

RYEGATE TOWN PLAN

ADOPTED SEPTEMBER 10, 2001

RYEGATE TOWN PLAN
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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this plan is to guide citizens of Ryegate in making decisions with foresight and flexibility. The plan looks back at our past history, presents information about our present, and attempts to predict our future needs. By doing this, we hope to identify some long-range goals which will provide us with reason and structure to balance the community's needs, uses, and interests in the land.

The Town Plan provides the legal underpinning for our bylaws, the zoning ordinance, site plan review process, and on-site septic system ordinance. It gives us the information to make decisions about what the content of these bylaws will be, and guides us in interpreting, administering, and enforcing them.

The plan is organized by subject. Each section begins with a goal statement followed with a brief description of the current situation and recognized problems or needs. The descriptive material and inventories to provide more detailed information are contained in the appendices. Appendix 1 is a Community Profile which describes the town's population growth, employment, income, and other information which is important for considering the choices and opportunities discussed in the main body of the plan.

Each section has a list of recommended actions to be undertaken by the Planning Commission, Selectboard, other local officials, and town residents over the next 5 years. The Implementation Plan, compiles these recommendations into a list. We hope to begin prioritizing the actions on the list as we move through the process of formally adopting the Plan. We will then complete the Implementation Plan by establishing the estimated time and dates, costs, and groups or individuals responsible for carrying out the recommended actions.

The maps which accompany the plan are meant to be used, revised, and updated by Ryegate residents and property owners. These maps, like the new town property maps, are based upon the 1979 orthophotos provided to the Town by the Vermont Mapping Program. The information on the maps is computerized so that we can easily make changes, corrections, and updates.

This plan is the result of a process which involved a number of people over the course of several years. A mail survey of all voters and property owners was completed in the winter of 1991. Results are in Appendix E. Following the survey, neighborhood meetings were held in East Ryegate, South Ryegate, and Ryegate Corner. Numerous individuals and groups have provided comments on sections of the plan. During the adoption process, the residents of Ryegate and adjoining towns will be invited to two public meetings to give their comments. Following the second public meeting, the Selectmen will vote to adopt the plan.

The Ryegate Planning Commission hopes to cooperate with adjoining towns in order to preserve the overall beauty and quality of life of the area. We will attempt to mesh our plans and zoning regulations so that our decisions do not negatively impact our neighbors. We will work with our adjacent communities to resolve conflicts and consider issues which might have impacts beyond the boundaries of a single town.

HISTORY & HISTORIC FEATURES

GOAL: TO MAINTAIN THE TOWN'S HISTORIC CONNECTIONS BY ENCOURAGING THE PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS, LANDMARKS, AND RECORDS.

Benning Wentworth, governor of the Province of New Hampshire, chartered 23,040 acres in the southeast corner of Caledonia County to Richard Jeness and 93 associates on September 8, 1763. This was the town's first speculative real estate transaction. None of the 94 grantees ever saw the land before it was conveyed for one thousand pounds to John Church of Charlestown, NH in 1767. Church later sold the tract to Reverend John Witherspoon, President of Princeton College.

In 1773, James Whitelaw and David Allen, agents of the Scotch-American Company, purchased the town from Dr. Witherspoon. Whitelaw's survey of the area remains the basis of local property boundaries. In his report to the Scottish investors, he marvelled at the fertility of the soil, the abundance of fish in the streams, and the availability of water power for sawmills.

According to the New Hampshire Historical Society, the town was named Ryegate in honor of Baron Reigate, a leading British naval figure and Royal Governor of Jamaica.

Ryegate's first Town Meeting was held in May of 1776, the first child was born in 1774, and the first marriage took place in January of 1777. (A progression of events not unlike what goes on today.) The first buildings were along the Bayley-Hazen Road at Ryegate Corner, the only public highway connecting the Wells River Valley with Barnet, Peacham, and Danville. A mail route was soon established along this route, and the first Ryegate Postmaster was General James Whitelaw.

The first school was at the site of what is now Blue Mountain Grange Hall. The town was later divided into ten school districts. In 1914 and 1915, a two year high school was operated in South Ryegate. The District Schools were gradually phased out until only South Ryegate, Ryegate Corner and East Ryegate had grade schools, with high school students attending schools of their choice in surrounding towns. In 1970 the Blue Mountain Union School was built for students K-12 from the towns of Ryegate, Groton, and the Village of Wells River.

Ryegate may be the only town in Vermont which has only Presbyterian churches since its charter. The first church, built in 1779, stood in Ryegate Corner at the site of the current Town House. This Church was used by both Associated and Reformed (Covenanter) Presbyterians. Through the years, dissident groups broke away and constructed churches in Ryegate Corner, South Ryegate and East Ryegate. The East Ryegate church is now owned by the Historical Society.

Railroads were an important factor in the growth and development of Ryegate. The Connecticut and Passumpsic River Railroad began its route to St. Johnsbury in 1850, and the first train of the Montpelier and Wells River Line traversed the Valley in 1873. Farm products, lumber, grain and thousands of bricks were shipped out of East Ryegate. Pulp was shipped into the paper mill beginning in 1906, and millions of pounds of paper shipped out.

In South Ryegate, the railroad allowed development of the granite industry. Quarries on Blue Mountain and White's Hill supplied finishing sheds in the village. The quarries gradually gave way to a superior grade of granite coming from the Barre area, and closed down completely in the 1930s. The Blue Mountain Quarry reopened briefly from 1986 to 1991 and then, in May of 1993, it was purchased by McCullough Crushing from the Small Business Administration.

Agriculture has played an important role in the history of Ryegate. The early farms were largely subsistence operations, but sold their surplus butter, lumber, and beef to purchase goods which could not be made on the farm. They also produced large families of sturdy citizens who have made their mark on the town and on many other towns in this country. Agriculture continues to play an important role in the economy and landscape of the town. Farms are now fewer, larger, and more mechanized.

Construction on the Ryegate Wood Energy Plant on RTE 5 in East Ryegate began in 1991. The plant, completed in November of 1992, provides about 75 jobs and a market for some of the low grade timber which is so plentiful in the area.

Reminders of Ryegate's history are the old blacksmith shop in Ryegate Corner which survived the 1941 fire, Whitehill House in North Ryegate, Long Meadow Inn an old stagecoach stop on what is now RTE 5 in East Ryegate, and the Bailey Hazen Military Road now Town Highway 7. One of the most significant historic resources is the town records. Some were lost in a fire, but the remainder are kept in a vault and are gradually being microfilmed for safe keeping.

Recommendations:

- Consider annual town appropriation to set aside funds for preservation of historic sites.
- Continue updates of the History of Ryegate.
- Continue to microfilm town records and keep copies in separate locations.

PRODUCTIVE RESOURCES

GOAL: TO CONTINUE THE TRADITIONAL USES OF LARGE TRACTS OF RYEGATE'S LAND FOR PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITIES - FARMING, FORESTRY, AND QUARRYING.

Farming, forestry, and quarrying have played a significant role in forming Ryegate's landscape, and in bringing together the people who now live in the community. Activities which depend upon land and natural resources continue to be a mainstay of the local and regional economy. Over 6,000 acres, or almost 30%, of the land in town is enrolled in the current use tax program which provides benefits for 39 landowners actively managing their land for farming or forestry.

However, changes in demographics and land use will increasingly challenge and conflict with resource-based industries. New landowners, retirees, and vacation home owners may object to the sounds and smells of agriculture and quarrying. The general public has little knowledge of forest management, and may be offended by the use of skidders and the cutting of trees. As the value of land for residential uses rises, landowners find it difficult to pay the taxes by farming or holding large tracts of land for their long-term productive potential. The Town will need to become more actively supportive if farming, forestry, and quarrying are to be part of Ryegate's future.

FORESTRY

According to a consulting forester who works for many Ryegate landowners, less than 50% of the forest land which is being logged is under active management. At this time, good forest management for the region requires cutting large volumes of low grade wood. This is necessary to offset past high grading - the practice of cutting the highest quality timber and leaving behind only poor quality trees. This will clear the way for a new stand of high quality timber. Logging on land which is not under active forest management may be taking a higher percentage of sawlogs, continuing the practice of highgrading.

Forestry products are sold to a variety of markets in the region. Pulp wood from the area is sold to mills in Maine, New York and New Hampshire. Of all low grade timber products, pulp wood commands the highest prices. The Ryegate Wood Energy Plant offers an alternative market. Spruce and fir logs are transported to New Hampshire, Canada, and to Burke Lumber. Johnson Lumber in Bradford is the main purchaser of local hardwood logs.

Forestry is a substantial contributor to the town and regional economy. A directory of loggers and truckers compiled by the State Dept. of Forests, Parks, and Recreation lists 9 logging operators in Ryegate, Groton, McIndoe Falls, and Passumpsic. Four local log truckers are listed. The directory lists 8 sawmills in Caledonia County, and 18 secondary processors of timber products. CPM in East Ryegate employs approximately 100 workers.

Recommendations:

- Raise money to purchase a town forest to provide local outdoor recreation opportunities, firewood for town buildings and local residents, and a demonstration area for forest management practices.
- Confine commercial, industrial, and residential development into centralized districts rather than allowing it to occur all along roads.
- Provide new landowners with information about Current Use, Coverts, and Forest Stewardship programs when they register their deeds with the Town Clerk.

AGRICULTURE

Ryegate is fortunate to have a relatively young and active farming community. There are fourteen dairy farms in town and 2 large sheep farms. The Ryegate Grange is an active center for social and educational activities which serves local farm families.

Most local dairy farms are family operations which have passed from father to son fairly recently. The youngest farmer in the community is in his mid-30s, and the average age is around 45. A few wives work part-time off the farm, but Ryegate's farm families direct most of their energy and time toward their home operations.

Land leased from both farming and non-farming landowners is an important component of Ryegate's land use. These leases enable smaller farmers to maintain open land they are not using and generate capital. Nonfarmers can reap tax benefits and participate in the agricultural base of the community by leasing or renting their property.

