

Required Element (RE) 8: Adjacent Communities ^{1, 2}

(RE) 24 V.S.A. § 4382(a)(8) A statement indicating how the plan relates to development trends and plans for ADJACENT MUNICIPALITIES, areas and the region developed under this title.

U. S. Census Bureau Profiles:

Item	Maidstone ³	Brunswick ⁴	Ferdinand ⁵	Granby ⁶	Guildhall ⁷
Total Population ⁸	211	88	16	81	262
Median Household Income ⁹	\$53,977	\$88,750	\$14,013	-	\$112,500
Bachelor's Degree or Higher ¹⁰	32.1%	26.8%	0.0%	5.3%	32.8%
Employment Rate ¹¹	34.5%	67.8%	60.8%	42.2%	62.5%
Total Housing Units ¹²	305	93	48	73	161
Without Health Care Coverage ¹³	1.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%
Total Households ¹⁴	119	43	46	30	160
Hispanic or Latino (of any race) ¹⁵	1	1	0	0	5

¹ 24 V.S.A. § 4382(a)(8), "State required element 8."

² DHCD Planning Manual, Module 1, "Regional Context," [page 41](#)

³ U. S. Census Bureau, Census Bureau Profile, Maidstone town, Essex County, Vermont (https://data.census.gov/profile/Maidstone_town,_Essex_County,_Vermont?g=060XX00US5000942475).

⁴ U. S. Census Bureau, Census Bureau Profile, Brunswick town, Essex County, Vermont (https://data.census.gov/profile/Brunswick_town,_Essex_County,_Vermont?g=060XX00US5000910075).

⁵ U. S. Census Bureau, Census Bureau Profile, Ferdinand town, Essex County, Vermont (https://data.census.gov/profile/Ferdinand_town,_Essex_County,_Vermont?g=060XX00US5000925975).

⁶ U. S. Census Bureau, Census Bureau Profile, Granby town, Essex County, Vermont (https://data.census.gov/profile/Granby_town,_Essex_County,_Vermont?g=060XX00US5000929125).

⁷ U. S. Census Bureau, Census Bureau Profile, Guildhall town, Essex County, Vermont (https://data.census.gov/profile/Guildhall_town,_Essex_County,_Vermont?g=060XX00US5000930775).

⁸ U. S. Census Bureau, [P1](#) | [2020 Decennial Census](#)

⁹ U. S. Census Bureau, [S1501](#) | [2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates](#)

¹⁰ U. S. Census Bureau, [S1501](#) | [2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates](#)

¹¹ U. S. Census Bureau, [DP03](#) | [2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates](#)

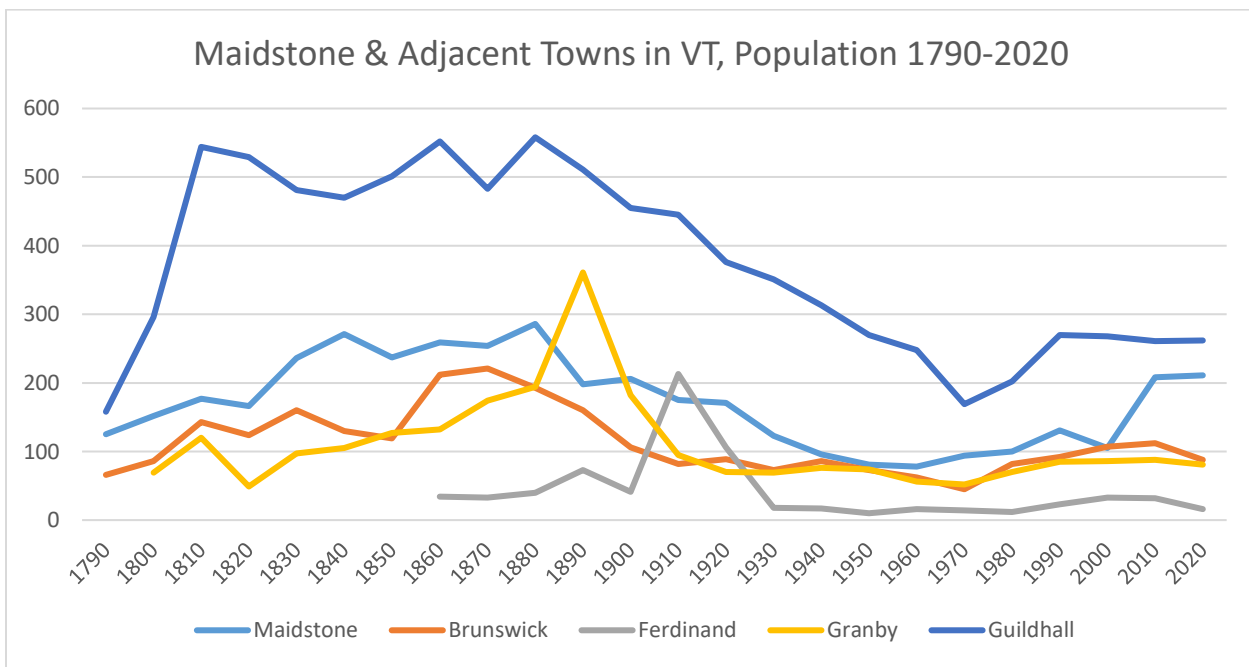
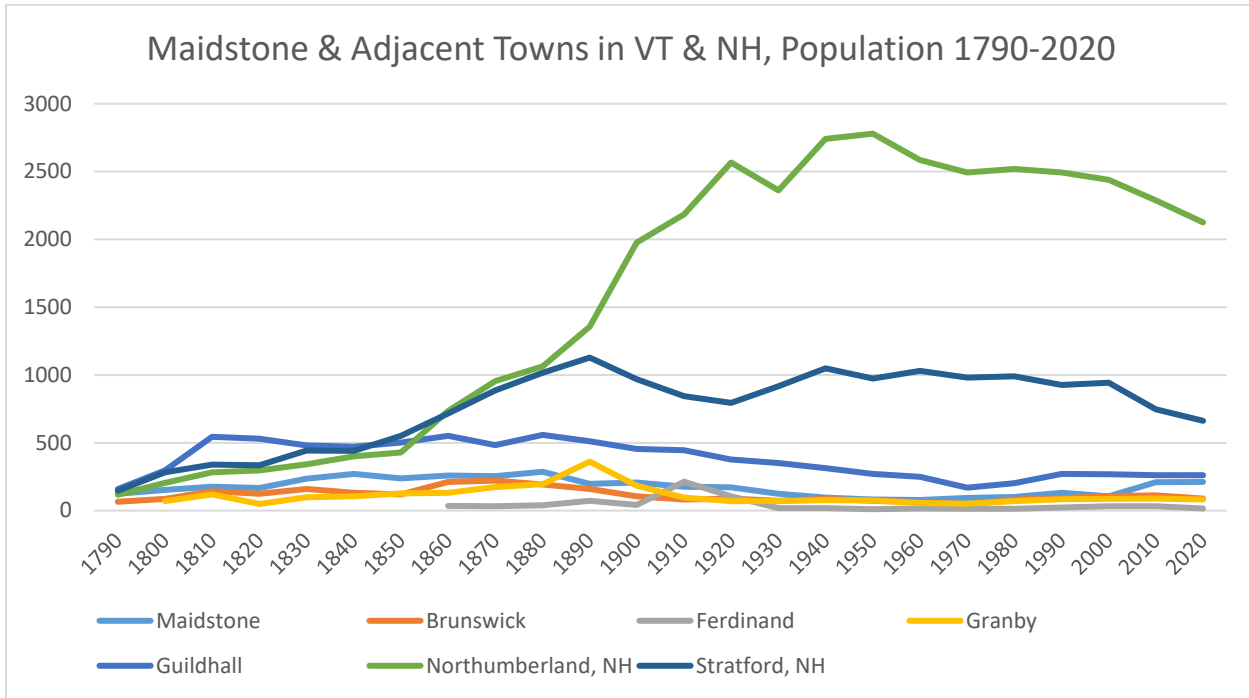
¹² U. S. Census Bureau, [H1](#) | [2020 Decennial Census](#)

¹³ U. S. Census Bureau, [S2701](#) | [2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates](#)

¹⁴ U. S. Census Bureau, [DP02](#) | [2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates](#)

¹⁵ U. S. Census Bureau, [P9](#) | [2020 Decennial Census](#)

Population Trend ^{16, 17}



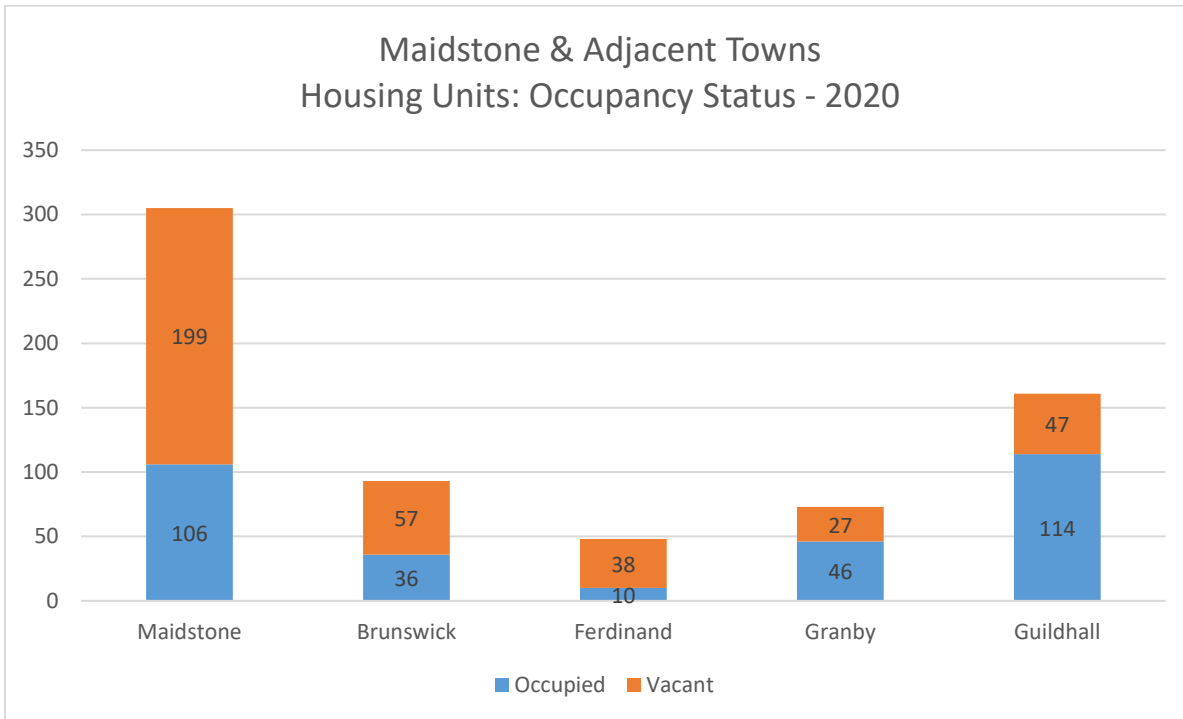
¹⁶ HousingData.org, Vermont (<https://www.housingdata.org/profile/population-household/population>), citing: U.S. Census Bureau: American Community Survey 5-year estimates (Table B01003), U.S. Decennial Census (for years 2010 and earlier).

¹⁷ New Hampshire Department of Business and Economic Affairs, [Historic Census Data](#), 1790 – 1820 US Census, [Page 2](#); 1830 – 1920 Decennial US Census, [Page 2](#); 1930, Table 4 – Population of Counties by Minor Civil Divisions: 1930, 1920 and 1910, [Image 6](#), Coos County; 1940 – 1960, Number of Inhabitants, Table 7 – Population of Counties, by Minor Civil Divisions: 1940 to 1960, [Image 9](#); Number of Inhabitants, New Hampshire, Table 4 – Population of County Subdivisions: 1960-1980, [Image 13](#); Population of New Hampshire Towns and Counties 1960-2010 [csv file].

