to Interstate 89. There are a number of industrial sites in Barre City that have direct rail access and freight traffic on the rail line is utilized.
4. **Support and Programs.** Two economic development organizations with paid staff are available to assist existing and potential businesses – Barre Area Development Corporation (the local economic development organization) and the Barre Partnership (the downtown revitalization organization). Barre City has a state Designated Downtown, which provides benefits (including the tax credits mentioned above) to businesses and property owners within the district. Barre City and Barre Area Development can help administer economic development programs, funding and grants (such as federal Community Development Block Grant and state brownfield clean-up and redevelopment funding). Barre City could seek state designation as a growth center, which could provide benefits to the city and landowners within the designated area in support of new growth and development. The city could also seek an expansion of its federally designated Historic District, which would make more property owners eligible for tax credits when they invest in rehabilitation of their buildings.

goals & strategies

Barre City has established the following economic development goals and strategies in order to achieve our vision for a healthy future:

1. **For Barre City to establish and maintain a diversified and vibrant local economy, which provides jobs that can sustain the city’s residents, and which revitalizes and redevelops the city’s industrial sites, commercial areas and downtown business district.**

- A. Invest in the public infrastructure and services needed to attract and retain businesses in the city.
 - A-1. Continue efforts to improve and beautify the city’s streetscapes, gateways and public spaces in order to provide the attractive and well-maintained physical environment needed to support successful businesses, particularly within the downtown business district.
 - A-2. Explore opportunities to increase wireless internet service throughout the downtown business district.
- B. Implement the city’s land use strategies as set forth in this plan, which identify and establish policies for the downtown business district, commercial zones, neighborhood commercial zones, industrial zones and mixed-use zones.
 - B-1. Implement this plan’s land use policies, which call for development of a dense, attractive, mixed-use downtown business district that particularly seeks to attract tenants from the business and professional services sector, and that provides “anchor” retailers such as grocery, hardware, pharmacy and clothing so city residents have convenient access to basic goods.
 - B-2. Build on Barre City’s heritage, historic resources and existing arts institutions to attract both residents and visitors to the downtown, particularly in the evenings and on weekends, which will expand the customer base for downtown retailers and restaurants.
 - B-3. Adopt the ordinances needed to address issues with the appearance and maintenance of downtown storefronts and building facades, including vacant storefronts and buildings.
 - B-4. Continue to plan for and construct the improvements needed to make Barre City more pedestrian friendly.
 - B-5. Implement a clean streets policy in Barre City to remove graffiti and to keep the streets and sidewalks free of dirt and litter.
- C. Recognize that a large percentage of land in the city suitable for commercial or industrial use is already developed but that much of this land has potential to be used more productively or intensively.
 - C-2. Continue efforts to remediate and redevelop brownfield sites.
- D. Continue to assist building and businesses owners with navigating the city’s permit process.
- E. Retain and build on Barre City’s heritage as a “blue collar” community that is affordable for working class families and offers a great quality of life.
 - E-1. Implement the goals and strategies set forth in other chapters of this plan intended to promote livable neighborhoods, affordable housing, and community services and amenities to attract and retain a skilled workforce in the city.

E-2. Foster a greater sense of civic pride among Barre City residents.

E-3. Continue to improve Barre City's reputation and image (i.e. Barre Rock Solid).

E-4. Continue to promote more events and gain better participation in from those by the Barre Partnership, such as the Heritage Festival, Granite City 5K, a soap-box derby, the farmer's market, events at the Old Labor Hall and the Auditorium, etc.

F. Find new uses and opportunities for, and promote investment in the city's vacant, obsolete or under-utilized buildings.

F-1. Encourage building owners to renovate and develop buildings with a flexible design that can be easily converted to new uses and to adapt to new economic conditions.

F-2. Increase awareness and use of the city's tax stabilization programs to facilitate investment in real property.

F-3. increase the programming at the City's BOR Facility and Civic Center, and Alumni Hall.

2. For Barre City to remain a regional employment center that provides livable wage jobs for a large percentage of the city's workforce and workers from surrounding communities.

A. Continue efforts to revitalize Barre City's downtown business district.

B. Link economic development goals and strategies to building a sustainable community so that today's decisions and actions will not diminish the opportunities for future generations to live healthy and successful lives in the city.

C. Market the city as a place where people can live in close proximity to their place of work, and the economic, environmental and social benefits that a short commute has for individuals, families and the community.

D. Identify and attract companies from outside the city that will complement our existing businesses, and that will provide jobs that match the skills and training of the city's workforce, and/or that will revitalize and redevelop the city's industrial sites, commercial areas and downtown business district.

E. Assist in the expansion of existing businesses within the City as a means to improve and attract workforce development.

3. For Barre City and its economic development partners to support entrepreneurship as a primary mission.

A. Recognize the critical role that small, local businesses play in creating new jobs in the city and in recirculating dollars in the local economy.

B. Assist local entrepreneurs to open, successfully operate and growth their businesses.

- C. Use available revolving loan funds primarily to support local business start-ups and expansions.
 - D. Continue to partner with and support the efforts of local economic development organizations.
- 4. For Barre City's workforce to have the skills and training opportunities needed to remain competitive in a global marketplace, allowing residents to respond to changes in the local economy by transitioning between jobs and to remain employed throughout their working lives.**
- A. Attract, retain and educate a skilled workforce that can successfully adapt to ongoing change in the local economy.
 - B. Provide services and opportunities for unskilled or under-skilled residents.

next steps

Barre City should pursue the following actions in order to achieve our vision for a healthy future:

1. Implement the state-approved Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District for the downtown business district.