Farmers in Ryegate can still get most of their supplies from vendors who make regular visits to their farms. However, the nearest equipment dealer is now in North Haverill, NH. which is 20 miles away.

Several of the local farmers have taken advantage of a state program to help them find, train, and pay workers.

Milk from Ryegate farms goes to Agrimark in West Springfield, MA. Local farmers have discussed a regional processing facility, but so far the time, energy, and know-how is lacking.

Recommendations:

- Ensure that farmers are represented on the Planning Commission & Selectboard and that their point of view is well-represented in decisions.
- Allow and encourage clustering of residential development so that landowners can sell some land and still maintain open land for agriculture.
- Reexamine zoning districts to find areas appropriate for decreased lot sizes so that residential development can be concentrated away from farming areas.
- Think of farms as small businesses and extend the same consideration and services to farmers as we do to other commercial/industrial entrepreneurs.
- Support Current Use Programs which provide property tax relief for land in farming and forestry uses.

GRANITE

The granite industry has been a part of Ryegate's economy and landscape since the turn of the century. Several quarrying operations have come and gone since then, but the Blue Mountain Quarry (formerly Gibson Quarry) is the only one still extracting granite. Other known granite sites are the Beaton Quarry also on Blue Mountain, and a site in South Ryegate where stone was quarried and crushed during the construction of RTE 302.

The granite found in the Ryegate area is described as "building stone". It is acceptable for most commercial uses such as curbing, bridges, and foundations. It is also used to make bases for statues and for lower-priced monuments. Ryegate granite has a coarser grain with less contrast than the more well-known Barre Grey. The two remaining local monument makers use mostly Barre granite, especially since prices for the Barre stone have fallen.

Markets for the local product are both national and international. These markets depend upon a competitive price and a sustained volume of output. Local industry spokespersons agree that the demand exists for Ryegate's granite if and when it can be quarried cost efficiently. A geologist employed by Blue Mountain Quarry has estimated that it contains over 100 years' reserve capacity of granite.

Recommendations:

- Protect access to granite supply so that it can be quarried in the future as this becomes more economically feasible. Do not allow surrounding land uses which will conflict with future extraction activities.

GRAVEL

Gravel for the town's roads is purchased from Newbury at a cost of \$19,000 in 1993. Ryegate's road commissioner estimates that there is a 5-10 year supply available from the current source. Some crushed granite for road surfacing has been purchased from Waterford in the past. The granite available locally is currently too expensive for road use.

Recommendations:

- Survey the town to identify gravel deposits which could supply future needs. This could be done by someone with a knowledge of geology. Follow up with actions to secure the site and ensure access and compatibility with surrounding land uses.
- Begin planning for the Town's long-term gravel needs.
- Consider the local availability of gravel when reviewing applications for subdivision. Make sure that the least amount of roadway possible is built.
- Make sand and gravel extraction Conditional Uses in the zoning ordinance and require reclamation of operations wishing to start up or expand.

BUSINESS & INDUSTRY

GOAL: TO IDENTIFY AND SUPPORT THE TYPE OF GROWTH WHICH WILL COMPLEMENT EXISTING FIRMS AND ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN RYEGATE.

There are a number of existing small businesses and home industries in Ryegate, including some successful farming operations. The recent townwide survey revealed considerable public support for these enterprises.

Two granite sheds, a pottery business, and the Claremont Paper Mill supply the majority of jobs in the community. The Bonneville woodchip generation plant, completed in 1992 will supply 25 more jobs. There are also regional facilities with potential to supply employment in neighboring towns, for instance the Newbury Industrial Park.

Opportunities exist to promote the use of industrial spaces provided by regional facilities. There is also potential for expansion of existing firms. Spin-off businesses and industries, which would provide services and goods or further process materials produced by existing local firms, might be actively pursued or given support for location in the town.

The Town of Ryegate is fortunate to have good highway and rail access. Innovations in communications technology are also in use to enable residents to work out of their homes.

Sixty nine percent of Ryegate residents commute to work, according to 1990 Census figures. There is concern that any new jobs created will not necessarily go to residents who live here already. Regional declines in the manufacturing, farming, and construction industries also raise concern over what lies ahead for Ryegate's landscape, lifestyle, and economic future.

Recommendations:

- Define business and industry in Ryegate's terms. Identify the type of growth which will complement existing firms and enhance the quality of life in Ryegate. Incorporate standards which will support the desired type and scale of development into the zoning ordinance.
- Form regional development committee with adjoining towns to plan and share benefits and costs of industrial and commercial growth.
- Make sure local communication and transportation infrastructure is up to date and maintained.
- Target the use of income from the town's previous Community Development Grant toward helping existing firms expand or diversify, or creating spin-offs from existing firms.
- Inventory farmland and work with farmers to develop an agricultural zone in town which compensates them for keeping their land open by allowing clustered housing in some areas.

HOUSING

GOAL: TO MAINTAIN THE CURRENT PATTERN OF SETTLEMENT AND OPEN LAND, AND THE EXISTING MIXTURE OF RESIDENTS OF VARIOUS AGE AND INCOME LEVELS IN THE TOWN.

Achieving this goal will require that local decision-makers consciously balance the need for housing options in a variety of price ranges and styles with the desire to conserve land for forestry and agriculture.

A complete analysis of Ryegate's population and housing statistics and projections is contained in Appendix A. The main findings of the analysis are summarized here.

The aging of the population in general, and Ryegate's propensity to attract retirees will create demands for housing options appropriate to the special needs of the elderly. At the other end of the spectrum, households entering the housing market for the first time will have an increasingly difficult time buying a starter home in Ryegate. This may speed the trend toward an older, more affluent population whose needs and preferences will increasingly dominate local decisions. School budgets may be hard to pass, and employers may not choose to locate in a town where their employees can't find housing or be assured of a good educational system.

Per capita income is not keeping pace with housing prices in Ryegate. Between 1988 and 1989, the median residential sale price of a house and 6 acres or less rose 94% while per capita income increased by only 23%.

While the median income household in Ryegate may be able to afford the monthly mortgage payments on a median-priced home, they might have a hard time coming up with the \$17,000 in up-front costs to qualify for a conventional mortgage.

A study of housing conditions completed in 1981 found 75% of the units sampled were substandard but suitable for rehabilitation. 85% of the town's rental units, and 67% of its owner-occupied units were built before 1940.

Recommendations:

- Use soils and slope maps, maps of existing land use to determine site suitability for housing - septic system capacity, productive value for agriculture & forestry, proximity to roads & utilities - incorporate findings into zoning bylaw.
- Use soils, slopes, and land use maps to locate sites appropriate for residential development at higher density than is currently permitted. Consider smaller lot sizes in areas where there is already a concentration of housing.
- Reevaluate cluster (PRD) provision of zoning bylaw to make sure it serves the purposes for which it is intended; consider providing incentives for cluster development proposals in selected areas of town.
- Consider including provision for mobile home park(s) in zoning bylaw. Without this, any proposal to develop a mobile home park will be exempted from local zoning and receive review at the state level.
- Survey town residents over 65 years of age to find out what their housing needs are, and if these are being met. Or conduct an overall housing survey to identify problems, needs, and preferences of the entire town.
- Check into giving local tax break to elderly by deferring a portion of property taxes until death or sale of property.
- Make sure residents and property owners are aware of federal and state programs for weatherization, rehabilitation, and home financing by making information available through the town clerk, planning commission, and zoning administrator.

ENERGY

GOAL: THE TOWN OF RYEGATE WILL PROMOTE A REDUCTION IN LOCAL DEPENDENCE UPON COSTLY NON-RENEWABLE ENERGY RESOURCES BY ENCOURAGING CONSERVATION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL, RENEWABLE ENERGY RESOURCES. THIS WILL BE ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH POLICIES WHICH INFLUENCE MUNICIPAL FACILITIES AND SERVICES, TRANSPORTATION, LAND USE, AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF RENEWABLE ENERGY RESOURCES.

Growing consciousness about the long-term costs - economic, environmental, and social - of our energy choices has made energy an important consideration in local decisions about municipal services and facilities, land use, and building standards. As can be seen in Table 1 below, energy is a major line item in Ryegate's town budget.

**TABLE 1:
ENERGY EXPENDITURES 1985-1990**

	1985	1990	% Change
Roads			
Fuel for heat	\$1,245.53	\$80.19	-94%
Gasoline	\$11,027.44	\$10,567.00	-4%
Diesel Fuel	\$1,775.70	\$3,720.21	+110%
Oil	\$998.10	\$465.69	-53%
Electricity	NA	\$306.52	NA
Total	<u>\$15,046.77</u>	<u>\$15,139.61</u>	<u>+.6%</u>
Town Clerk's Office			
Electricity	\$257.70	\$207.41	-20%
Fuel for Heat	\$823.50	\$862.65	+5%
Repairs/Insulation	\$36.85	\$276.62	+7%
Total	<u>\$1,118.05</u>	<u>\$1,346.68</u>	<u>+20%</u>
Fire Department			
Gasoline	\$129.06	\$800.40	+520%
Fuel for Heat	\$1,662.06	\$1,045.58	-37%
Electricity	\$297.91	\$130.75	-56%
Total	<u>\$2,089.03</u>	<u>\$1,976.73</u>	<u>-5%</u>
Grand Totals	<u>\$18,253.85</u>	<u>\$18,463.02</u>	<u>+1%</u>

SOURCE: Town Reports

Between 1985 and 1990, the town's overall energy expenditures increased only marginally. This is due to both price fluctuation and changes in energy use. The amount of gasoline used in road maintenance increased by 12%, while the price of gas declined by 15%. Diesel fuel use increased by 83% with the purchase of a new truck, and its price increased by 31%. The cost of fuel for heating the town garage decreased by 94% when wood was substituted for oil.