Housing Units – Occupancy Status^{18, 19}

In the census data, “Vacant” may include seasonal, recreational or occasional use dwellings, which would account for most of the “vacant” units in Maidstone. In Maidstone, Brunswick and Ferdinand, the number of “vacant” units exceeds the number of occupied units, indicating relatively high seasonal, recreational or occasional use.

2020 Occupancy Status	Maidstone	Brunswick	Ferdinand	Granby	Guildhall
Total:	305	93	48	73	161
Occupied	106 - 34.8%	36 - 38.7%	10 - 20.8%	46 - 63.0%	114 - 70.8%
Vacant	199 - 65.2%	57 - 61.3%	38 - 70.2%	27 - 37.0%	47 - 29.2%

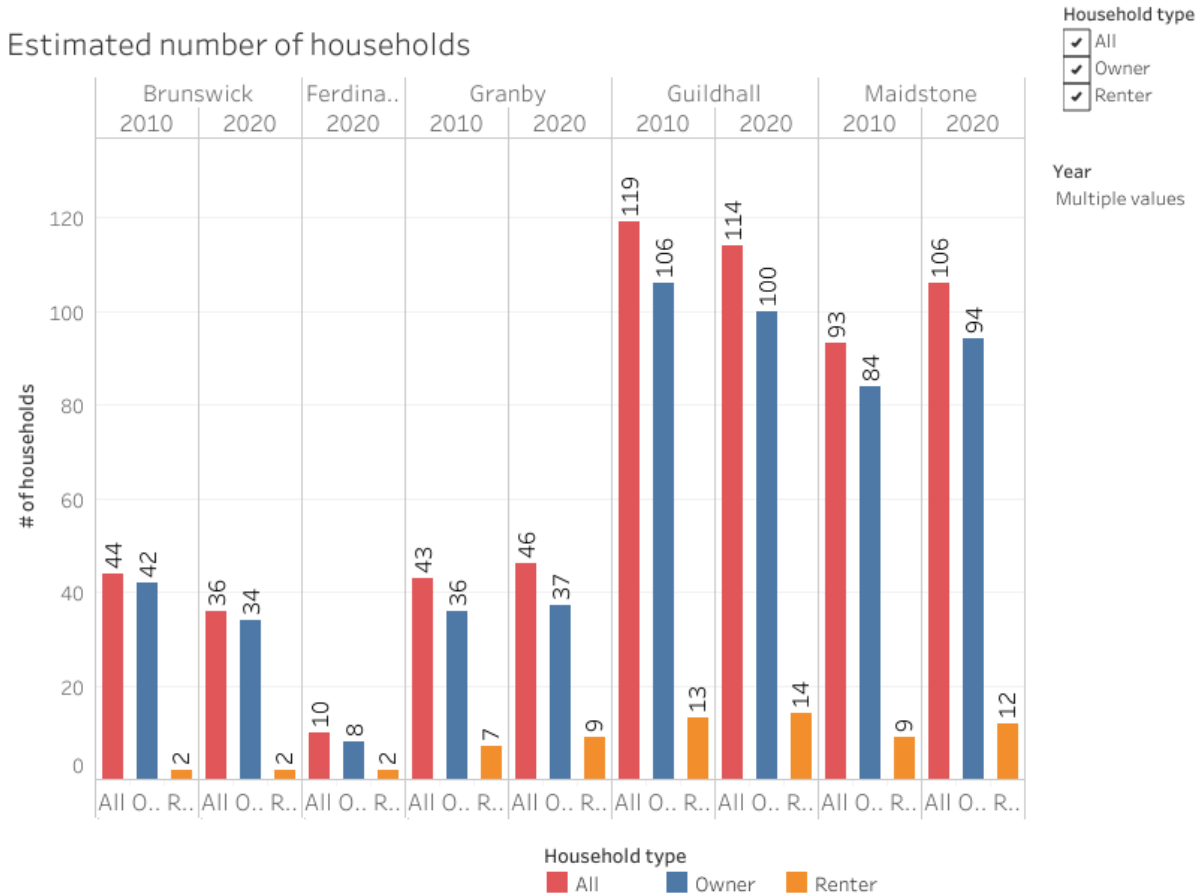


¹⁸ U.S. Census Bureau. "OCCUPANCY STATUS." *Decennial Census, DEC Redistricting Data (PL 94-171), Table H1, 2020*, <https://data.census.gov/table/DECENNIALPL2020.H1?g=060XX00US5000942475>. Accessed on September 7, 2024.
 U.S. Census Bureau. Maidstone, "OCCUPANCY STATUS." *Decennial Census, DEC Redistricting Data (PL 94-171), Table H1, 2010*, <https://data.census.gov/table/DECENNIALPL2010.H1?g=060XX00US5000942475>. Accessed on September 7, 2024.

¹⁹ U.S. Census Bureau. Brunswick, "OCCUPANCY STATUS." *Decennial Census, DEC Redistricting Data (PL 94-171), Table H1, 2020*, <https://data.census.gov/table/DECENNIALPL2020.H1?g=060XX00US5000910075>. Accessed on September 7, 2024.

Maidstone & Adjacent Towns, Estimated Number of Households, 2010 & 2020 ²⁰

For the number of estimated households in Maidstone and surrounding Vermont towns, the percentage that are of type owner is high as compared to type renter. For Maidstone approximately 88.7% of households are owner and 11.3% renter. Note that these households are “occupied” versus “seasonal, recreational or occasional use.”



Source:

U.S. Census Bureau: American Community Survey 5-year estimates (Table B25003), U.S. Decennial Census (for years ending in zero)

Description:

A household includes all the people who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residence. A housing unit is defined as owner occupied if the owner or co-owner lives in the unit, even if it is mortgaged or not fully paid for. All occupied units which are not owner occupied, whether they are rented for cash rent or occupied without payment of cash rent, are classified as renter occupied.

²⁰ HousingData.org, Vermont (<https://www.housingdata.org/profile/population-household/households-by-tenure>), citing: U.S. Census Bureau: American Community Survey 5-year estimates (Table B25003), U.S. Decennial Census.

2007 and 2016 Maidstone Town Plan: Implementation Plan: Adjacent Communities

1. Continuously monitor the situation to ensure that relationships with the adjacent communities continue to be positive.

2016 Maidstone Town Plan: Impact of Adjacent Communities

Maidstone is very closely linked to the adjacent communities in both Vermont and New Hampshire. It is bordered on the northeast by Brunswick, on the east by the Connecticut River (opposite Stratford and Northumberland), on the southwest by Guildhall and Granby, and on the west by Ferdinand. Maidstone supports the adjacent communities by providing labor for their jobs; by bringing summer residents to the area that stimulate the local economy, by supporting community endeavors such as medical services and schools. In turn, the adjacent communities provide shopping facilities, medical services, fire protection, and schools and so on. We rely on each other and maintaining a positive relationship is important. Keeping communications open among communities is critical to maintaining the quiet rural lifestyle that is important to all the residents of the area. We have reviewed the town plans for the surrounding towns and the regional plan and do not foresee any significant impacts.

Recommended Actions:

Continuously monitor the situation to ensure that relationships with the adjacent communities continue to be positive.

This is what I have accumulated so far relating to Maidstone and adjacent communities. (Nothing on New Hampshire towns, except for population). This includes information from the 1993, 2007 and 2016 Maidstone Town Plans.

Relationship of Maidstone's Town Plan Objectives with those of the State, Regional and adjacent communities

1993, 2007 and 2016 Maidstone Town Plans: Statement of Planning Goals

Planning goals 1 through 7 occur in the 1993, 2007 and 2016 versions of the Town Plan, with only some minor differences, which are noted below. Planning goals 8 through 12 were added to the 2007 version of the Town Plan and are also included in the 2016 version.

1. Maintain the scale, the traditions and the rural character of Maidstone. Preserve those qualities that make Maidstone an attractive community in which to live, work, and raise a family.

- (SPG) 24 V.S.A. § [4302](#) (a) **General purposes. ... to protect residential, agricultural, and other areas from undue concentrations of population and overcrowding of land and buildings ...**
(c) In addition, this chapter shall be used to further the following specific goals: (1) To plan development so as to maintain the **historic settlement pattern of compact village and urban centers separated by rural countryside.**
- **NVDA Regional plan:**²¹ Vermont's rural traditions have been better preserved in the Northeast Kingdom than in other areas of the state. **Respect for individual rights and a genuine**

²¹ NVDA, *Regional Plan for the Northeast Kingdom 2018* (<https://www.nvda.net/nvda-regional-plan/2018FullPlan.pdf>), [Image 8](#) of 302, Volume I, Regional Goals & Strategies, II. Regional Vision, p. 2.

neighborliness toward others are values that continue as part of the social fabric here. The physical landscape has essentially remained unchanged with **compact village centers surrounded by working farms and productive forests**. When one examines local town plans throughout the region, one quickly gets the sense that **most people in this region prefer gradual change over rapid growth**. Nevertheless, most Northeast Kingdom residents stand firmly behind development that promotes job creation and sustained economic development.

- **Maidstone's** 1993, 2007 and 2016 Town Plan, objective 1, desires to “Maintain the scale, the *traditions and the rural character* of Maidstone. Preserve those qualities that make Maidstone an attractive community in which to live, work, and raise a family.”
- **Brunswick**, objective 1, seeks to *preserve the scenic qualities* of a quiet river-valley countryside which attracts sightseers with its charm and lovely views of pastures, woodlands and mountain scenery.²²
- **Unified Towns and Gores of Essex County (UTG)**, which includes Ferdinand: *Traditional ways of life and land use patterns* within the UTG should be preserved.²³
- **Guildhall**, 2013 Municipal Plan:²⁴ Objective 1: To *remain rural in character*.; Also, Objective 5: To preserve and protect our *historical heritage, character, rural nature and aesthetic beauty*. Guildhall 2024 Proposed Municipal Plan: 1. Future Land Use. Goal:²⁵ *Maintain the forested landscape and healthy waterways* while supporting appropriately scaled development in the established village cluster and along the main roads in Guildhall.
- **Granby**:²⁶ a priority is to: *Maintain the character* of the Town, including its *traditional way of life, environmental quality, and land use patterns*.

Conclusion:

Maidstone's objective of maintaining the scale, traditions and its rural character is consistent with the objectives of the adjacent communities, listed above. Relative to the State and Regional goals, Maidstone, like Brunswick and Ferdinand, does not have a village center, but it does have rural countryside.

2. Maintain the agricultural lands that are essential to the overall objective of preserving open space, scenic qualities and rural flavor. Also, 11. Protect the forest lands and agricultural lands within the Town.

- **(SPG) 24 V.S.A. § 4302 (a) General purposes.** ... to protect residential, **agricultural**, and other areas from undue concentrations of population and overcrowding of land and buildings ... to enable the **mitigation of the burden of property taxes on agricultural, forest, and other open lands**;
(c) In addition, this chapter shall be used to further the following specific goals:
 - (6) To maintain and improve the quality of air, water, wildlife, **forests**, and other land resources.
 - (C) Vermont's **forestlands** should be managed so as to **maintain and improve forest blocks and habitat connectors**.
 - (9) To **encourage and strengthen agricultural and forest industries**.

²² Brunswick, VT: 2019 Municipal Plan, “Statement of Objectives,” [page 3](#).

²³ The Unified Towns & Gores of Essex County, VT, Municipal Plan, “List of Priorities,” [page 4](#).

²⁴ Town of Guildhall, Municipal Development Plan, 2019, [page 6](#).

²⁵ Town of Guildhall Proposed Municipal Plan, 2024, Future Land Use, [page 5](#).

²⁶ Town of Granby, Town Plan, 2016, Planning Priorities, [page 8](#).