Status: The TIF plan and application was prepared and received state approval in 2012.

Timing: First debt incurred January 2014. Life of the TIF District is 20 years.

Partners: City Clerk/Treasurer, City Planner, Regional Planning Commission, City Manager, City Council, City Assessor.

Notes: The TIF District provides a financing tool for significant infrastructure projects to stimulate the development and redevelopment of several properties in the Designated Downtown. These private projects require city investment into parking, transportation, and streetscape in order for them to be built to full capacity. Barre City's Tax Increment Finance District plan was approved in 2012, allowing a total of \$6.6M in infrastructure improvements in support of private development in the designated TIF district, located in the heart of the downtown. To date the City has completed \$2.2M in parking improvements including the Enterprise Aly, Campbell and Keith Avenue parking lots, and the Pearl Street pedestrian way. Other potential parking-related projects include redesign along Merchants Row and additional improvements in the Keith Avenue parking lot. All projects require voter approval.

2. Open a grocery store in Barre City.

Status: There is a recognized need for a large-scale grocery store, but to date no private operators have been interested in locating in Barre City and existing neighborhood stores have not been interested in expanding. This community sentiment bubbled to the surface in a 2004 market study, commissioned by the downtown Barre merchant's association (The Barre Partnership).

Results of a community survey pointed to the desire for a downtown store. The report highlighted this sentiment and confirmed that grocery stores located in the downtown do indeed contribute to a vibrant community center.

Timing: 2023

Partners: Granite City Grocery, other grocery retailers, Barre Area Development Corp., The Barre Partnership, Capstone Community Action Council, City Council

Notes: According to their 2020 annual report, various sites have been proposed since 2012, reviewed and even vetted by their Board and their professionals, but their market study has not supported the sites proposed, and the financial model will not work without support from a market study. Volunteers are going to be reaching out to the community to ensure that the mission and vision are still relevant to the community.

3. Complete planning for and implement the Merchant Row project.

Status: A plan for Merchants Row was completed in 2011.

Timing: When the City is ready to present the project to the voters for approval.

Partners: City Planner, Planning Commission, City Manager, City Council, CVRPC

Notes: The Merchants Row plan resolves a number of circulation issues associated with the Merchants Row area of Barre and would transform this bleak area of undifferentiated asphalt to a re-configured urban landscape that includes sidewalks, ADA accessible entrances to Merchants Row shops, public plazas at the Barre Opera House and historic train depot, an alignment for a long planned bike path, designated loading areas and landscaping. Enterprise Aly was completed in 2015, and the updated design of the Merchants Row area would expand upon the work already done.

4. Update planning for and implement the North Main to Summer Street project.

Status: A plan for North Main to Summer Street was completed in 2012.

Timing: 2022

Partners: City Planner, Planning Commission, City Manager, City Council, Barre Partnership

Notes: The plan's overall strategy is to focus development and activity along Main and Summer Streets, and provide parking within the center of the blocks in a series of connected 'parking courts' that are configured to be user-friendly and convenient, but tied to an urban pattern that places parking behind the buildings and preserves streetscapes for walking and human activity. An update to the plan is needed.

benchmarks

Barre City should measure progress towards achieving our vision for a healthy future against the following benchmarks:

1. Per capita income in Barre City. Per capita income (total income ÷ total number of residents) measures our city's economic health and it is an important indicator of our community's standard of living. For individual residents, income is one of the strongest predictors of health and well-being. *Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey*

In 2010: \$20,700
2018 Update: \$22,030
Target for 2026: \$24,000

2. Unemployment rate for Barre City residents. The unemployment rate is another direct measure of city's economic health. A high unemployment rate as compared to state and regional averages suggests that there are problems specific to the community that are affecting the local economy. Employment is the primary source of income for most Barre City residents and for individuals and families' unemployment can lead to increased rates of physical and mental illness. *Source: Vermont Department of Labor, Local Area Unemployment Statistics*

In 2010: 11.1%
2018 Update: 3.4%
Washington Co. for 2018: 2.6%
Target for 2026: 2.6%

3. Total number of jobs in Barre City. Whether the number of jobs in a city is growing, stable or declining, particularly as compared to regional employment trends, is also an indicator of economic health and vibrancy. Barre City was historically dependent upon a single industry, which resulted in a long period of economic decline and stagnation as jobs in granite manufacturing disappeared. An increase in jobs in a diversity of sectors will be evidence that we are building a healthier and more resilient local economy. *Source: Vermont Department of Labor, Labor Market Information*

In 2010: 4,400
2018 Update: 5,700
Target for 2026: 6,500

4. Vacancy rate for first floor commercial space in the downtown business district. Vacant downtown buildings are highly visible evidence of the poor health of a local economy. Barre City's downtown has endured a long period of neglect and dis-investment that appears to be reversing. Declining vacancy rates is a direct measure of the success of our revitalization efforts, and the health and well-being of our community. *Source: Planning Director*

In 2010: 15%
2019 Update: 12%
Target for 2023: 8%