ENERGY & MUNICIPAL FACILITIES & SERVICES

To ease the budget demands of energy expenditures, the Town should reduce its dependence on oil by implementing cost-effective weatherization and renewable energy measures in town buildings, purchasing energy-efficient vehicles, and supporting educational programs which provide information about energy use and conservation.

Recommendations:

- Consider total lifetime costs of vehicle and equipment operation (gas mileage, energy efficiency, useful life expectancy, operating costs) when making purchasing decisions.
- Conduct energy audits of all town buildings, especially Town Clerk's Office, to determine how much energy is used. Identify areas of energy waste and areas of potential savings, and identify areas for potential renewable energy modifications.
- Budget funds for weatherization of town buildings, carpeting for Town Offices.
- Support programs in schools for energy education; vocational programs to include energy efficiency for building trades, auto mechanics, consumer education, and driver education.

ENERGY & TRANSPORTATION

Transportation currently accounts for 46% of total energy demand in Vermont, and is predicted to account for 1/3 of the increase in energy demand by 2010. Road maintenance constitutes the largest share of the Town's energy costs, and personal transportation requirements constitute the largest share of a family's energy costs. The Town can reduce its own expenses, encourage more efficient travel, and protect its rural quality of life by more energy efficient transportation policies.

Recommendation:

- Maximize energy efficiency in laying out school bus routes.

ENERGY & LAND USE

Land use policies can save energy that would otherwise be lost through inefficient site designs and settlement patterns. Appropriate siting of new buildings and the inclusion of south-facing windows can routinely save 10-50% on a building's heat usage. The most cost effective time to incorporate energy efficiency is during construction or renovation.

Recommendations:

- Use zoning bylaw to encourage concentration of residential, commercial, industrial development in certain areas; discourage sprawl.
- Use site plan review to encourage maximum use of landscaping for screening from heat and wind, exposure to sun (applies to buildings other than one and two family dwellings and subdivision layout).
- Consider adopting provisions for clustered mixed use development (PUD- planned unit development; PRD - planned residential development) in zoning ordinance. This would encourage developers to submit plans for innovative site design and layout.
- Use site plan review to limit the amount of roadway constructed in subdivision design.
- Zoning administrator and/or town clerk distributes copies of energy resource list (below) and list of energy efficient appliances (from Dept. of Public Service) to every applicant for building permit.

RENEWABLE ENERGY RESOURCES

The money Vermonters spend on fossil fuels is money which leaves the state and local economies. Only 20% of the dollars spent on non-renewable fuels stays in the state, while 80% of that spent on wood remains in Vermont. Replacement of fossil fuel systems with wood energy will yield significantly less pollution, and keep energy dollars within our local economy. Through development of renewable energy resources, residents can decrease the proportion of their income spent on energy and increase local economic opportunities.

Recommendations:

- Make sure zoning ordinance allows building modification for solar or wind collection.
- Protect landowners' access to renewable energy resources (solar, wind, water power) through site plan review.

WATER QUALITY

GOAL: TO CONTROL SOURCES OF CONTAMINATION AND MAINTAIN OR IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF THE WATERS IN THE TOWN TO A LEVEL WHICH APPROACHES THE QUALITY OF 200 YEARS AGO.

Ryegate's water resources, described in Appendix D, include the Connecticut and Wells Rivers and their tributaries; Coburn, Upper Symes, Lower Symes, and Ticklenaked Ponds; wellhead protection areas for community water supplies in East and South Ryegate; and a number of wetlands. These resources are pictured on maps on file in the Town Clerk's Office.

Water quality issues include any activities which potentially impact either ground water or surface waters. These issues are discussed in Appendix D. Threats to water quality identified by the planning commission are onsite septic systems, stormwater runoff, siltation of streams, nitrates, town salt shed, placement of sewer/water systems, agricultural runoff, logging practices, and illegal dumping.

Private ponds which use streams as a water source or for discharge also pose threats to water quality. Increased sedimentation of streams may occur during construction, or as a result of erosion on the shore of the pond. As the slower moving surface water of the pond is exposed to sunlight then returns to the stream, water is warmer with less dissolved oxygen. This negatively affects fish, and accelerates the growth of nuisance plants and algae. Non-native fish species may be introduced to the watershed via private ponds, and the migration of native fish species may be blocked.

Recommendations:

- Add erosion control standards to zoning ordinance. Limit the area of a lot which can be cleared or graded; require that construction be carried out in phases to limit the amount of earth exposed at any one time; require reseeding and replanting of graded areas within a limited amount of time; require silt fencing and haybale dikes during construction.
- Limit density of development on steep slopes (>15%) and/or shallow soils to prevent erosion and lower the density of onsite septic systems.
- Consider extending setbacks from streams and wetlands to 75 feet. (This is the standard established for logging operations). Require that this buffer strip be maintained in natural vegetation to control runoff and erosion.
- Require stormwater management plans for parking areas and roads over a specified length or slope.
- Arrange for better enforcement of existing municipal sewer ordinance, or amend the zoning bylaw to give Planning Commission jurisdiction over on-site septic system location, design, and installation. Contact Vermont Association of Conservation Districts (229-4982) for advice on this.
- Require language about septic system maintenance to be included in subdivision covenants.
- Adopt local road standards for erosion and runoff control during road construction, repair, and maintenance. Use "Vermont Backroad Erosion Control Handbook".
- Build containment shed for Town sand pile and improve the salt shed. Put line item in Town budget to begin saving for this.
- Protect wetlands under local zoning. Prohibit placement of buildings, roads, and utilities on wetlands and require protective buffers of at least 50 feet. Notify state Division of Water Quality of projects which affect wetlands - they will make a field visit to evaluate the wetland and delineate a buffer zone.
- Create a map of local wetlands at a scale compatible with property maps and other planning maps by using infra red photos already available for the Town.
- Create an overlay zone to regulate land uses in your Wellhead Protection Areas (WHPAs). Work with East and South Ryegate to develop source protection plans for their water supplies. (These plans are required for permit renewal).
- Create an overlay zone for shorelines of lakes and ponds to add special standards for vegetated buffer strips, setbacks, and septic system location. Attend NVDA workshops on Shoreline Zoning.

FACILITIES & SERVICES

GOAL: TO EFFICIENTLY PROVIDE ADEQUATE, SAFE, AND AFFORDABLE PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES WHICH SERVE THE NEEDS OF ALL TOWN RESIDENTS.

TRANSPORTATION

ROADS

Ryegate has just over 73 miles of roads within its borders (see Table 2). The Selectmen are responsible for the town roads. They plan on paving approximately 2 miles of road surface each year. It is up to the Selectmen to decide if taking over a private road is in the best interest of the Town. In order to have them consider taking over a road, the property owner must bring the road up to Class III standards including a 3 rod right of way.

The Town maintains a fund for machinery needed for road maintenance through a yearly budget appropriation of \$20,000. Recently, the Town of Ryegate purchased a new grader and a new loader. Current highway equipment owned by the town is shown in Table 3.

**TABLE 2:
ROAD MILEAGE**

	Miles

Town Roads	56
State Highways	11
Interstate Hgwy. 91	6

SOURCE: VT Dept. of Transportation, 1986.

**TABLE 3:
HIGHWAY EQUIPMENT**

1990 International Truck	\$25,000
1987 Chevrolet Truck	\$12,000
1983 Chevrolet Truck	\$3,000
1993 John Deere Grader	\$116,750
1994 John Deere Loader	\$76,000
Miscellaneous Equipment	\$7,500

SOURCE: Town Report, 1990

A new town garage was constructed in 1990 with funds appropriated over 5 years at \$20,000 per year, and a \$48,000 bond.

BRIDGES

According to VT Agency of Transportation records, Ryegate has 4 bridges of 20 feet and over. Two of these are structurally deficient and need to be replaced:

.20 miles from Jct. TH 50 & US 302 crossing Wells River
The other 2 are functionally deficient, meaning that they are not adequate for the adjoining road and/or traffic conditions.

.20 miles from Jct. TH 5 & US 302 crossing Wells River

.05 miles from Jct. TH 2 & US 302 crossing Wells River

The Town has established a fund to save for future improvements to its bridges. Yearly appropriation \$10,000.

RAIL

The Canadian Pacific Railroad owns and operates 90.3 miles of line between Wells River and Newport which traverses through East Ryegate. The line serves shippers whose principal commodities are plywood, grain, furniture, grocery products, coal, and paper products.

The CP connects with the Lamoille Valley Railroad and the Twin State Railroad Company at St. Johnsbury, the Central Vermont Railroad at Richford, and the B&M at Wells River. As of 1986, the line was reported in good condition for FRA Track Class 3 operations allowing 40MPH freight traffic.

Negotiations are currently underway for the sale of this section of the Canadian Pacific Railroad to a short-line operator.

AIR

There is an airport for small planes in Lyndonville, and international service out of Burlington, VT and Manchester, NH.

BUS

Vermont Transit Lines provides regional bus service. A shuttle picks up bus passengers at the P&H Truck Stop in Newbury and takes them to Lyndonville or White River Junction to make further connections.

NORTHEAST KINGDOM REGIONAL TRANSIT

Northeast Kingdom Community Action (NECKA) sponsors a transportation service for persons who are likely to need transportation assistance due to their being elderly, low-income, or handicapped. (A 1988 study estimated that 34 percent of Caledonia County's population fits this description.). Ryegate residents are served through an outpost in Groton.