- (A) Strategies to protect long-term **viability of agricultural and forestlands** should be encouraged and should include **maintaining low overall density**.
- (B) The manufacture and marketing of value-added **agricultural and forest products** should be encouraged.
- (C) The **use of locally-grown food products** should be encouraged.
- (D) Sound **forest and agricultural management practices** should be encouraged.
- (E) Public investment should be planned so as to **minimize development pressure on agricultural and forest land**.
- **NVDA Regional plan – Forest Land Use Goals:**²⁷
 - **Sustainable forestry** will remain an economically viable tool to preserve woodlands, open space for recreation, and local character.
 - **Mixed-use forests** will allow for expanded economic benefits to forest owners while encouraging sound ecological practices and recreational access to the public.
 - **Value-added processing** opportunities for wood resources in the region will increase.
 - Residential and commercial **development patterns** will occur in such a way as to retain the productivity of the region’s accessible forests.
 - **State and federally controlled land** is an important resource for passive **recreation** and will continue to be accessible to the public.
 - Municipalities with land in municipal forests will have the capacity to **manage the land for its resource value and public recreational use**.
 - **Maintain enough forest land to support wood-related industries, retain the region’s natural beauty, protect fragile areas, encourage wildlife, promote recreational usage, and maintain a healthy, sustainable forest based economy.**
- **NVDA Regional plan – Agricultural Land Use Goals:**²⁸
 - **Farming and agriculture** will remain an important and viable sector of the regional economy.
 - **Contiguous tracts of agricultural soils** will be preserved.
 - **Development of residential and commercial uses will not significantly reduce the amount of open and productive farm land.**
- **Maidstone’s** 1993, 2007 and 2016 Town Plan desires to “*Maintain the agricultural lands* that are essential to the overall objective of preserving open space, scenic qualities and rural flavor.” Further, in the 2007 and 2016 Town Plan, objective 11, desires to “*Protect the forests lands and agricultural lands* within the Town.”
- **Brunswick:**²⁹ Objective 5: All possible lawful aid will be encouraged to benefit and *promote the active productive farms* operating in the Town. Objective 2: All landowners are urged to *maintain* their open fields, pastures and *woodlands* for their own personal enhancement and investment and further to seek the *preservation of the natural plant life and the encouragement of wildlife*.
- **UTG (Ferdinand):**³⁰ The unspoiled mountainous and *forested landscape* is an important draw to tourists and therefore a key component of UTG’s tourist-based economy. The *protection of these scenic areas* from the impacts of large-scale development is a priority.

²⁷ NVDA, *Regional Plan for the Northeast Kingdom 2018* (<https://www.nvda.net/nvda-regional-plan/2018FullPlan.pdf>), [Images 12-13](#) of 302, Volume I, Regional Goals & Strategies, V. Goals and Strategies, pp. 6-7.

²⁸ NVDA, *Regional Plan for the Northeast Kingdom 2018* (<https://www.nvda.net/nvda-regional-plan/2018FullPlan.pdf>), [Image 13](#) of 302, Volume I, Regional Goals & Strategies, V. Goals and Strategies, pp. 6-7.

²⁹ Brunswick, VT: 2019 Municipal Plan, “Statement of Objectives,” [page 3](#).

³⁰ The Unified Towns & Gores of Essex County, VT, Municipal Plan, “List of Priorities,” [page 4](#).

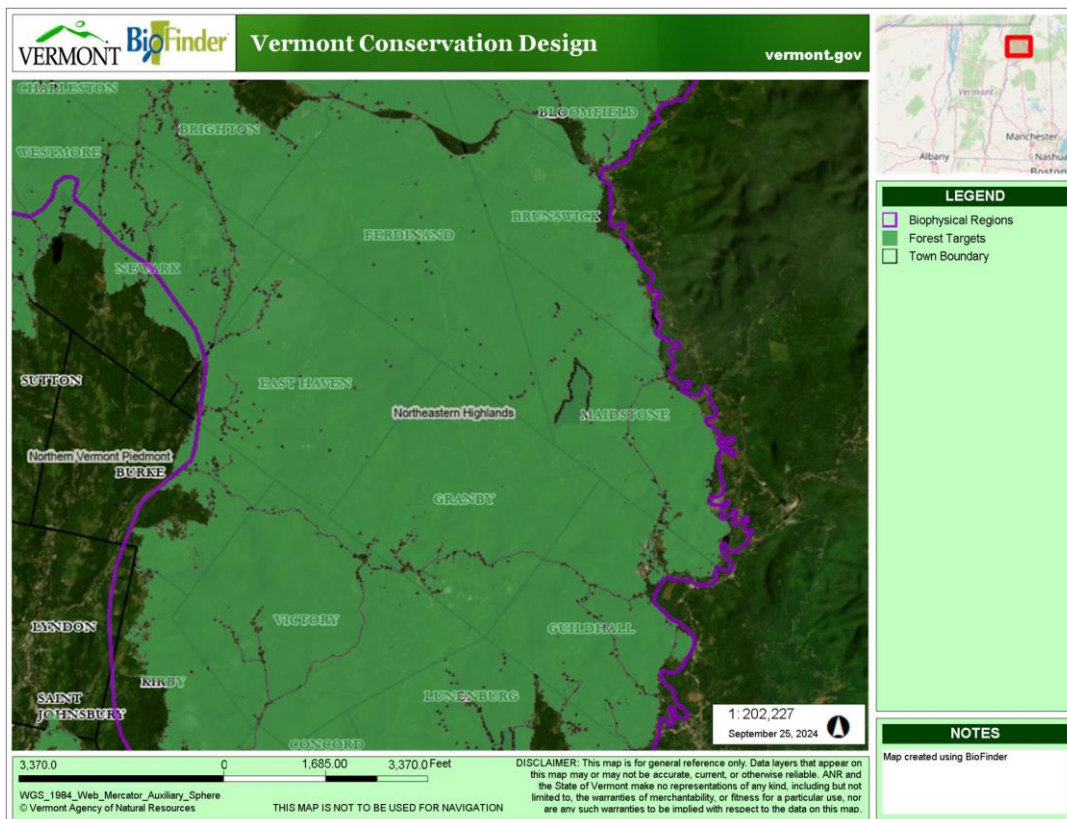
- **Guildhall** does not mention agriculture or farms, or forests, in their 2013 goals and objectives,³¹ however the 2024 Proposed Municipal Plan mentions “*Maintain the forested landscape*” in its Future Land Use goal.³²
- **Granby** gives the following as a priority: *Maintain accessible large tract forested lands.*³³

Conclusion: Maidstone’s objective of maintaining or protecting agricultural lands and forests is consistent with the goals of the State, Regional and surrounding communities.

Maidstone & Adjacent Towns – Vermont Conservation Design – Forest Targets

There are two sets of Forest targets, Young Forest and Old Forest. Young forest is forest habitat that is regenerating from natural or human disturbance and dominated by seedlings and saplings, regardless of natural community type. ...³⁴ Old forests are biologically mature forests, often having escaped stand-replacing disturbance for more than 100 years and exhibiting minimal evidence of human-caused disturbance as well as continuity of process, senescence of trees, and regeneration response. ...³⁵

Maidstone and the surrounding communities are all included as “forest targets.”³⁶



³¹ Town of Guildhall, Municipal Development Plan, 2019, [page 6](#).

³² Town of Guildhall Proposed Municipal Plan, 2024, Future Land Use, [page 5](#).

³³ Town of Granby, Town Plan, 2016, Planning Priorities, [page 8](#).

³⁴ Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, [Forest Conservation Targets](#) (2019), Young Forest.

³⁵ Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, [Forest Conservation Targets](#) (2019), Old Forest, [page 4](#).

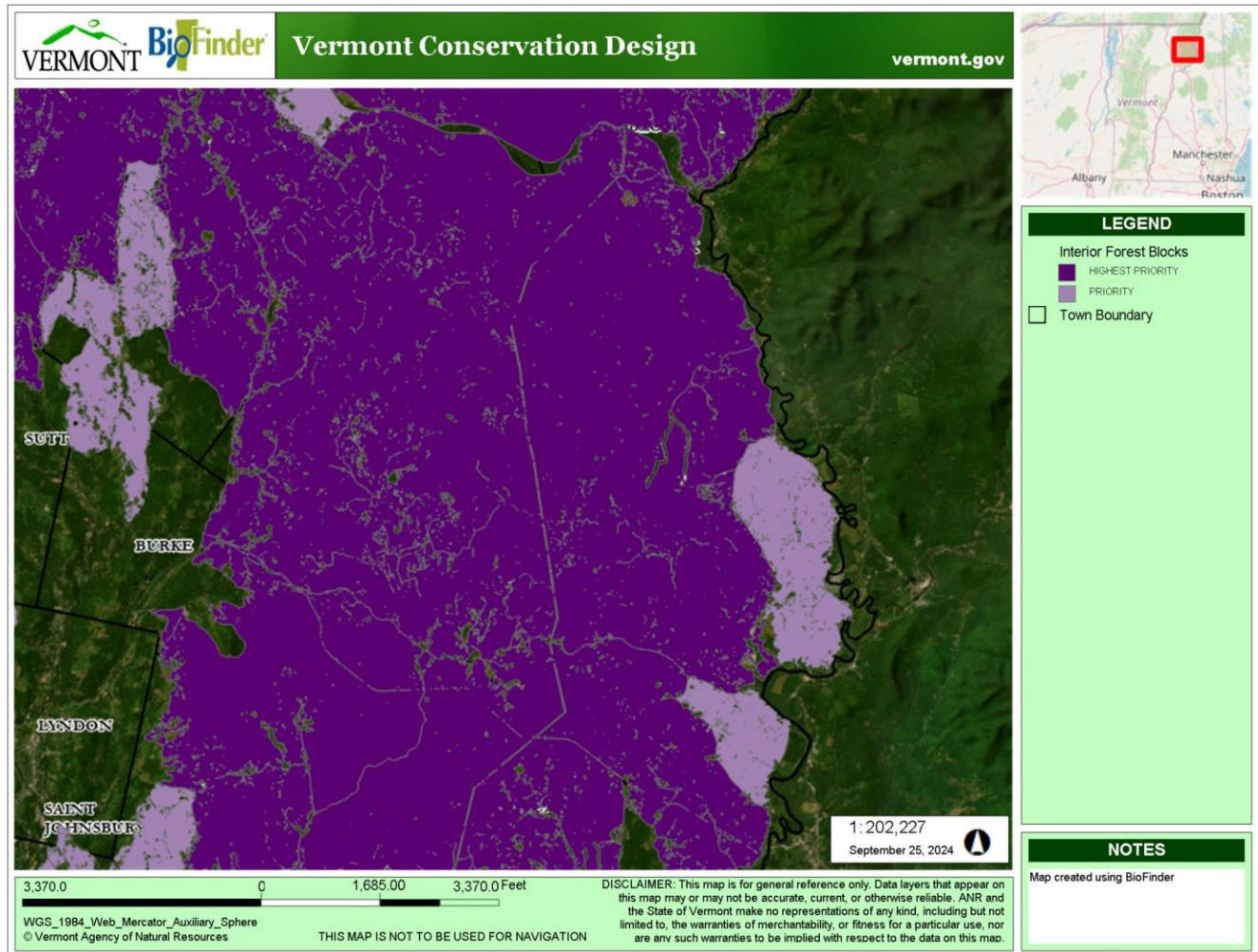
³⁶ Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, [BioFinder](#), Vermont Conservation Design – Targets, Biophysical Regions & Forest Targets.

Maidstone & Adjacent Towns – Landscape Scale Components – Interior Forest Blocks

Forest blocks are areas of contiguous forest and other natural communities and habitats, such as wetlands, ponds, and cliffs, that are unfragmented by roads, development, or agriculture (Sorenson and Osborne 2014). Forests blocks are the first foundational unit of the Vermont Conservation Design.³⁷

Interior Forest Blocks are a selection of habitat blocks that best provide interior forest conditions in each biophysical region of Vermont. Habitat blocks themselves are areas of contiguous forest and other natural habitats that are unbroken by roads, development, or agriculture.³⁸

Maidstone and the surrounding area has mostly “highest priority”, and some “priority” interior forest blocks, as shown in the following map.³⁹

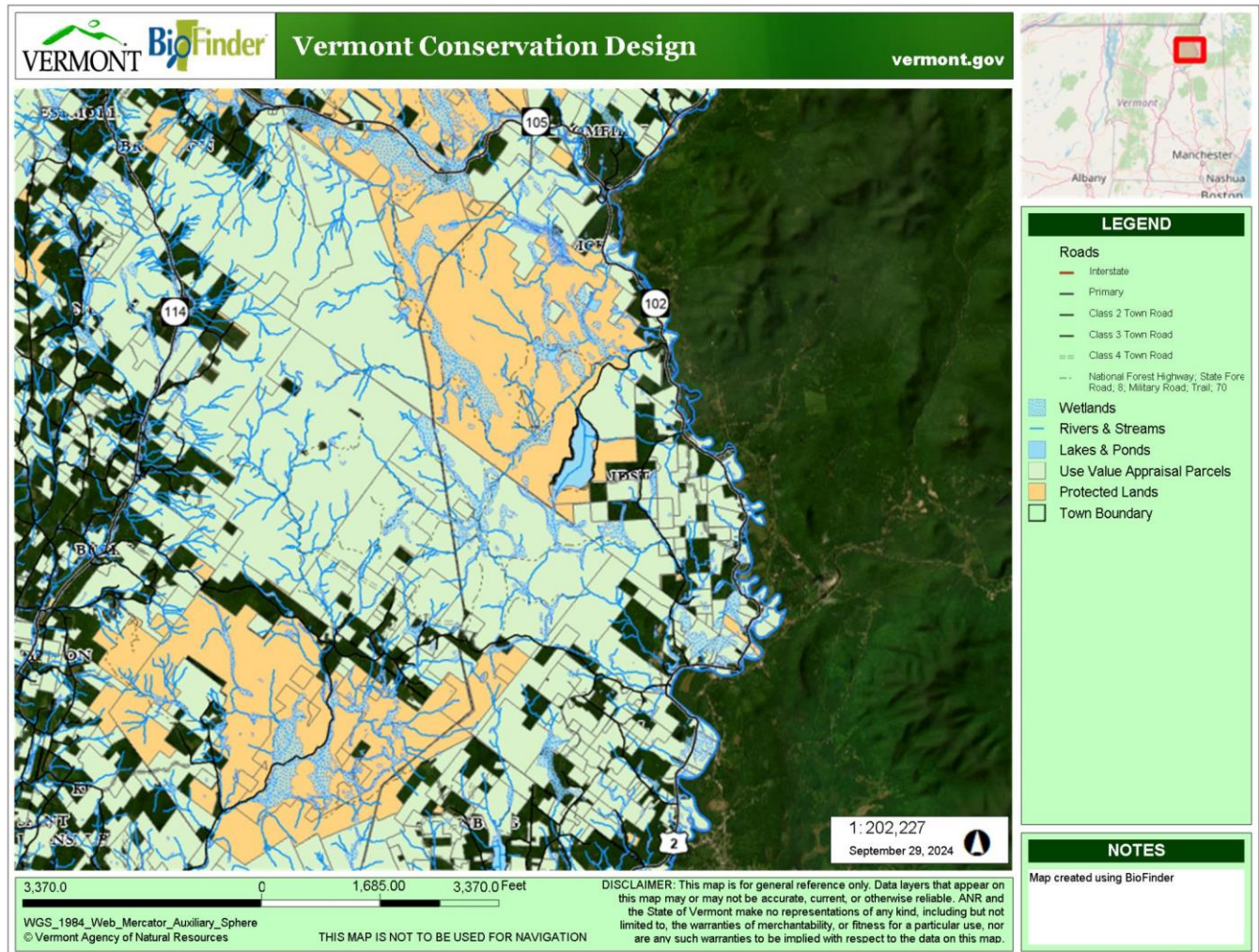


³⁷ Vermont Agency of Natural Resources: Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department, [Interior Forest Blocks](#); Vermont Conservation Design – Summary Report (February 2018), [Interior Forest Blocks](#).

³⁸ Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department, [Vermont Conservation Design, Interior Forest Blocks Summary](#) (2023).

³⁹ Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, [BioFinder](#), Landscape Scale Components, Interior Forest Blocks.

Use Value Appraisal Parcels and Protected Land



3. Preserve the unique natural areas and ecosystems that make up Maidstone's diverse and scenic landscape. Also 9. Protect the Town's water resources.

- (SPG) 24 V.S.A. § [4302](#) (c) In addition, this chapter shall be used to further the following specific goals:
 - (5) To identify, protect, and preserve important natural and historic features of the Vermont landscape, including:
 - (A) significant natural and fragile areas;
 - (B) outstanding **water resources**, including lakes, rivers, aquifers, shorelands, and wetlands;
 - (C) significant scenic roads, waterways, and views;
 - (D) important historic structures, sites, or districts, archaeological sites, and archaeologically sensitive areas.
 - (6) To maintain and improve the quality of air, **water**, wildlife, forests, and other land resources.

- (A) Vermont’s air, **water**, wildlife, mineral, and land resources should be planned for use and development according to the principles set forth in 10 V.S.A. § 6086(a).
 - (B) Vermont’s **water quality** should be maintained and improved according to the policies and actions developed in the basin plans established by the Secretary of Natural Resources under 10 V.S.A. § 1253.
 - (C) Vermont’s forestlands should be managed so as to maintain and improve forest blocks and habitat connectors.
- **NVDA Regional Plan – Natural Resource Goals:**⁴⁰
 - The overarching goal for the region is to balance local economic needs with the protection of the natural resource that so many of the region’s residents enjoy and depend upon.
 - The quality and quantity of the region’s **surface waters** should be protected, maintained, and restored.
 - The quality and quantity of existing and potential **groundwater** resources should be protected and improved.
 - Significant **wetlands** within the region should be protected.
 - The region’s mineral and soil resources should be used in a manner that will support the sustainable growth and development of the region.
 - A consistently high level of air quality should be maintained for the health, safety, and enjoyment of the region’s residents and visitors.
 - Adequate resource information for the region should be maintained to improve the region’s ability to plan for **protection of wildlife resources** in the area.
 - Critical **wildlife habitat** should be protected.
 - The native **biodiversity** of the region should be maintained, and restored when appropriate.
 - **Private, public and community interests** should be considered in matters affecting local recreation and open space.
- **Brunswick;**⁴¹ Objective 2: All landowners are urged to *maintain their open fields, pastures and woodlands* for their own personal enhancement and investment and further to *seek the preservation of the natural plant life and the encouragement of wildlife*. Objective 3: Brunswick will endeavor to *protect its streams and bodies of water* as natural resources subject to pollution and infringement.
- **UTG (Ferdinand):**⁴² The unspoiled mountainous and forested landscape is an important draw to tourists and therefore a key component of the UTG’s tourist-based economy. The *protection of these scenic areas from the impacts of large-scale development* is a priority. Also, “Maintaining and *protecting water quality in our lakes, ponds, rivers, wetlands, and streams* is a priority.”
- **Guildhall and Granby** do not list water and streams in their objectives.

Conclusion: Maidstone’s objective to preserve unique natural areas and ecosystems appears to be compatible with State and regional goals and appears not to conflict with goals of surrounding

⁴⁰ NVDA, *Regional Plan for the Northeast Kingdom 2018* (<https://www.nvda.net/nvda-regional-plan/2018FullPlan.pdf>), [Images 34-36](#) of 302, Volume I, Regional Goals & Strategies, V. Goals and Strategies, pp. 28-30.

⁴¹ Brunswick, VT: 2019 Municipal Plan, “Statement of Objectives,” [page 3](#).

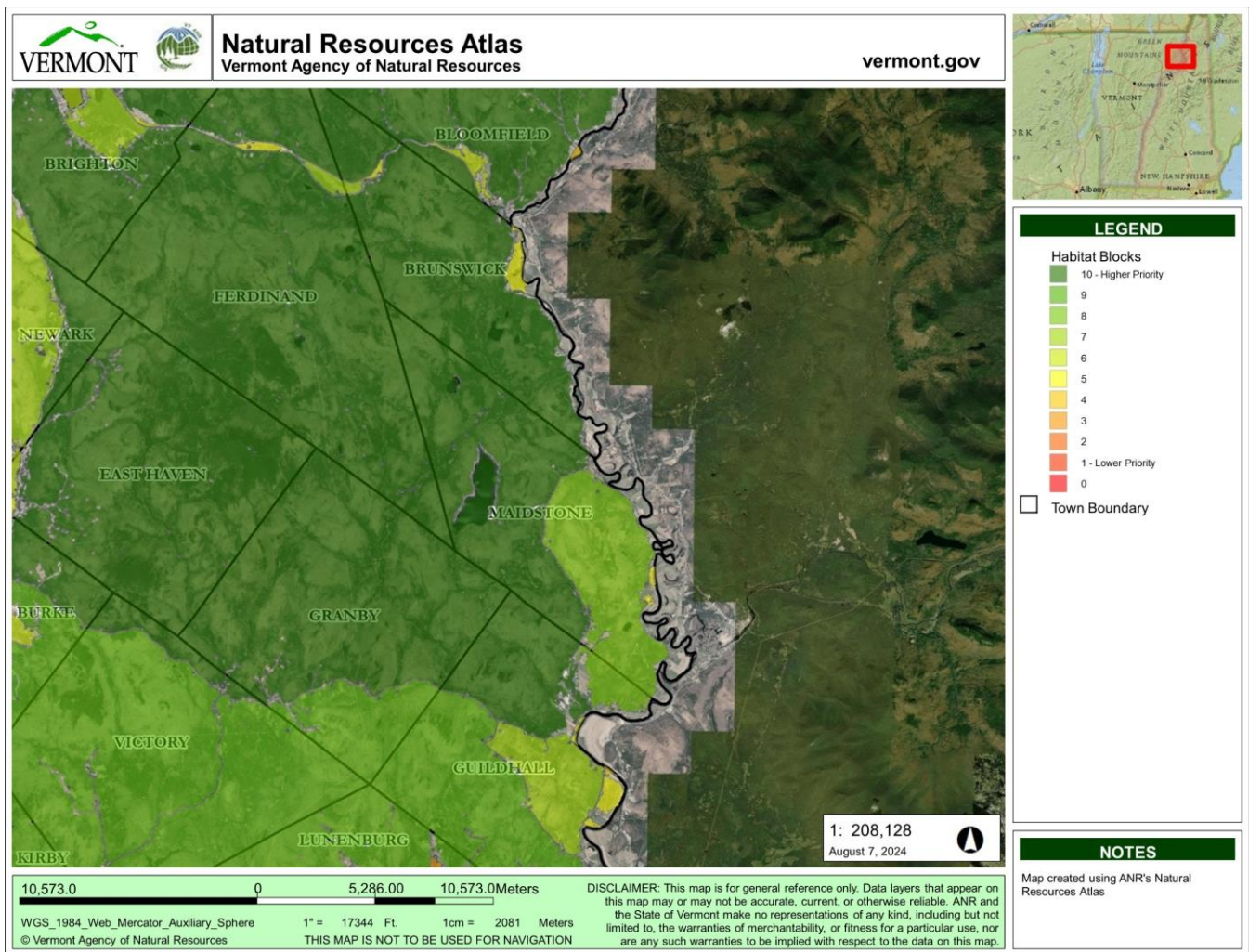
⁴² The Unified Towns & Gores of Essex County, VT, Municipal Plan, “List of Priorities,” [page 4](#).

communities. Also, Maidstone’s objective to protect the Town’s water resources appears to be compatible with State, regional and goals of surrounding communities.