Recommendations:

- Establish a written road policy to clarify how private roads will be considered for take-over by the Town. This may help to limit the amount of land devoted to road construction in more remote parts of town where there is less likelihood of take-over.
- Adopt an access permit system so that all curb cuts will require a permit. This will enable you to control the number and location of access points onto town roads in order to minimize erosion and runoff which impacts adjacent town roads and culverts, and to ensure safe access.
- Continue long-range planning and budgeting for road maintenance and machinery expenditures.
- Check into state funding available for town road and bridge projects.
- Promote greater use of van and car pooling by providing parking areas near the Interstate.
- Promote greater use of walking and bicycling around town by providing lanes and/or paths.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

FIRE

Ryegate has a volunteer fire department with 25 volunteers and 2 stations, one in Ryegate Corner and one in South Ryegate. In addition, there is a stationary pump housed at the CPM paper mill in East Ryegate. The Ryegate Corner Station was built in 1981; A fund has been started to replace the South Ryegate station within the next few years. This facility may need to be moved, since the town does not own the current site. The town will also need to purchase a new pumper within the next few years. Equipment is normally purchased used. The fire department has a mutual aid agreement with surrounding towns. Fire fighters are dispatched by calling Twin State Fire Mutual Aid in North Haverhill for further assistance.

RESCUE

Ryegate and Groton have a Fast Squad of approximately 12 volunteers with training as Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT) and

Emergency Care Attendants (ECA). A truck, stationed at the Groton Fire Station, is equipped to carry tools and supplies, but does not transport patients. The Fast Squad stabilizes patients and provides emergency First Aid preceding the arrival of Woodsville Ambulance. The Town pays a yearly appropriation to Woodsville Ambulance, and users of the service are billed. The Fast Squad is currently dispatched by Twin State Mutual Aid in North Haverhill, NH.

POLICE

The Town of Ryegate is dependent upon the Vermont State Police for police protection and services.

Recommendations:

- Prepare a 5-year capital budget for equipment and construction.
- Consider adapting Fast Squad truck to transport patients.

SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL

Approximately 1,000 tons of solid waste is generated in Ryegate every year, according to a study conducted by the Northeast Kingdom Solid Waste District. Until 1990 the town paid a per capita landfill access fee to Newberry Waste Management, Inc. in Boltonville. Since then, residents must pay their own fee, and can choose where to take their trash. Most still go to Newbury, but others find disposal costs in New Hampshire cheaper. There are three private haulers serving residences in the town. The landfill in Boltonville closed in the Fall of 1993.

PUBLIC WATER SYSTEMS

SOUTH RYEGATE

The South Ryegate Water Cooperative owns a drilled rock well with a capacity of 150 gallons/minute. This water source supplies 11 residences with 35 people. Is there reserve capacity?. There is adequate water pressure except for one home which has low pressure due to elevation. Water is tested monthly for bacteria. The well is located in a residential area where there are gardens and private septic systems which could introduce contaminants.

EAST RYEGATE

The East Ryegate Fire District No. 2 owns a 174 foot deep gravel well located on the eastern side of the Village between Russell and Wallace Streets. A six inch water main carries 150 gallons per minute to a 200,000 gallon reservoir situated about 1,000 feet west of RTE 5 approximately 100 feet above the Village. This water supply serves about 50 households and the CPM mill. Hydrants connected to the system provide limited fire protection. Samples tested by the Vermont Dept. of Health in 1990 showed no evidence of volatile organic compounds, and acceptable levels of radiological contaminants and inorganic chemicals. Water pressure is adequate throughout the system. There are homes within 50-100 feet of the water source which could cause contamination through the use of fertilizers or pesticides.

Recommendations:

- Add overlay zone to zoning bylaw for wellhead protection areas.
- Develop source protection plans for both community water supplies which identify all potential sources of contamination and suggest strategies for minimizing the risks coming from these sources.
- Enlist cooperation of land and home owners within wellhead protection areas to help minimize risks of contamination from existing land uses.
- Determine capacity of existing wells and plan for future supply-replacement in case of contamination, and additional supply to accommodate population growth.

COMMUNITY WASTE WATER DISPOSAL SYSTEMS

SOUTH RYEGATE

South Ryegate has a community leach field serving 13 homes. The system was designed to handle 6,000 gallons per day from 20 residences, but may be nearing capacity due to soil limitations. The town has cooperated with state engineers to improve the

performance of this system. The system must be pumped out with a high pressure spray at least twice a year to prevent clogging of the leach field and surfacing of sewage.

EAST RYEGATE

The East Ryegate community leach field has a projected capacity of 17,000 gallons per day. Currently, there are approximately 40 households using the system. However, this system has failed and the East Ryegate Fire District is currently seeking funds for a new system. The system is not required to be tested since it discharges indirectly through a gravel wick into the leachfield.

Recommendations:

Note: These recommendations apply **ONLY** to the municipal waste water disposal systems located in East Ryegate and South Ryegate. These recommendations do **NOT** apply to privately owned waste water disposal systems.

- Ensure maintenance of the leachfields, pump stations, and septic tanks.
- Alternate leach fields on regular basis.
- Clean septic tanks regularly (once or twice/year).
- Use chemical treatment of disposal fields to break up vegetation mats.
- Keep disposal fields mowed so roots don't clog the soil needed for filtering waste.
- Use capital budgetting to plan and finance expansion or replacement of these systems.
- Make provision for the proper disposal of sludge.

EDUCATION PLAN

GOAL: TO PRODUCE YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT ONLY EDUCATED IN THE TRADITIONAL SENSE, BUT WHO ARE READY TO MEET THE CHALLENGES THAT TODAY'S EVER-CHANGING WORLD WILL PROVIDE FOR THEM. TO KEEP THE PROGRAMS IN PLACE THAT WE WANT TO CONTINUE SUPPORTING AND MAKE MINOR ADJUSTMENTS DUE TO CHANGES IN STUDENT NUMBERS AS NEEDS DICTATE. (Goals taken from the 1994 annual report of the school district)

The citizens of Ryegate have been school conscious since the early days of the settlers. The Town has progressed from home classrooms to the ten district schools, and finally, to the Blue Mountain Union School. It would be easy for the Planning Commission to assume that the Town has reached the ultimate in educational facilities. However, thinking persons know that this isn't true, education is never finished and as long as education is needed, there will always be needs to be met in the way of facilities.

The Blue Mountain Union School was built in 1970 to serve the Village of Wells River and the Towns of Ryegate and Groton. The building is situated on a parcel of land that is located a short distance west of the Village of Wells River, north of Route 302 and east of Interstate 91. It is a flat roofed structure that has a maximum design capacity of 600 students and a staff of teachers, custodians, guidance counselors, and administrators that numbers less than 100. The facility includes a number of special purpose rooms that include an art room, a cafeteria, a combined auditorium & gymnasium, a computer lab, a home economics room, an industrial arts room, a library, a music room, a science lab, and a typing room. Outside of the building on the surrounding grounds there is a typical playground and athletic fields for soccer, softball, and baseball.

CURRENT ENROLLMENT

The current enrollment at Blue Mountain Union School is 534 or 89% of the buildings design capacity. While the enrollment of the school has not yet exceeded design capacity, some overcrowding is already being felt. This is especially true for the middle school grades of 6, 7, and 8. Table 4 above and Figure 1 below present the current enrollment in both a tabular and graphic format.

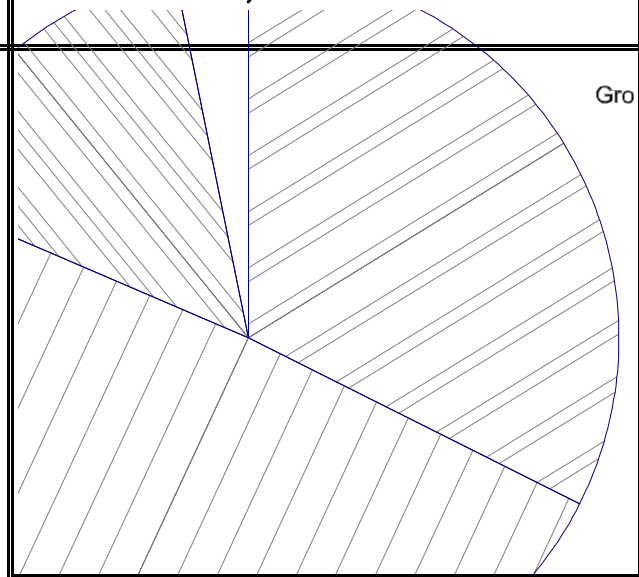
PRESENT USE OF THE SCHOOL

The remaining text of the education plan is based upon the Principal's Report and the Guidance Report that appeared in the annual report for the 1993-1994 school year. BMU has adopted the Whole Language approach to the teaching of reading. As a remedy for the fact that children were trying to learn to read by a system which required no consistency from year to year in the approach, BMU's entire elementary staff was sent to a week long Whole Language Workshop last summer. This has been complimented by the assistance of a consultant who is assisting our staff in coordinating the various aspects of the program and in developing an assessment tool. This approach should result in more and better readers within the next few years.

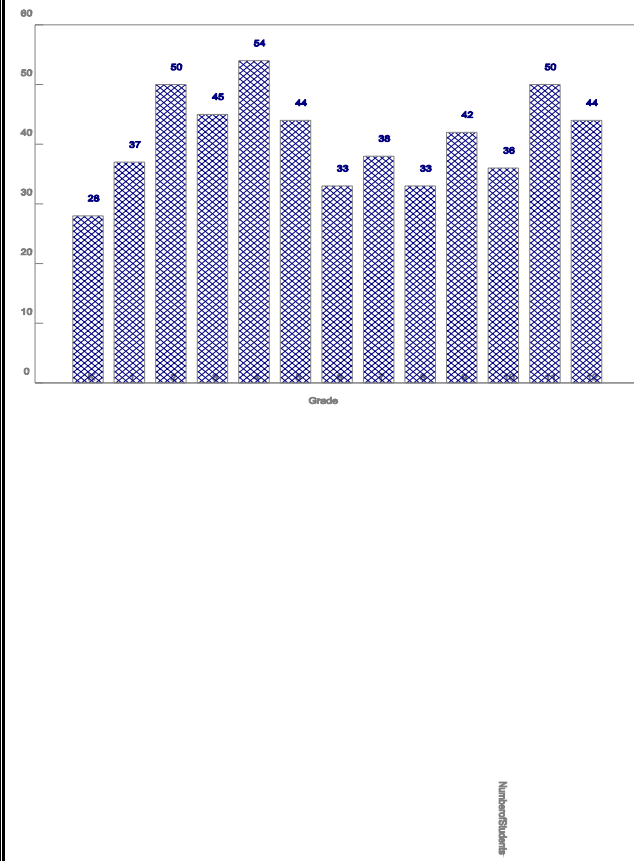
TABLE 4:
CURRENT ENROLLMENT BY GRADE AND TOWN, 1994

Grade	----- Towns -----				Total
	Groton	Ryegate	Wells River	Others	
K	11	11	6	0	28
1	15	17	5	0	37
2	18	22	10	0	50
3	22	16	6	1	45
4	21	24	8	1	54
5	12	23	9	0	44
6	12	13	8	0	33
7	10	25	2	1	38
8	6	21	6	0	33
9	16	19	5	2	42
10	10	21	2	3	36
11	13	24	8	5	50
12	7	26	7	4	44
K-5	113	173	22	9	317
6-12	74	149	38	15	276
K-12	177	322	60	24	534

Figure 1:
CURRENT ENROLLMENT BY TOWN, 1994



**Figure 2:
CURRENT ENROLLMENT BY GRADE, 1994**



Grade six students are now required to become computer literate. This is a change from past practice and will give BMU students a head start on their mastery of this most important skill, a skill which cuts across subject matter lines.

For grades 6, 7, and 8 BMU has adopted the Middle School approach. The middle school staff has successfully, completely and extensively, implemented the first year of the middle school program. Despite the confines of space, and the lack of an adequate number of teaching staff to support the program, the Middle School program has been so successful that other schools, who are contemplating such a move, have requested to visit BMU as a model for their future plans. BMU can be justly proud that, despite the growing pains, the students are receiving a top quality education in the middle school: an education which will prepare them for the world when they are ready to enter the post-school era. The Middle School students have received instruction on career education, post secondary options and self-esteem from the Vermont Assistance Corporation Outreach Counselor.

The interactive TV program has come a long way in the first few months; BMU is the first high school in Vermont to use interactive TV to this extent and can be justly proud of the increased course offerings for the students as well as the students adaptability to the system. The students are finding the interactive TV courses interesting and challenging. This years offerings include: spanish, japanese, and anatomy/physiology. New courses that are being added include global studies, sociology/psychology, modern European history, Vermont history and test taking skills. These new course offerings allow students to enrich their educational breath of knowledge.

The Curriculum Committees have spent many hours revising their philosophies to correspond with the School Board's Philosophy, which in turn, reflects the fact that BMU must prepare its students for the Twenty First Century, and that this will require some revisions of traditional methods of teaching. The Testing Committee continues to grapple with the appropriateness, reliability, and validity of various testing methods; it is felt that the efforts of the Whole Language staff will be of great value to us as we come to terms with the most appropriate methods of testing our students.

Recommendations:

- Find ways to resolve the overcrowding for the middle school grades.
- Make every effort to continue and improve upon the educational programs that have been established during the 1993-94 school year (the programs discussed above).
- Maintain a quality education that will prepare BMU's students for the future.

RECREATION

Mills Memorial Field in South Ryegate is the principal public recreation facility in town. The field is used for Little League, Babe Ruth, and adult softball leagues. There is a public playground adjacent to the ball field.

The town owns a beach at the north end of Ticklenaked Pond which is used for Red Cross certified swimming lessons every summer. The program serves approximately 100 children of all ages.

The town has a beach committee responsible for spring clean-up and fund raising for the public beach at Ticklenaked Pond. The committee has built fireplaces, bath houses, and picnic tables in past years only to have them destroyed by vandalism.

Recommendations:

- Hire State Trooper to patrol public beach at Ticklenaked Pond.
- Purchase or lease land for another ball field.
- Cooperate with surrounding towns to supply more recreation opportunities.
- Involve schools, local youth groups in clean-up and construction of facilities at Ticklenaked Pond.
- Consider purchase of town forest to provide recreation, an outdoor classroom, and a source of wood. The wood could be sold to provide municipal revenue, used in heating town buildings, or harvested by town residents for home heating.

- Bring together local trail users - horseback riders, bicyclers, hikers, snowmobilers, ATVers, birdwatchers, etc. - to map existing trails and plan for extension, connection, and maintenance. Program could include purchase of easements or other compensation from landowners. There is currently grant money available for local trail systems.
- Emphasize trails and paths for non-mechanized recreation.

TOWN ADMINISTRATION

Ryegate town records are kept at the Town Office in Ryegate Corner. The building also houses the Post Office and a small library. The Town Clerk and Town Treasurer both work approximately half-time. The Town House, also in Ryegate Corner, is used for town meetings. It is an old building with wood heat, located on a hill with very little area for parking.

Recommendations:

- Prepare a 5-year capital budget and program for anticipated maintenance, improvements, and additions to town properties, buildings, and equipment. This would enable the town to plan ahead for large expenditures, stabilize the tax rate, and take advantage of opportunities for outside funding and good deals on equipment and materials. Since 1992, Vermont state law has required those towns that wish to bond for large projects to adopt capital budgets and programs prior to requiring any developer to post a bond.

RYEGATE TOWN PLAN

Facilities & Services

LIBRARIES

SOUTH RYEGATE

The South Ryegate Library is located on Church Street. It is open on Thursdays from 2 to 5 p.m., and receives approximately 20 visitors a week. Many of the patrons are children. Summer children's programs are provided through the State Library Association and Blue Mountain School. The South Ryegate Library receives 80% of its funding through the South Ryegate Women's Club. The remaining 20% comes from the Town of Ryegate.

EAST RYEGATE

The East Ryegate Library is located in the home of Jane Johnson and is open only by appointment. This facility is adequate for its present level of use but is not accessible to handicapped individuals.

RYEGATE CORNER

The Ryegate Corner Library is located in the same building as the Post Office and is open days 9 to 10 a.m. and 4 to 5:15 p.m. This facility receives its funding from the Town. This library is adequate for the amount of use it receives and is accessible to handicapped individuals.

CEMETERIES

The Selectmen and Cemetery Commission share responsibility for the town's cemeteries. Maintenance is performed by a paid staff financed through user fees and trust funds. The Commission estimates that 25-30 lots are sold annually. Most of the remaining lots are in Pinehurst and Ryegate Corner. Seven lots are reserved for the indigent. According to the Cemetery Commission, present facilities, staffing, and equipment are adequate to serve the town's population for at least the next 5 years.

**TABLE 5:
CEMETERIES**

Cemetery	Location	Acres
Pinehurst	South Ryegate	4
Hillside	South Ryegate	2
Ryegate Corner		6
North Ryegate		1
Total		13

HEALTH SERVICES & FACILITIES

HOSPITALS

Patients requiring hospitalization are transported to the Cottage Hospital in Woodsville, NH. In 1990, there were 44 inpatient admissions from Ryegate, and 1,110 outpatient visits. This represents 7% of the hospital's services. The Town appropriates \$500 per year to the Cottage Hospital.

MEDICAL FACILITIES

There are no private doctors offices or clinics in Ryegate.

NORTHEASTERN VERMONT AREA AGENCY ON AGING

This Agency assists persons 60 and older through a combination of federal, state, and local funding. The Agency provided advocacy services, senior companion visits and transportation services to 11 senior citizens in Ryegate during 1990.

CALEDONIA HOME HEALTH CARE

Home Health Care provides in-home nursing, therapy, and clinics on preventative medicine, prenatal care, and industrial health. During fiscal year 1990 a total of 657 visits were made to Ryegate residents, most for nursing and therapy.

NORTHEAST KINGDOM MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE, INC.

This private, non-profit agency provides treatment and counseling, diagnosis, evaluation & testing, day treatment, residential care, consultation to schools and care providers, a foster home program, employee assistance, stress management, and vocational and client support groups. Nineteen Ryegate residents received services during 1990.

PRIVATE UTILITIES

ELECTRICITY

The town is served primarily by Green Mountain Power. Vermont Electric Cooperative, Washington Electric Cooperative, and Central Vermont Public Service also have lines in Ryegate.

GAS

Gas service is provided by National Propane (formerly Adirondack Bottle Gas), Petrolane, Perry's Oil Service and Pratt's Propane.

OIL

Bradford Oil, Jock Oil and Perry's Oil provide home heating oil.

TELEPHONE

Ryegate's telephone service is provided by Northland and NYNEX.

CABLE

The Villages of East Ryegate and South Ryegate are now served by cable TV. It is unlikely that the rest of the Town will be served by cable TV.

PUBLIC LANDS & BUILDINGS

TOWN OF RYEGATE

Mills Memorial Field & concession stand, South Ryegate
Town house, Ryegate Corner
Town Clerk's Office, Ryegate Corner
Town Garage, Ryegate Corner
Storage Shed, Ryegate Corner
Firestation, Ryegate Corner
Firestation, South Ryegate
Beach at Ticklenaked Pond

STATE OF VERMONT

Fishing access at Ticklenaked Pond	0.75 Acres
Fishing access at Lower Symes Pond	0.40 Acres
Roy Mountain Wildlife Management area	331.00 Acres
Pine Mountain Wildlife Management area	68.00 Acres

NATURAL AREAS

GOAL: TO ENSURE THAT THE REGION'S ABUNDANT FISH & WILDLIFE RESOURCES ARE PROVIDED WITH ADEQUATE HABITAT, AND THAT RARE AND ENDANGERED SPECIES OF PLANTS AND ANIMALS, UNIQUE NATURAL AREAS, AND SCENIC RESOURCES ARE PROTECTED WITHOUT UNDULY RESTRICTING PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS.