Habitat Blocks

A Habitat Block is an area of natural cover (including forest, wetland, shrubland, rivers, streams, lakes & ponds). It is bounded by roads, development and agriculture. Habitat Blocks vary in size from small to very large, but for these purposes are only larger than 20 acres. In total there are 4,214 Habitat Blocks ranging from 20 acres to 150,294 acres, with an average size of 1,078 acres.⁴³

Maidstone and the surrounding area has mostly “highest priority”, and some “priority” habitat blocks, as shown in the following map.⁴⁴



⁴³ Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department, [Vermont Conservation Design, Habitat Blocks Summary](#) (2023).

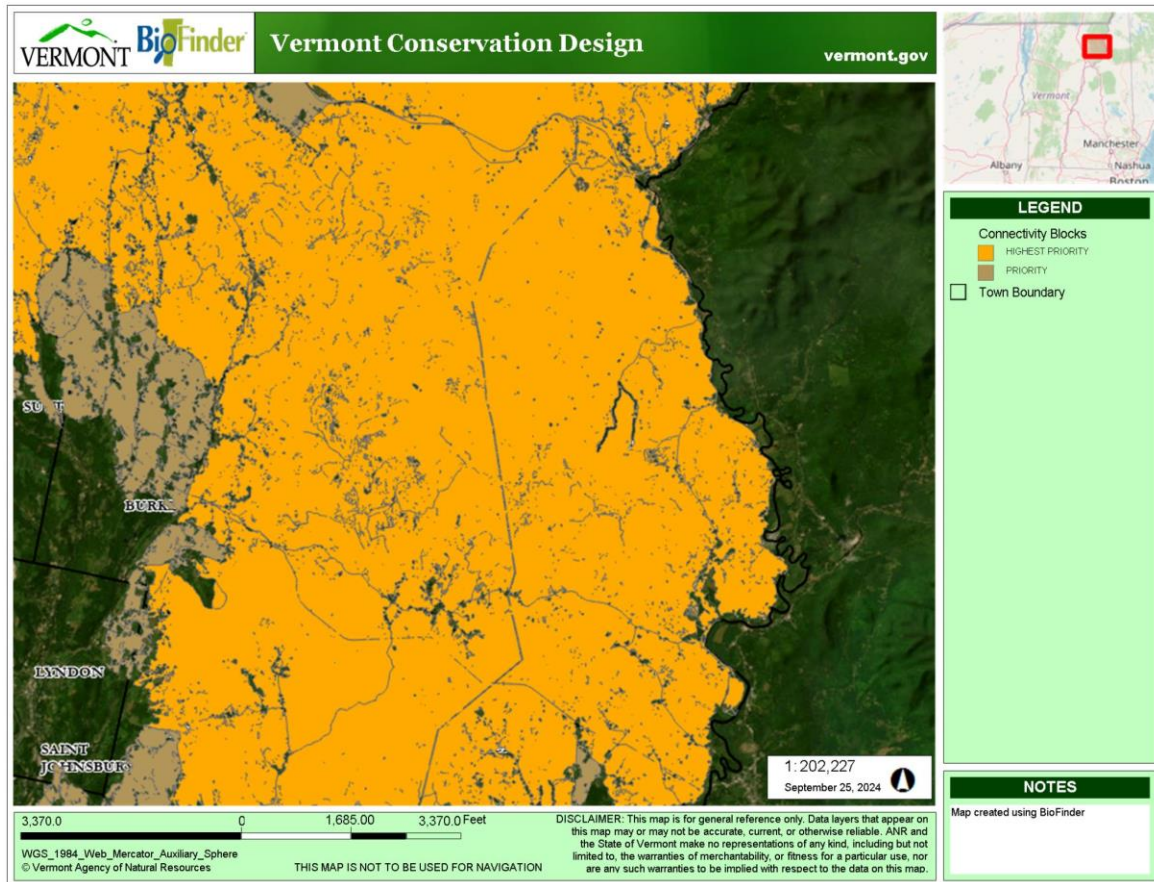
⁴⁴ Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, [BioFinder](#), Natural Resources Atlas, Habitat Blocks.

Connectivity Blocks

Landscape connectivity refers to the degree to which blocks of suitable habitat are connected to each other (Noss and Cooperrider 1994). Connectivity Blocks are the network of forest blocks that together provide terrestrial connectivity at the regional scale (across Vermont and to adjacent states and Québec) and connectivity between all Vermont biophysical regions.⁴⁵

Connectivity Blocks are a selection of habitat blocks that create a connected network of forest across Vermont and into adjacent states and provinces. These are mostly forested areas but also include shrubland and wetland. They include the largest forests that are serving as core habitat, as well as sometimes smaller, connecting blocks. Connectivity Blocks are the network of forest blocks that together provide terrestrial connectivity at the regional scale, across Vermont and to adjacent states and Québec, and connectivity between all Vermont biophysical regions.⁴⁶

Maidstone and the surrounding area has “highest priority” connectivity blocks, as shown in the following map.⁴⁷



⁴⁵ Vermont Agency of Natural Resources: Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department, [Connectivity Blocks](#); Vermont Conservation Design – Summary Report (February 2018), [Connectivity Blocks](#).

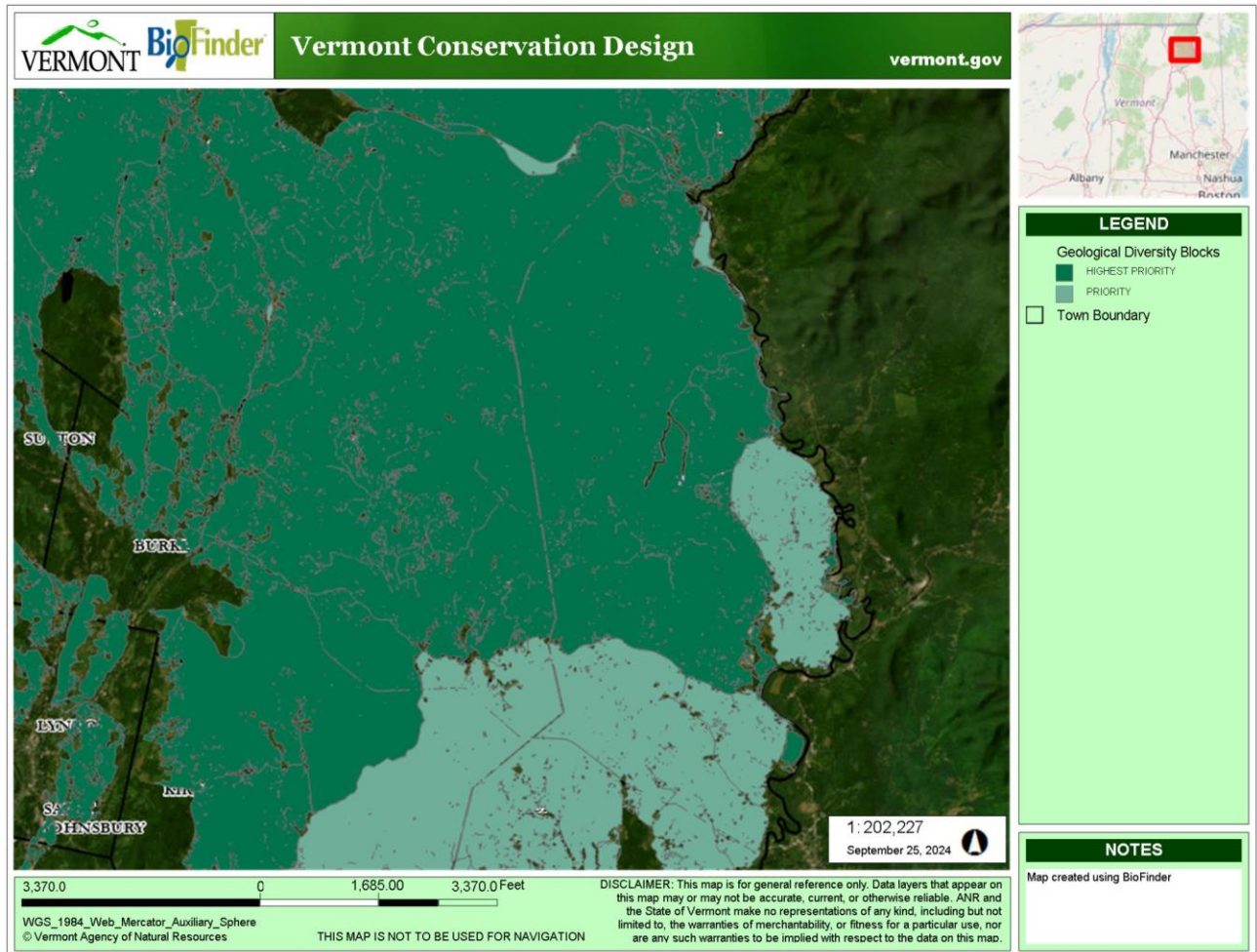
⁴⁶ Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department, [Vermont Conservation Design, Connectivity Blocks Summary](#) (2023).

⁴⁷ Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, [BioFinder](#), Landscape Scale Components, Connectivity Blocks.

Geological Diversity Blocks

Geologic Diversity Blocks are a selection of habitat blocks that represent the range of physical landscapes across VT. On the surface, these places are mostly forested areas including shrubland and wetland but below the surface they have interesting mixes of bedrock, soils and other characteristics like elevation and aspect.⁴⁸

Maidstone and the surrounding area has mostly “highest priority”, and some “priority” geological diversity blocks, as shown in the following map.⁴⁹



⁴⁸ Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department, [Vermont Conservation Design, Geological Diversity Blocks Summary](#) (2023).

⁴⁹ Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, [BioFinder](#), Landscape Scale Components, Geological Diversity Blocks.

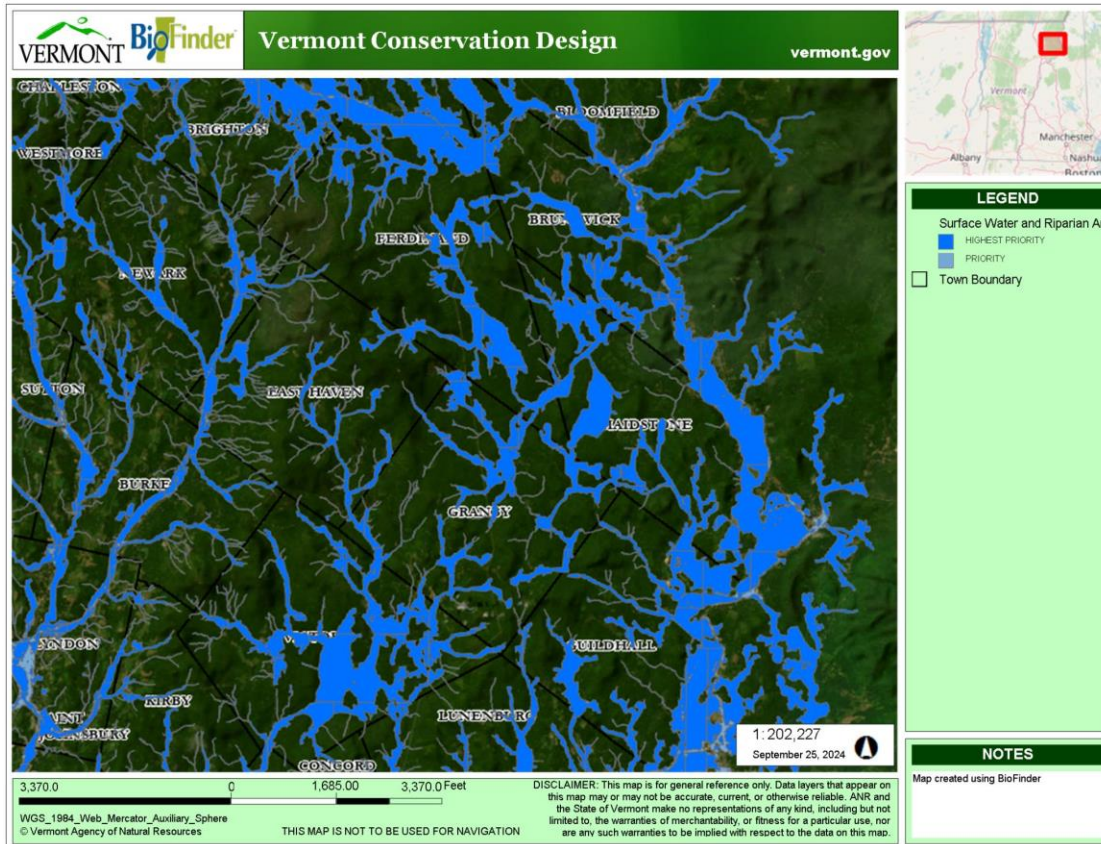
Surface Water and Riparian Areas

Vermont's network of lakes, ponds, rivers and streams, and their associated riparian zones, valley bottoms, and river corridors are the second foundational unit of Vermont Conservation Design.⁵⁰