Ryegate is blessed with a significant amount of critical wildlife habitat. There are extensive deer wintering areas spread throughout the town. These are areas with softwood cover, southerly or westerly exposure, moderate elevation, and minimal human disturbance. Their function is to provide shelter from deep snow, cold temperatures, and wind chill in order for the deer to conserve energy during the harsh winter months.

The town has one of the highest deer populations in Caledonia County. Recent public hearings on the District H2 Deer Management Plan indicate that local residents want to maintain the deer population at current or higher levels. All of the wintering areas, as shown on maps on file in the Town Clerk's Office, may not be in current use by deer.

Forested areas in the northern tier of the Town have been identified by the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife as productive habitat for bear. This means that there is a high concentration of females of reproductive age. Bear require large contiguous areas of forest land with relatively little disturbance.

There are ways to allow some development and still maintain the integrity of deer yards and bear habitat. However, as more remote areas of the town are developed, humans and their domestic animals will increasingly come into contact with wildlife. This may result in conflict or the confinement of wildlife into small and fragmented areas which will not be adequate in the long term.

Wetlands provide habitat and breeding area for many species of fish and wildlife. In addition, they act as filters for contaminants and sediments which would otherwise reach lakes and streams. Protection of wetlands is covered in the water quality section of this plan.

The Wells River and its tributaries, Clark Hatch Brook, Darius James Brook, and Tannery Brook contain natural populations of Brook Trout. The Upper Connecticut has natural populations of Brown Brook, and Rainbow Trout; Northern Pike, Large- and

Small-Mouth Bass; and Walleye. (Source: Vermont Rivers Study 1986). In addition to their value as a recreational resource, fisheries provide food for other wildlife. Actions which protect fish habitat will also contribute toward overall water quality, recreational access, and scenic beauty. Activities which will affect the quality of fish habitat include excessive encroachment onto shoreline areas, instream construction, stream crossing, and pond construction.

The Nongame and Natural Heritage Program of the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife has identified and mapped significant natural features in the town. There are rock outcrops along the Connecticut River which may be home to some rare plants. Lower Symes Pond provides habitat for wildlife and some rare aquatic vegetation. The ridgeline above the pond has two stands of red pine which are considered rare. Most of these features are on land which has many other limitations to development such as steep slopes and shallow or saturated soils.

Recommendations:

- Develop a proposed land use plan based upon a comparison of the critical habitat areas (mostly deer yards) in town with current land use, roads, and physical characteristics of the land. Determine which of the town's many deer wintering areas are most appropriate for buffering from surrounding land uses.
- Contact local hunters and trappers to find out which of the identified deer yards still have good potential for use.
- Make maps and information about natural areas and wildlife habitat easily available to the public so that they are aware up front of potential complications in the development of their property.
- Invite the cooperation and participation of local individuals who are knowledgeable about the town's wildlife and natural areas -sportspeople, anglers, outdoors enthusiasts. Often just a word from these folks to their neighboring landowners will be enough to protect important/sensitive areas.
- Create an overlay zone for critical wildlife habitat and natural areas and make any development within this zone a Conditional Use.
- Require that domestic pets be controlled in residential developments which are near deer yards or bear habitat. This can be done through covenants as a condition for a conditional use permit.
- Promote the maintenance of large tracts of forest land by providing incentives for clustering development, especially in the 10 acre agricultural zone.
- Maintain connecting links between forested areas by identifying wildlife travel corridors and making sure that the adjoining land uses are buffered from those corridors.
- Maintain streamside and lakeside vegetation by requiring buffer strips with natural vegetation along streams, rivers, and shorelines (see water quality section of this plan).
- Protect wetlands from development by requiring an undisturbed buffer strip, and prevent runoff and direct discharges into wetlands (see water quality section of this plan).
- Discourage construction of private ponds unless fed by ground water or overland drainage. Require approval of a state fisheries biologist for construction of any pond on a permanent or seasonal stream or which requires use of a stream for supply or discharge of water.
- Minimize impacts of stream crossings during development by requiring strict erosion control measures, and that instream work be done between June 1 and October 1 of the same year. Require that the installation of culverts be approved by fisheries biologist to ensure that fish passage and habitat are maintained.

TAXES

GOAL: TO ACHIEVE AN EQUITABLE AND EFFICIENT SYSTEM OF TAXATION WHICH PROVIDES ADEQUATE FUNDING FOR TOWN SERVICES AND FACILITIES WITHOUT OVERBURDENING PROPERTY OWNERS.

TOWN REVENUE & EXPENDITURE TRENDS

Table 6 shows changes in revenue and expenditures over the last decade. While tax rates are still a major concern to residents according to the public survey conducted in early 1991, the proportion of town revenues raised by taxes has actually diminished from 79% in 1980 to 70% in 1990. Most of this difference has been made up by "Other" sources of revenue which have increased from 6% to 22%. These sources include fees for licenses and permits and interest collected on dedicated funds and community development loan repayments. Federal assistance to towns has declined steadily, but even with its own loss of federal revenues, the state has maintained a steady level of funding to Ryegate.

Education costs have declined as a proportion of town expenses from 61% in 1980 to 42% in 1990. The proportion of town monies expended on roads has also declined. These figures reflect some large capital expenditures in the "Other" category: a new town garage, road resurfacing, and townwide reappraisal.

GRAND LIST TRENDS

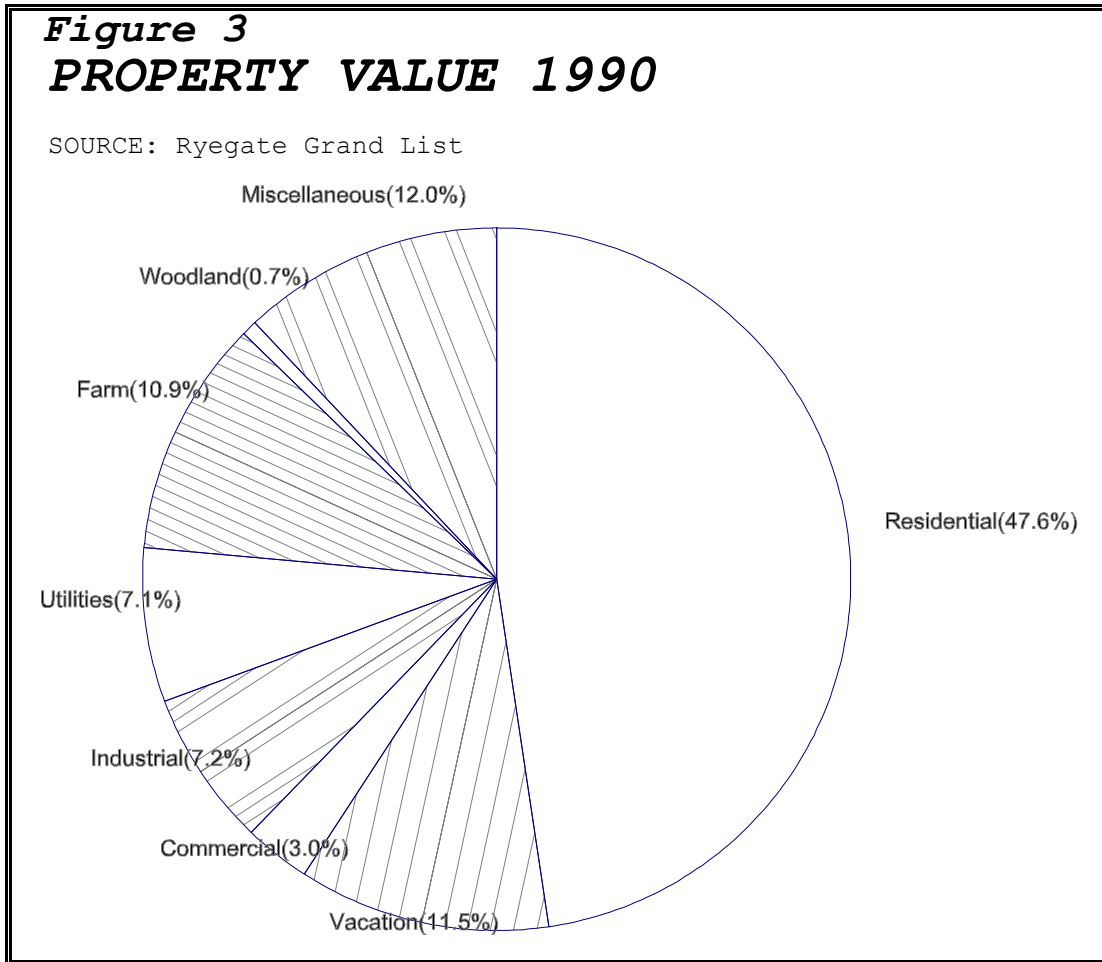
The number of properties on Ryegate's Grand list increased by 9 percent between 1982 and 1990, from 624 to 683. The proportion of properties in each land use category has remained substantially the same with a small decrease in vacation units from 17% to 14%.

**TABLE 6:
REVENUES & EXPENDITURES,
1980-1990**

	1980	% of Total	1985	% of Total	1990	% of Total
REVENUES						
Taxes	\$477,162.68	79%	\$588,461.23	71%	\$839,634.99	70%
State	\$48,779.98	8%	\$67,784.66	8%	\$91,801.40	8%
Federal	\$43,350.88	7%	\$20,935.96	3%		
Other	\$34,691.24	6%	\$153,939.97	19%	\$270,182.82	22%
Total	\$603,984.78	100%	\$831,121.82	100%	\$1,201,619.21	100%
EXPENDITURES						
Schools	\$375,381.00	61%	\$432,885.00	56%	\$536,671.00	42%
Roads	\$134,511.37	22%	\$134,156.12	17%	\$184,027.52	14%
Other	\$101,787.96	17%	\$212,502.74	27%	\$551,048.47	43%
Total	\$611,680.33	100%	\$779,543.86	100%	\$1,271,746.99	100%

SOURCE: Ryegate Town Reports

The value of the town's overall grand list increased by 49.5% between 1982 and 1990. Figure 3 shows the composition of Ryegate's grand list in 1990 by type of property.



TAX BURDEN

Property tax burden is relative. Table 7 shows Ryegate's rank among the 247 Vermont towns on several different measures. A lower rank indicates a lighter burden. In 1988, Ryegate's effective tax rate was among the highest in the state. However, the actual amount paid in taxes on a residence is below the statewide median. The high tax rate is due at least partly, to the need for reappraisal, which has now been remedied.

Ryegate ranks 95th among the state's 255 towns in the amount it spends on education per student. According to the 1990 Town Report, 60% of local property taxes go toward education, 31% go to roads, and 9% to general expenses. Statewide, towns spend about two-thirds of their property tax revenues on education. In 1993, 59% of local property taxes go toward education, 22% go to roads, and 19% to general expenses.

THE EFFECTS OF NEW DEVELOPMENT ON PROPERTY TAXES

The effect of a new development on the town's tax rate is dependent upon a variety of factors. However, since most of the property tax in most towns goes toward paying the local share of education costs, the biggest factor in determining how new development affects the tax rate is the amount of state aid to education which the town is receiving.

Research on property taxes and growth in Vermont shows some clear trends:

- Tax burdens tend to increase with population growth.
- Tax burdens increase with commercial and industrial growth.

Growth increases the demand for services - both educational and municipal. At the same time, towns which receive state aid for education find that any increase in their tax base from new development is quickly offset by adjustments in the state aid formula. Table 8 illustrates the potential effects of four different developments upon Ryegate's tax base.

Due to adjustments in state aid to compensate for changes in the town's tax base, Ryegate's tax rate would remain substantially the same under any of the four scenarios. Even though the formula and the state's ability to fulfill its commitments are subject to change, increases in the town's grand list will continue to trigger a decrease in state aid as long as that aid is based upon providing assistance to pupils in property-poor towns. Vacation homes which tend to raise the value of property in town, also may cause a loss of state aid.

**TABLE 7:
TAX BURDEN MEASURES
1988**

Measure	Rank*
Effective Tax Rate	232
Average R1 Tax	103
Total Residential Tax per Adjusted Gross Income	171
School Tax Per Student	95

*Among 47 Towns

SOURCE: Report of the Governor's
Commission on Property Taxation,
February 1989.

**TABLE 8:
SCHOOL TAX RATE UNDER FOUR
SCENARIOS**

Current Tax Rate*	Scenario			
	A	B	C	D
1.172	1.169	1.171	1.173	1.174

Scenario:

- A - \$1 million commercial development, 0 new students
 - B - \$1 million housing development, 10 new students
 - C - \$500,000 mobile home park, 10 new students
 - D - \$1 million land donation to town, \$1 million off tax rolls
- * Current Tax Rate is estimated effective tax rate for 1989

SOURCE: The Tax Base & The Tax Bill. Deb Brighton & Jim Northup for VT League of Cities & Towns, 1990.

This is not to say that the town should not encourage new development in order to provide employment opportunities, goods & services, or housing. But decisions regarding the type, scale, and timing of growth should be made based upon the type of development and its demand for services, the existing capacity of municipal and educational services, and local needs and priorities rather than upon expected tax benefits.

Recommendations:

- Develop a capital budget and program for large expenditures so that the costs can be spread out over time.
- Make sure that town services are adequate to support new residential, commercial, or industrial growth.
- Adopt policies which minimize the amount of new roadway constructed to service new development, encourage development close to existing town roads, and set standards and limits to the number, location, length, and quality of the roads which will be considered for take over by the town.
- Make sure covenants for subdivisions contain language which clearly spells out responsibility for private road maintenance.

LAND USE

CURRENT LAND USE

CURRENT ZONING DISTRICTS

The Town currently has 6 zoning districts which are described as follows:

Medium Density Residential. Suitable for single family dwellings on smaller lots than in rural areas. Public water and/or sewer are available, or can be reasonably expected to service this area in the future. (minimum lot size: 20,000-200,000 sq. ft. depending upon use and access to public sewer & water).

Low Density. Rural Residential area to permit single-family dwellings, prevent premature development of the land, retain areas for agriculture and non-intensive uses, prevent development where it would cause an undue burden upon the Town, and retain the open character intrinsic to the area. (minimum residential lot size: 5 acres).

Rural Land. Land characterized by poor access, poor soil, steep topographic conditions, and remoteness from existing concentrated settlement which would be expensive to serve with public utilities and services. Primary uses in this category include forestry, agriculture, and other non-intensive uses (minimum lot size: 10 acres).

Industrial. Continues established industrial areas. (minimum lot size: 20,000-120,000 sq.ft. depending upon access to water & sewer).

Commercial. Small commercial areas to serve primarily local requirements. (minimum lot size: 20,000-60,000 sq. ft. depending upon access to water & sewer).

Shorelands/Streambank. Areas rural in character with recreation as their primary use. Any development within 500 ft. of a major water body is subject to site plan review by the Planning Commission. All buildings, construction, and sewage disposal systems must be set back at least 50 ft. from the seasonal high water mark of all bodies of water in this district. Only seasonal dwellings and outdoor recreational facilities are permitted. (minimum lot size: 40,000 sq.ft.).

CURRENT LAND COVER AND LAND USE

The Land Use / Land Cover map shows the Town of Ryegate delineated by current land use or, if it is not developed, the type of land cover. Table 9 presents the categories of land use/cover and the total acreage that each of these categories represents.

Those areas designated as developed land include the Villages of East Ryegate, Ryegate Corner and South Ryegate. There are several small areas along Route 5 and at the northern tip of Tickenaked Pond that are also included in this designation. This designation also includes 502 acres of roads and railroads.

There are several areas in Ryegate that have been designated as industrial. These include the Blue Mountain Quarry, the wood chip plant and the paper mill in East Ryegate and granite sheds and the pottery business in South Ryegate.

Land that is currently supporting vegetation, natural or cultivated, makes up 22,174 acres or 94.5 percent of the Town's total area. The six categories included in this vegetated area are interstate landscaped area, agricultural, brush and transition, forest, forested wetland, and emergent wetland.

**TABLE 9:
Current Land Use/Cover**

Land Cover/Use	Area in Acres	Percent of total area
Developed land	793	3.0
Interstate landscaped area	224	1.0
Utility	235	1.0
Cemetery	12	
Industrial	133	0.6
Agricultural	3,660	15.6
Brush or transitional	2,550	10.8
Forest	15,285	65.2
Water	200	1.0
Forested wetland	147	0.6
Emergent wetland	399	1.7

LAND USE CAPABILITY

This section of the Ryegate Town Plan takes a look at the soils in Town and their suitability for development. This section includes a soils map for the Town of Ryegate which is meant to give a general picture of the basic land resources available to the inhabitants of the Town. It should be emphasized that these soil groupings are general in nature and while the group as a whole might not be adapted for a particular use, certain sections might be well adapted.

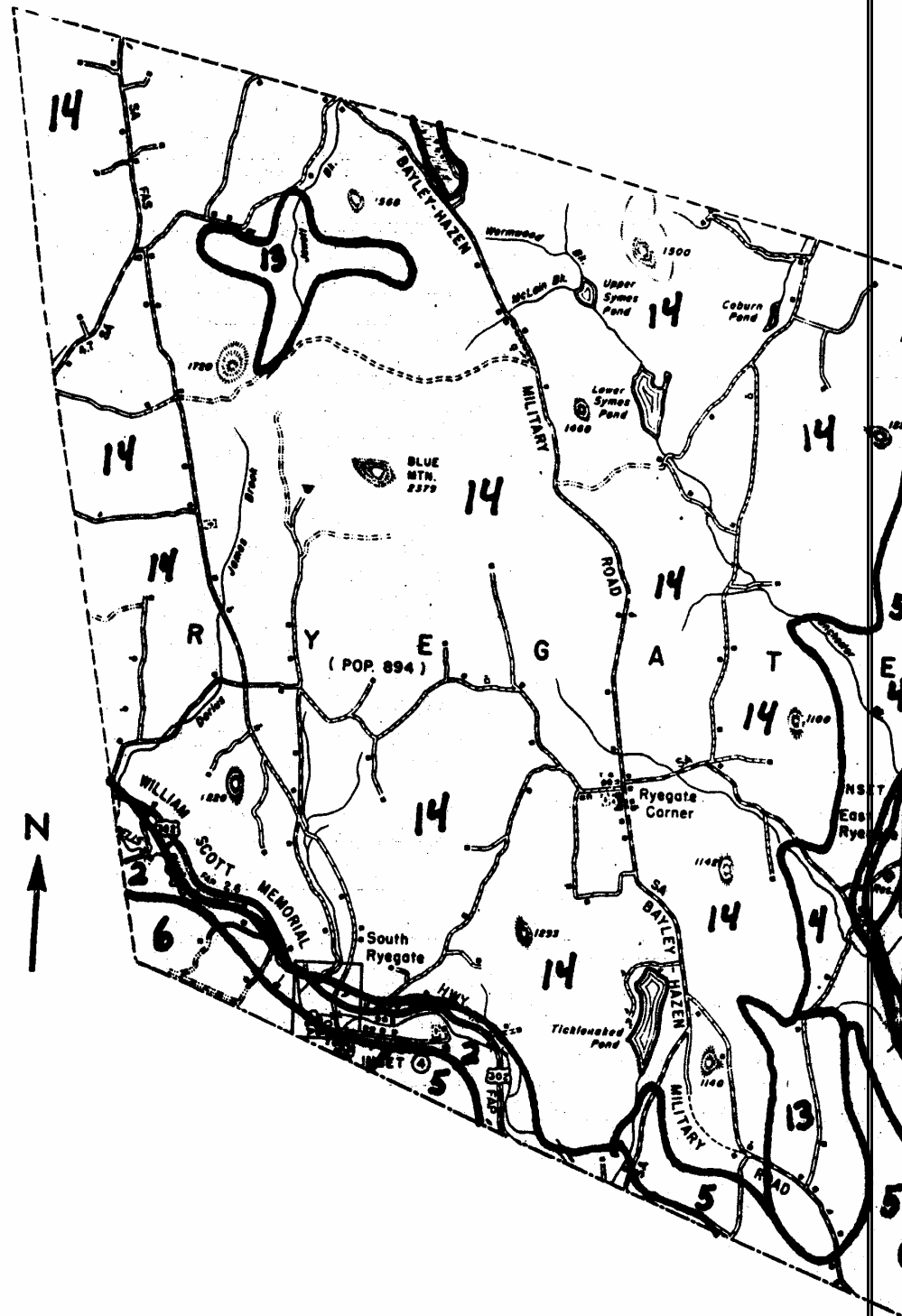
The wording for this section was taken from the 1971 Ryegate Town Plan. This wording has been updated to reflect the new names the Soil Conservation Service has given to the different soil types. In at least one case, the new soil type names have resulted in a greater generalization of soil types. The result, slightly more than 75% of Ryegate's land area now falls under one soil type.