Surface Waters and Riparian Areas includes all rivers, streams, lakes, and ponds and the valley bottoms in which rivers and streams flow. The valley bottoms are areas of alluvial soils (soils deposited by flowing water) through which rivers and streams migrate over time and where seasonal river or stream flooding is expected.⁵¹

Riparian areas are ecosystems comprised of streams, rivers, lakes, wetlands, and floodplains that form a complex and interrelated hydrological system. These ecosystems extend up and down streams and along lakeshores and include all land that is directly affected by surface water (Verry et al., 2000). Riparian ecosystems are generally high in biological diversity.⁵²

Maidstone and the surrounding area has many areas of "highest priority" surface waters and riparian areas, as shown in the following map.⁵³



⁵⁰ Vermont Agency of Natural Resources: Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department, [Surface Waters and Riparian Areas](#); Vermont Conservation Design – Summary Report (February 2018), [Surface Blocks and Riparian Areas](#).

⁵¹ Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department, [Vermont Conservation Design, Surface Waters & Riparian Areas Summary](#) (2023).

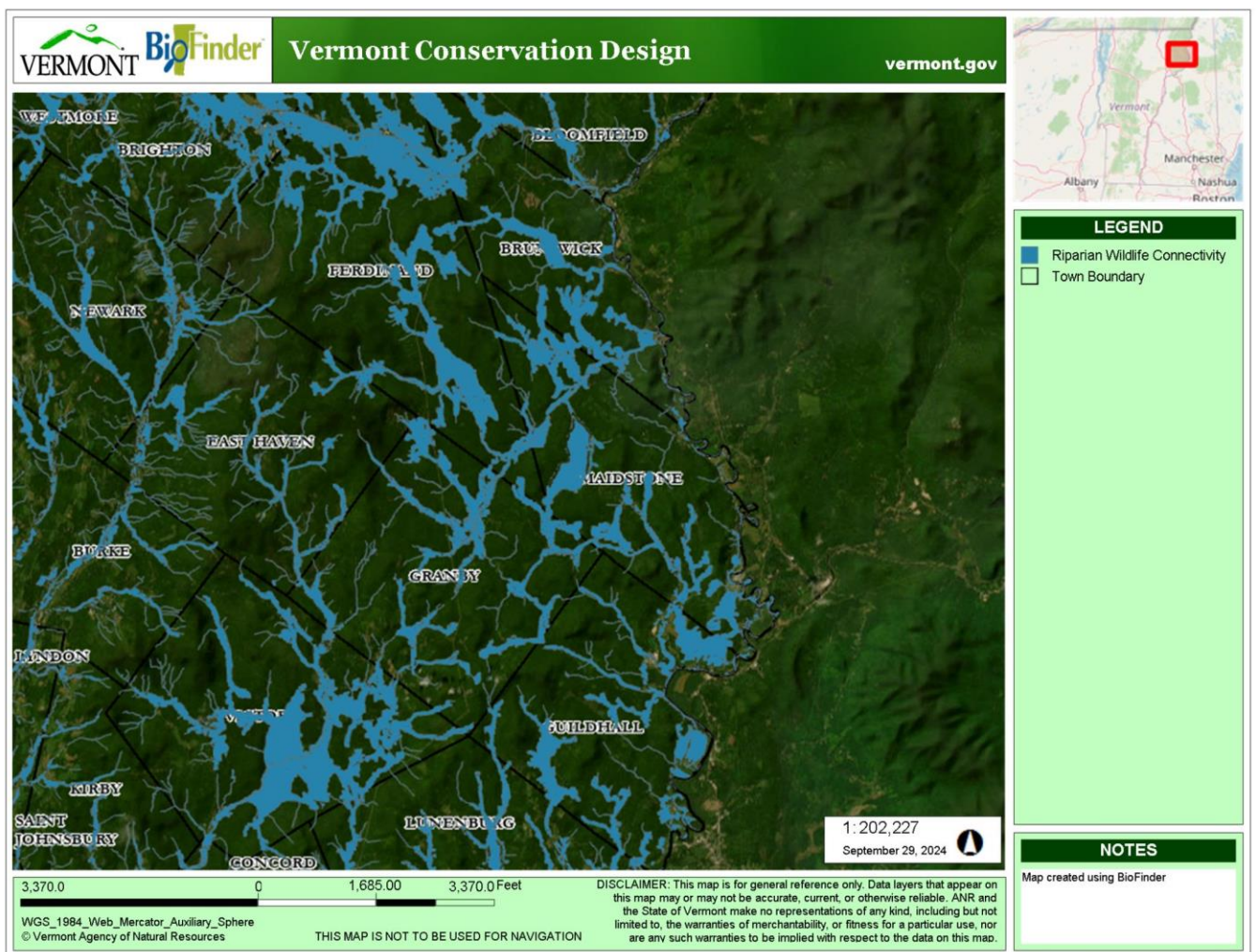
⁵² Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, BioFinder, [Riparian Connectivity](#) (Technical Abstract, 2023).

⁵³ Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, [BioFinder](#), Landscape Scale Components, Surface Water and Riparian Areas.

Riparian Connectivity

Riparian connectivity is the connected network of streamside vegetation that provides cover for wildlife movement and also allows for plant migration over generations. This is part of a larger network of connected forests and waterways that link larger patches of habitat within a landscape, allowing for movement, migration, and dispersal of animals and plants. Riparian ecosystems are generally high in biological diversity. They are “characterized by frequent disturbances related to inundation, transport of sediments, and the abrasive and erosive forces of water and ice movement that, in turn, create habitat complexity and variability...resulting in ecologically diverse communities”.^{54, 55}

Maidstone and the surrounding area has many areas of riparian wildlife connectivity, as shown in the following map.⁵⁶



⁵⁴ Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department, [Vermont Conservation Design, Riparian Connectivity Summary](#) (2023).

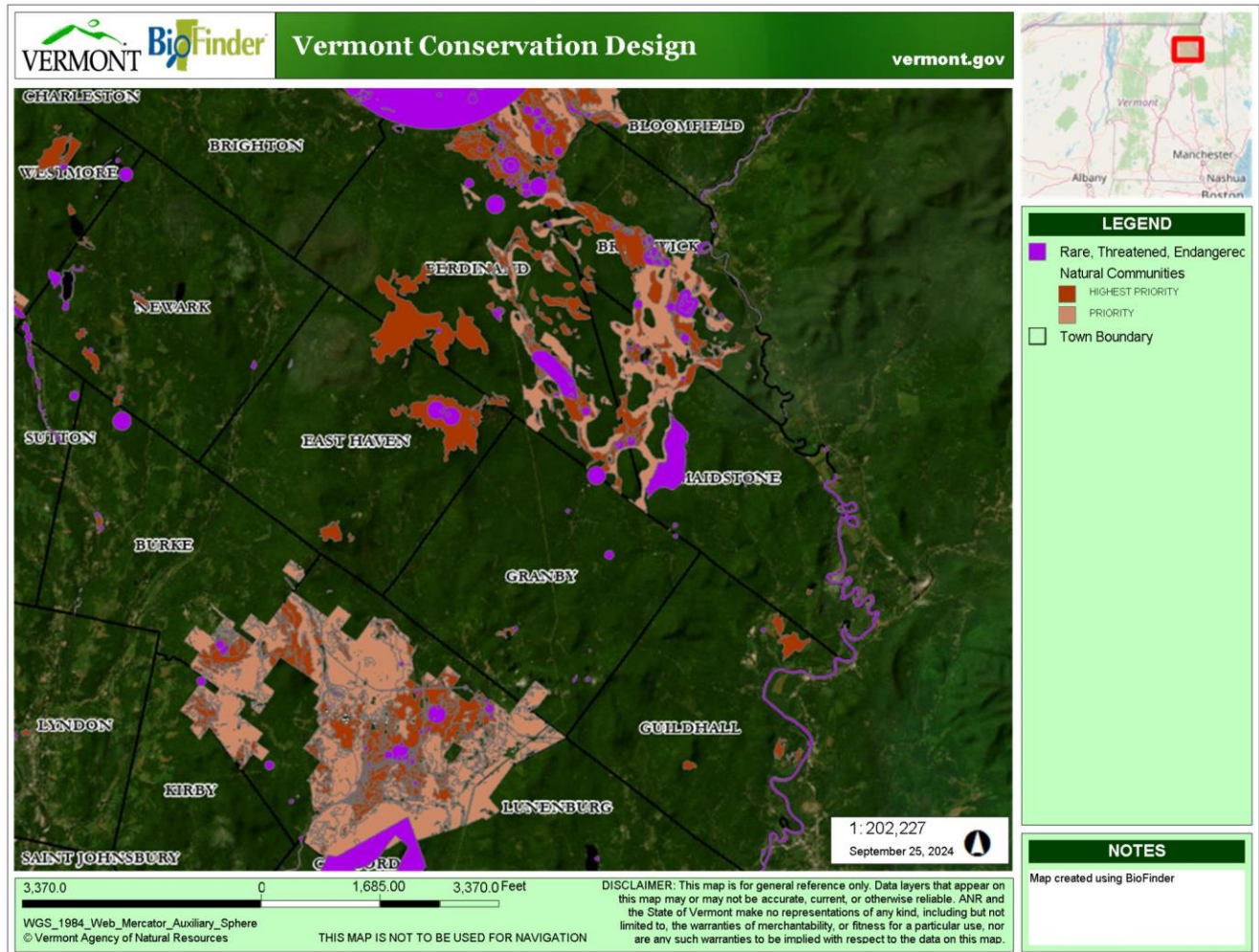
⁵⁵ Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, BioFinder, [Riparian Connectivity](#) (Technical Abstract, 2023).

⁵⁶ Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, [BioFinder](#), Landscape Scale Components, Riparian Connectivity.

Natural Communities

A natural community is an interacting assemblage of plants and animals, their physical environment, and the natural processes that affect them. As these assemblages of plants and animals repeat across the landscape wherever similar environmental conditions exist, it is possible to describe these repeating assemblages as natural community types. While they are named for plants that are common there, natural communities encompass the full interaction of plants, animals, soils, bedrock, and ecological processes.⁵⁷

Rare, Threatened, Endangered Species & Natural Communities in and around Maidstone.⁵⁸



⁵⁷ Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department, [Vermont Conservation Design, Natural Communities Summary](#) (2023).

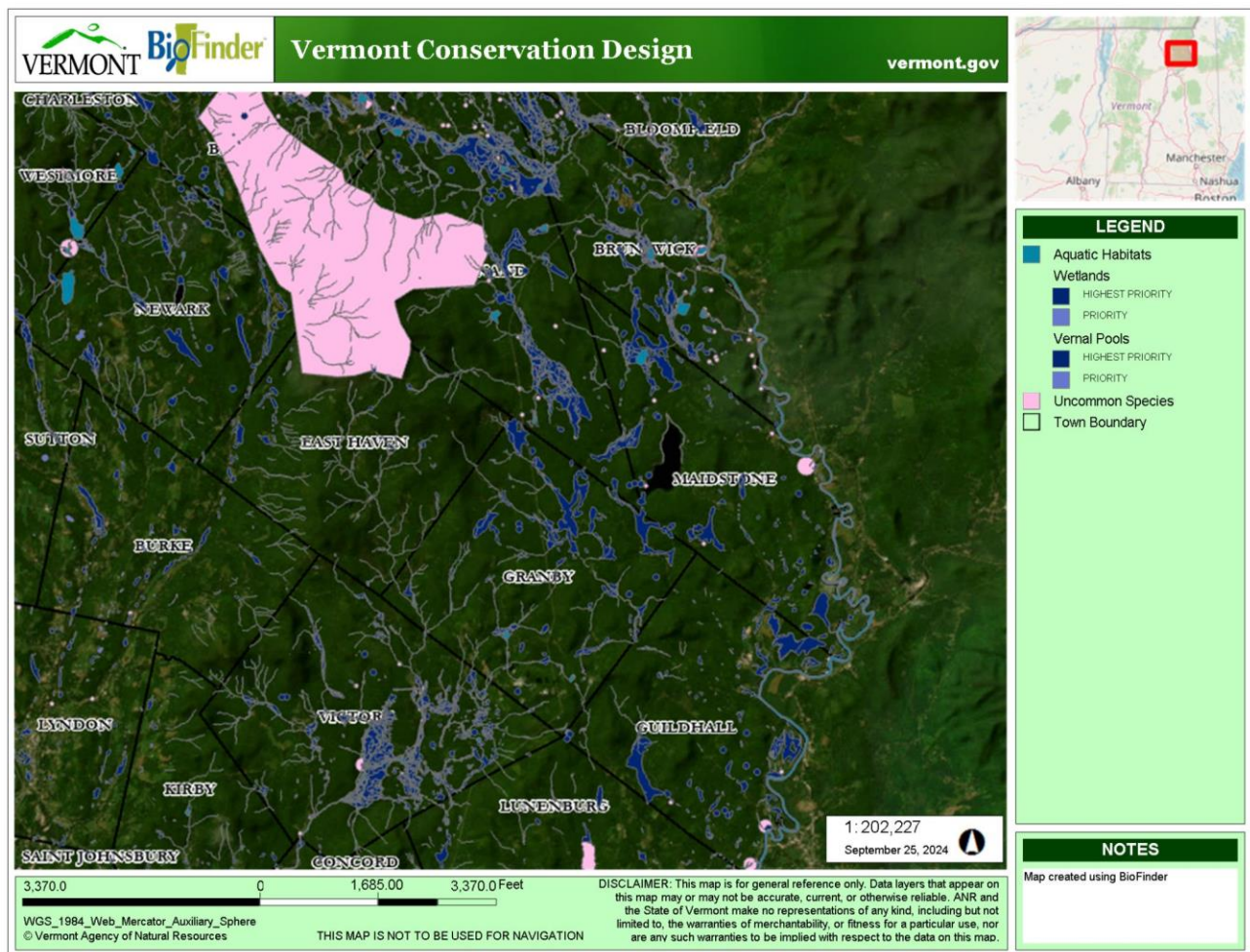
⁵⁸ Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, [BioFinder](#), Species and Community Scale Components, Rare, Threatened, Endangered Species, and Natural Communities.

Aquatic Habitats

The Rivers and streams portion of the Important Aquatic Habitats and Species Assemblages are a set of river and stream reaches with known concentrations of rare species or high species diversity, or which are good examples of aquatic habitat conditions. Collectively, they are representative of the full range of stream sizes, gradients, and temperature conditions in Vermont. The Lakes and Ponds portion of the Important Aquatic Habitats and Species Assemblages are lakes and ponds with known concentrations of rare species, exceptional species diversity, or which are examples of high quality aquatic habitat.⁵⁹

Important aquatic habitats and species assemblages ...⁶⁰

Aquatic Habitats, Wetlands, Vernal Pools, and Uncommon Species in Maidstone and surrounding communities.⁶¹



⁵⁹ Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department, [Vermont Conservation Design, Important Aquatic Habitats Summary](#) (2023).

⁶⁰ Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, [Important Aquatic Habitats and Species Assemblages](#) (Technical Abstract, 2023).

⁶¹ Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, [BioFinder](#), Species and Community Scale Components, Aquatic Habitats, Wetlands, Vernal Pools, and Uncommon Species.

4. Recreational opportunities on public lands should be maintained and encouraged on private lands only when landowners are willing to allow public access to their lands. Those habitats that provide opportunities for hunting, fishing, berry picking, hiking and so on need to be carefully monitored and protected. [1993 Town Plan: Maintain opportunities for recreational activities on public and private lands. Protect the habitats that provide for hunting, fishing, berry—picking, hiking, and so on.]

- (SPG) 24 V.S.A. § [4302](#) (c) In addition, this chapter shall be used to further the following specific goals: (8) To maintain and enhance recreational opportunities for Vermont residents and visitors.
 - (A) Growth should not significantly diminish the value and availability of outdoor recreational activities.
 - (B) Public access to noncommercial outdoor recreational opportunities, such as lakes and hiking trails, should be identified, provided, and protected wherever appropriate.
- NVDA Regional plan – Recreation Land Use Goals: ⁶²
 - Sufficient open space will be available for current and future outdoor recreational pursuits.
 - A variety of year-round and seasonal, indoor and outdoor recreation opportunities will be available for residents and visitors.
 - Public access to water bodies will be protected.
- Brunswick; Objective 6: ⁶³ 6. Brunswick will *encourage development which is* rural residential, farming, or *recreational* in character conforming to the limitations described in the Town land use plan.
- UTG (Ferdinand) has as a priority: ⁶⁴ Maintaining and enhancing *recreational opportunities* for the residents and visitors of the UTG is a priority.
- Guildhall: 2024 Proposed Plan: Recreation. Goal: ⁶⁵ *Maintain and enhance outdoor recreational opportunities* for Guildhall residents and visitors

Conclusion: Maidstone’s objective of maintaining recreational opportunities on public lands and encouraging them on private lands, when landowners are willing to allow public access, is consistent with the goals of the State, Regional and the surrounding communities of Brunswick, Ferdinand and Guildhall’s proposed plan.

5. Encourage slow, orderly growth on the [1993: “non-agricultural”] lands that are suited for development.

- (SPG) 24 V.S.A. § [4302](#) (a) **General purposes.** ... It is the intent and purpose of this chapter to encourage the appropriate **development** of all lands in this State by the action of its constituent municipalities and regions, with the aid and assistance of the State, in a manner which will promote the public health, safety against fire, floods, explosions, and other dangers; to promote prosperity, comfort, access to adequate light and air, convenience, efficiency, economy, and general welfare; to enable the mitigation of the burden of property taxes on agricultural, forest, and other open lands; to encourage appropriate architectural design; to encourage the development of renewable resources; to protect residential, agricultural, and other areas from undue concentrations of

⁶² NVDA, *Regional Plan for the Northeast Kingdom 2018* (<https://www.nvda.net/nvda-regional-plan/2018FullPlan.pdf>), [Images 14-15](#) of 302, Volume I, Regional Goals & Strategies, V. Goals and Strategies, pp. 7-8.

⁶³ Brunswick, VT: 2019 Municipal Plan, “Statement of Objectives,” [page 3](#).

⁶⁴ The Unified Towns & Gores of Essex County, VT, Municipal Plan, “List of Priorities,” [page 4](#).

⁶⁵ Town of Guildhall Proposed Municipal Plan, 2024, Recreation, [page 15](#).

population and overcrowding of land and buildings, from traffic congestion, from inadequate parking and the invasion of through traffic, and from the loss of peace, quiet, and privacy; to facilitate the growth of villages, towns, and cities and of their communities and neighborhoods so as to create an optimum environment, with good civic design; to encourage development of a rich cultural environment and to foster the arts; and to provide means and methods for the municipalities and regions of this State to plan for the prevention, minimization, and future elimination of such land development problems as may presently exist or which may be foreseen and to implement those plans when and where appropriate. In implementing any regulatory power under this chapter, municipalities shall take care to protect the constitutional right of the people to acquire, possess, and protect property. **(c) In addition, this chapter shall be used to further the following specific goals:** (1) To plan development so as to **maintain the historic settlement pattern of compact village and urban centers separated by rural countryside.**

- (A) Intensive residential development should be encouraged primarily in areas related to community centers, and strip development along highways should be discouraged.
- (B) Economic growth should be encouraged in locally designated growth areas, employed to revitalize existing village and urban centers, or both, and should be encouraged in growth centers designated under chapter 76A of this title.
- (C) Public investments, including the construction or expansion of infrastructure, should reinforce the general character and planned growth patterns of the area.
- (D) Development should be undertaken in accordance with smart growth principles as defined in subdivision 2791(13) of this title.
- **NVDA Regional – Future Land Use and Development Use Goals:**⁶⁶
 - **Established centers** will be an economically vital mix of commercial and residential uses, and will offer a variety of housing types available at different price points to support long-term sustainability.
 - Towns will be supported in identifying and implementing strategies that reverse the current trend of new residential development occurring primarily outside of centers.
 - Traditional development patterns will be maintained and linear “strip” development will be avoided.
 - New development will be compatible with existing land uses, and consistent with local plans.
 - Historic structures, community facilities, and other buildings will be preserved and adapted for re-use.
 - Brownfield sites will be reclaimed.
 - Significant development proposals will consider the impact on adjacent regions.
- **Brunswick:**⁶⁷ objective 6 states: “Brunswick will *encourage development which is rural residential, farming, or recreational* in character conforming to the limitations described in the Town land use plan.” Objective 8 states: Brunswick will strive to *minimize property taxes* within its control *by avoiding developments which will require town services and/or town roads*.
- **UTG (Ferdinand):**⁶⁸ The unspoiled mountainous and forested landscape is an important draw to tourists and therefore a key component of the UTG’s tourist-based economy. *The protection of these scenic areas from the impacts of large-scale development is a priority.*

⁶⁶ NVDA, *Regional Plan for the Northeast Kingdom 2018* (<https://www.nvda.net/nvda-regional-plan/2018FullPlan.pdf>), [Images 14-15](#) of 302, Volume I, Regional Goals & Strategies, V. Goals and Strategies, pp. 8-9.

⁶⁷ Brunswick, VT: 2019 Municipal Plan, “Statement of Objectives,” [pages 2-3](#).

⁶⁸ The Unified Towns & Gores of Essex County, VT, Municipal Plan, “List of Priorities,” [page 4](#).

- **Guildhall's** 2013 objective 2 states: ⁶⁹ To provide for *orderly, fiscally tolerable growth* in accordance with town bylaws. The 2024 Proposed plan, under 1. Future Land Use, Goal: ⁷⁰ Maintain the forested landscape and healthy waterways while supporting *appropriately scaled development in the established village cluster and along the main roads in Guildhall*.
- **Granby:** ⁷¹ Maintain a *low density of permanent and seasonal housing*; and “*Limit town roads to the current number of extent.*” ⁷²

Conclusion: Maidstone’s objective to encourage slow and orderly growth on lands that are suited for development appears to be consistent with surrounding communities.

6. Promote small scale, decentralized economic development, including home-based businesses, that does not detract from Maidstone’s rural character. [1993: omits “, including home-based businesses,”]

- **(SPG) 24 V.S.A. § 4302 (c) In addition, this chapter shall be used to further the following specific goals:** (2) To provide a strong and diverse economy that provides satisfying and rewarding job opportunities and that maintains high environmental standards, and to expand economic opportunities in areas with high unemployment or low per capita incomes.
- **NVDA Regional Plan - Economic Development Goals:** ⁷³
 - Reduce the region’s unemployment rate.
 - Train new and existing workers to meet the needs of area businesses and increase workers’ salaries.
 - Create higher wage jobs.
 - Coordinate economic development functions in the Northeast Kingdom.
 - Assist municipalities in their economic development efforts.
 - Increase and diversify the region’s agricultural output, especially value-added production using local staple products and raw materials.
 - Downtowns and village centers in the Northeast Kingdom should be maintained and revitalized.
 - Make quality, affordable child care available to workers with children in the Northeast Kingdom.
 - Expand tourism in the Northeast Kingdom, and make eco-based businesses a part of the region’s landscape.
 - Increase research and startup funds to aid value-added processing and to diversify the economy, especially for the region’s farmers.
 - Strengthen manufacturing, particularly in the forest products and industrial machinery sectors.
 - Promote small business sectors, e.g. telecommuting, specialty foods, value-added businesses, arts and crafts and e-commerce.
- **Maidstone’s** 2007 and 2016 Town Plan desires to “Promote *small scale, decentralized economic development*, including *home-based businesses*, that does not detract from Maidstone’s rural character.” The 1993 Town Plan says the same, except for: “, including home-based businesses.”

⁶⁹ Town of Guildhall, Municipal Development Plan, 2013, [page 6](#).

⁷⁰ Town of Guildhall Proposed Municipal Plan, 2024, Future Land Use, [page 5](#).

⁷¹ Town of Granby, Town Plan, 2016, Planning Priorities, [page 8](#).

⁷² Town of Granby, Town Plan, 2016, Planning Priorities, [page 8](#).

⁷³ NVDA, *Regional Plan for the Northeast Kingdom 2018* (<https://www.nvda.net/nvda-regional-plan/2018FullPlan.pdf>), [Images 32-34](#) of 302, Volume I, Regional Goals & Strategies, V. Goals and Strategies, pp. 26-28.

- **Brunswick**,⁷⁴ objective 7 states: *Because of the proximity of commercial areas in Bloomfield, Vt., and North Stratford, Colebrook, and Groveton N.H., it is not anticipated there will be a need for a commercial area* within Brunswick. However, commercial uses should not be prohibited, but allowed as conditional uses requiring the approval of the Zoning Board of Adjustment. *This does not preclude the active sale of natural products grown locally or the sale of craft products made by the residents in town.*
- **UTG** (Ferdinand) lists as a priority:⁷⁵ The unspoiled mountainous and forested landscape is an important draw to tourists and therefore a key component of the UTG’s *tourist-based economy*. *The protection of these scenic areas from the impacts of large-scale development is a priority*
- **Guildhall**, 2013 Objective 3,⁷⁶ To promote *clean industry* that will increase the tax base and provide job opportunities; 2024 Proposed Plan, Local Economy. Goal:⁷⁷ Maintain the working landscape and provide the labor force with new economic opportunities.

Conclusion: Maidstone’s objective to promote small scale, decentralized economic development appears to be consistent with the surrounding communities of Brunswick and Ferdinand. It does not appear that it would adversely affect Guildhall, and probably would not adversely affect Granby, which does not list economic development in its priorities.

7. Provide high quality public services (i.e. roads, solid waste disposal [1993: “, schools”]) while recognizing the limitations of the property tax system.

- **(SPG) 24 V.S.A. § 4302 (c) In addition, this chapter shall be used to further the following specific goals:**
 - (3) To broaden access to educational and vocational training opportunities sufficient to ensure the full realization of the abilities of all Vermonters.
 - (4) To provide for safe, convenient, economic, and energy efficient transportation systems that respect the integrity of the natural environment, including public transit options and paths for pedestrians and bicyclers.
 - (A) Highways, air, rail, and other means of transportation should be mutually supportive, balanced, and integrated.
 - (12) To plan for, finance, and provide an efficient system of public facilities and services to meet future needs.
 - Public facilities and services should include fire and police protection, emergency medical services, schools, water supply, and sewage and solid waste disposal.
 - The rate of growth should not exceed the ability of the community and the area to provide facilities and services.
- **NVDA Regional Plan – Utilities and Facilities: Educational Facilities Goals:**⁷⁸
 - School districts will seek to maximize educational opportunities for students, including extracurricular offerings, and increase economic efficiency by sharing services with neighboring school districts when feasible.

⁷⁴ Brunswick, VT: 2019 Municipal Plan, “Statement of Objectives,” [pages 2-3](#).

⁷⁵ The Unified Towns & Gores of Essex County, VT, Municipal Plan, “List of Priorities,” [page 4](#).

⁷⁶ Town of Guildhall, Municipal Development Plan, 2013, [page 6](#).

⁷⁷ Town of Guildhall Proposed Municipal Plan, 2024, Local Economy, [page 31](#).

⁷⁸ NVDA, *Regional Plan for the Northeast Kingdom 2018* (<https://www.nvda.net/nvda-regional-plan/2018FullPlan.pdf>), [Images 22-23](#) of 302, Volume I, Regional Goals & Strategies, V. Goals and Strategies, pp. 16-17.

- To provide the most favorable outcomes for students, school districts should be economically integrated.
- Adult literacy resources will continue to be available to residents of the Northeast Kingdom to increase the percentage of residents that have earned a high school diploma.
- Post-secondary institutions in the region are vital to the economic development potential of the region and will be supported.
- Post-secondary schools will be closely integrated with the local communities they serve, including the business community, and should have a mutually beneficial relationship.
- Affordable educational and training opportunities should exist for all persons within the region.
- **Maidstone's** 2007 and 2016 Town Plan desires to: Provide high quality *public services* (i.e. *roads*, solid waste disposal [1993 Town Plan includes: “, schools”]) *while recognizing the limitations of the property tax system*. [See also Objectives 8 and 12.]
- **Brunswick**,⁷⁹ Objective 8: Brunswick will strive to minimize property taxes within its control by *avoiding developments which will require town services and/or town roads*. [See also Objective 8.]
- **UTG**,⁸⁰ The number of *roads should be kept to a minimum* and consideration of environmental quality given priority.
- **Guildhall**, 2013 Objective 4,⁸¹ To consider all residents' needs and to provide *services, facilities and amenities the town can reasonably afford*; 2024 Proposed Plan, Community Facilities and Services.⁸² Goal: Plan for, finance, and provide an efficient system of public facilities and services to meet current and future community needs.
- **Granby** lists as a priority:⁸³ Provide acceptable levels of *community services at an affordable cost* to the community

Conclusion: Maidstone's objective to provide high quality public services does not appear to affect surrounding communities.

2007 and 2016 Maidstone Town Plans: Statement of Planning Goals (not in the 1993 Maidstone Town Plan)

8. *Protect private property values in the Town of Maidstone.*

- **24 V.S.A. § 4302 (a) General purposes.** ... to enable the mitigation of the burden of property taxes on agricultural, forest, and other open lands ...
- **Maidstone's** 2007 and 2016 Town Plan, Objective 8: *Protect private property values* in the Town of Maidstone. Also, **Maidstone's** 2007 and 2016 Town Plan desires to “Provide high quality public services (i.e. *roads*, solid waste disposal [1993 Town Plan includes: “, schools”]) *while recognizing the limitations of the property tax system*. [See also Objectives 7 and 12.]

⁷⁹ Brunswick, VT: 2019 Municipal Plan, “Statement of Objectives,” [pages 2-3](#).

⁸⁰ The Unified Towns & Gores of Essex County, VT, Municipal Plan, “List of Priorities,” [page 4](#).

⁸¹ Town of Guildhall, Municipal Development Plan, 2013, [page 6](#).

⁸² Town of Guildhall Proposed Municipal Plan, 2024, Community Facilities and Services, [page 17](#).

⁸³ Town of Granby, Town Plan, 2016, Planning Priorities, [page 8](#).

- **Brunswick,**⁸⁴ Objective 8: Brunswick will strive to *minimize property taxes* within its control by *avoiding developments which will require town services and/or town roads*. Also, objective 9: Given the large concentration of publicly owned land in Brunswick, as well as *concerns over rising property taxes*, more large tracts of government owned lands are not encouraged.
- **Guildhall,**⁸⁵ Objective 6: To *provide a fair taxation system and protect the town's tax base*.
- **Granby,**⁸⁶ Maintain an *affordable community cost of living*

Conclusion: Maidstone's objective to protect private property values does not appear to affect surrounding communities.

9. *Protect the Town's water resources*

See planning goal 3, above.

10. *Protect the rights of landowners*

- (SPG) 24 V.S.A. § [4302](#) (a) **General purposes.** ... municipalities shall take care to **protect the constitutional right of the people to acquire, possess, and protect property.**

Conclusion: Maidstone's objective to protect the rights of landowners appears to be compatible with State goals and appears not to conflict with goals of surrounding communities.

11. *Protect the forests lands and agricultural lands within the Town*

- See planning goal 2, above.

12. *Provide for the proper maintenance of all roads in Town*

- (SPG) 24 V.S.A. § [4302](#) (c) **In addition, this chapter shall be used to further the following specific goals:**
 - (4) To provide for safe, convenient, economic, and energy efficient **transportation** systems that respect the integrity of the natural environment, including public transit options and paths for pedestrians and bicyclers.
 - (A) **Highways**, air, rail, and other means of transportation should be mutually supportive, balanced, and integrated.
- **Maidstone's** 2007 and 2016 Town Plan, Objective 12: Provide for the *proper maintenance of all roads in Town*.
- **UTG,**⁸⁷ The number of *roads should be kept to a minimum* and consideration of environmental quality given priority.
- **Granby,**⁸⁸ *Limit town roads to the current number of extent*

⁸⁴ Brunswick, VT: 2019 Municipal Plan, "Statement of Objectives," [pages 2-3](#).

⁸⁵ Town of Guildhall, Municipal Development Plan, 2013, [page 6](#).

⁸⁶ Town of Granby, Town Plan, 2016, Planning Priorities, [page 8](#).

⁸⁷ The Unified Towns & Gores of Essex County, VT, Municipal Plan, "List of Priorities," [page 4](#).

⁸⁸ Town of Granby, Town Plan, 2016, Planning Priorities, [page 8](#).

Conclusion: Maidstone’s objective to provide for the proper maintenance of all roads in Town appears to be compatible with State goals and should not adversely affect surrounding communities.

Miscellaneous Goals from other Towns

Flood Lands

- **(SPG) 24 V.S.A. § [4302](#) (c) In addition, this chapter shall be used to further the following specific goals:**
 - (4) To encourage flood resilient communities.
 - (A) New development in identified flood hazard, fluvial erosion, and river corridor protection areas should be avoided. If new development is to be built in such areas, it should not exacerbate flooding and fluvial erosion.
 - (B) The protection and restoration of floodplains and upland forested areas that attenuate and moderate flooding and fluvial erosion should be encouraged.
 - (C) Flood emergency preparedness and response planning should be encouraged
- **Brunswick,**⁸⁹ objective 4: *Flood lands* are to be delineated and restricted from any residential or other development which would impose a financial or legal responsibility on Brunswick in the event of the next flood rampage. Structures on the flood plain shall be limited to recreational or agricultural purposes, other than housing for people or livestock.

Environmental

- **(SPG) 24 V.S.A. § [4302](#) (c) In addition, this chapter shall be used to further the following specific goals:**
 - (10) To provide for the wise and efficient use of Vermont’s natural resources and to facilitate the appropriate extraction of earth resources and the proper restoration and preservation of the aesthetic qualities of the area.
- **UTG,**⁹⁰ Minimizing the amount of *soil erosion* caused by logging or new development is a priority.

Cellular and Broadband

- **UTG,**⁹¹ Bringing *cellular and broadband service* to the UTG towns is a priority.

⁸⁹ Brunswick, VT: 2019 Municipal Plan, “Statement of Objectives,” [pages 2-3](#).

⁹⁰ The Unified Towns & Gores of Essex County, VT, Municipal Plan, “List of Priorities,” [page 4](#).

⁹¹ The Unified Towns & Gores of Essex County, VT, Municipal Plan, “List of Priorities,” [page 4](#).