**TABLE 10:
LEGEND FOR GENERAL SOIL MAP**

2. **ADAMS-COLTON-DUXBURY ASSOCIATION:** Deep, well drained and excessively drained nearly level to steep, sandy and gravelly soils on old lake beaches and terraces above flood plains.
4. **BUXTON-LAMOINE-NICHOLVILLE ASSOCIATION:** Deep, well drained and moderately well drained nearly level to steep soils on dissected terraces. Soils are very fine sandy loams and silts above flood plains.
5. **LYMAN-TUNBRIDGE-ABRAM ASSOCIATION:** Well drained and somewhat excessively drained, shallow to bedrock and deep, acid glacial till soils. They are gently sloping to steep stony and very stony loamy soils.
6. **COLONEL-DIXFIELD ASSOCIATION:** Deep, well and moderately well drained, gently sloping to steep, medium textured soils. They are stony and very stony, acid glacial till soils.
9. **MUCK AND PEAT-PEACHAM ASSOCIATION:** Deep, level, very poorly drained organic and mineral soils in depressions. (NOTE: This area was not numbered on the soils map. It is located between the Bayley-Hazen Military Road and the Ryegate/Barnet town line.)
13. **CABOT-BUCKLAND ASSOCIATION:** Deep, level to sloping, stony and very stony upland soils. They are moderately well drained and poorly drained, loamy glacial till soils.
14. **VERSHIRE-DUMMERSTON-GLOVER ASSOCIATION:** Deep and shallow to bedrock, somewhat excessively to poorly drained, glacial till soils. They are gently sloping to steep, stony to very stony, medium textured to loamy soils influenced by limestone.

RYEGATE⁴: TOWN PLAN Soil Map for Ryegate, VT

Land Use



IMPORTANT: Each area outlined on the above map consists of more than one kind of soil. This map is thus meant for general planning rather than a basis for decisions on the use of specific tracts.

The Adams-Colton Association comprises about 7.0% of the land area shown on the map by the figure 2. These are deep, well drained excessively drained nearly level to steep sandy and gravelly soils on old lake beaches and terraces above the flood plain. Agricultural use of these soils is limited but their use for homesites and recreational areas has fewer limitations. These areas are near the Connecticut River and the Wells River.

8.4% of the soils are placed in the Buxton-Lamoine-Nicholville Association. These areas are indicated on the map by the figure 4 and are located along route 5 and the Connecticut River. They are our better agricultural areas originating as silt deposits or dissected lake plains. Their limitations consist of some steep slopes and lack of permeability. These areas might best be retained as agricultural areas since they are well adapted for agricultura uses and not well adapted for septic tanks or sanitary landfills.

3.9% of the Town's area is made up by the Lyman-Tunbridge-Abram Association of soil types. This is an area in the southeastern corner of the Town marked by the figure 5 on the map. Use of these soils is serverly limited even for woodland use since they are steep and very stony.

A small 0.5% of the Town's area is occupied by the Colonel-Dixfield Association. This is located in the very southwestern corner of the Town. It is marked by a 6 on the map and is a deep, well and moderately well drained, gently sloping to steep, medium textured soil. They are stony and very stony, acid glacial till soils.

A small area between the Bayley-Hazen Road and the Ryegate/Barnet town line has been classified as a Muck and Peat Peacham Association. It contains about 0.4% of the land area and it is not numbered on the soils map. It is a deep, level, very poorly drained organic and mineral soil in depressions.

3.2% of the Town's soil is of the Cabot-Buckland Association. It is mostly in an area off the Bayley-Hazen road near Wells River and is marked by the figure 13. The use of these soils is serverly limited except for agricultural pursuits because they are wet.

The remaining 76.6% of Ryegate's land area has a soil type now known as the Vershire-Dummerston-Glover Association. This area is indicated on the soil map with the number 14. The characteristics of this soil association vary considerably. They include: topography that ranges from gently to steep slopes; shallow depth to bedrock; stony to very stony; and somewhat excessively drained to impermeable. Limitations for the use of these soils range from slight to severe. Development within this area needs to be closely monitored to avoid adverse impacts.

PROPOSED LAND USE

In 1991 the Ryegate Planning Commission conducted a survey of land owners to determine how they felt about the Town of Ryegate and how they wanted to see the Town change and grow. The results of this survey are presented in Appendix E of this Plan.

Conservation was an important issue. This included the conservation of agricultural and forest lands, water quality, energy, and the Town's rural atmosphere. Conservation easements were suggested as a means to protect agricultural and forestry land.

Landowner's who responded to the survey also saw a need for new industrial and commercial enterprises in Town. The types of enterprises landowner's would like to see would be environmentally friendly, make good neighbors for adjoining landowners, and would provide both jobs and tax revenues. Landowner's were concerned about Ryegate being an affordable place in which to live. More and better paying jobs combined with non-residential tax revenue were perceived as ways of preventing Ryegate from becoming a town to expensive in which to live.

When asked where and how development should occur, landowners indicated that commercial development should occur in South Ryegate and industrial development in East Ryegate. Respondants also indicated that new development should be encouraged only within or adjacent to areas that are already developed. Clustering of new commercial use was also suggested.

And, last but not least, respondants expressed concerns about adequate waste disposal and private property rights.

In summary, the landowner's in Ryegate want to see the Town to remain rural in character as well as to grow in a manner that will provide jobs and tax revenue. This may seem like a contradiction, however, if new growth is carefully planned and regulated this objective should not be impossible.

Recommendations:

- Revise zoning bylaw to insure that new development is occurring in areas that are 1) not environmentally sensitive and 2) already served by exiting utilities and municipal services.
- Take actions to conserve existing agricultural and forest lands using tools such as purchase or transfer of development rights.
- Revise the zoning bylaw to require buffer strips around ponds and lakes or along streams and rivers.
- Encourage new commercial and industrial enterprises to locate in Ryegate that will provide jobs and tax revenues.
- Revise or replace the existing sewage disposal ordinance, if necessary, to protect water quality.

ADJACENT COMMUNITIES

GOAL: TO MONITOR AND MAINTAIN OR IMPROVE THE RELATIONSHIPS WITH ADJACENT TOWNS AND THE SERVICES THAT RYEGATE SHARES WITH THEM.

It was once said that "no man is an island". The same is also true of towns. Ryegate and the surrounding towns depend upon services provided by or in adjacent towns as well as services that are provided by two or more towns jointly. This section of the Ryegate Town Plan takes a look at the services that are shared by Ryegate and the surrounding towns.

The services presented below extend beyond Ryegate's borders and are a concern for the adjacent communities as well. Ryegate and the surrounding towns rely on each other and maintaining a positive relationship is important. Keeping communication open between communities is critical to maintaining the lifestyle that is important to all the residents of the area.

EDUCATION

Children from the Towns of Ryegate and Groton and the Village of Wells River attend school at Blue Mountain Union school. Blue Mountain Union is located just off the north side of Route 302 in Wells River.

EMPLOYMENT

As Ryegate is a small town it does not offer a lot of employment opportunities. As such, residents must travel to not only the adjacent towns but to towns further away as well.

TRANSPORTATION

Northeast Kingdom Community Action maintains an office in Groton from which residents of the area who are elderly, handicapped, or low income can secure transportation.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Ryegate and Groton maintain a fast squad with 12 volunteers and a vehicle and rescue equipment and tools that is housed at the Groton Fire Department. This vehicle is not equipped to transport patients so the area depends upon the Woodsville Ambulance to transport patients. Ryegate also has mutual aid agreements with the fire departments in surrounding towns.

GRAVEL

Ryegate purchases gravel for the maintenance of town roads from sites in Newbury, Bradford, and Waterford.

RECYCLING

Currently, recycling is done within the Town of Ryegate by volunteers from Ryegate and Groton.

Recommendation:

- Continuously monitor these relationships and services to ensure that they continue to benefit Town of Ryegate and the surrounding towns as well.

IMPLEMENTATION

This section of the Ryegate Town Plan is a summary of all the goals and recommendations set forth elsewhere in the Plan.

HISTORY & HISTORIC FEATURES

GOAL: TO MAINTAIN THE TOWN'S HISTORIC CONNECTIONS BY ENCOURAGING THE PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS, LANDMARKS, AND RECORDS.

Recommendations:

- Consider annual town appropriation to set aside funds for preservation of historic sites.
- Continue updates of the History of Ryegate.
- Continue to microfilm town records and keep copies in separate locations.

PRODUCTIVE RESOURCES

GOAL: TO CONTINUE THE TRADITIONAL USES OF LARGE TRACTS OF RYEGATE'S LAND FOR PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITIES - FARMING, FORESTRY, AND QUARRYING.

FORESTRY

Recommendations:

- Raise money to purchase a town forest to provide local outdoor recreation opportunities, firewood for town buildings and local residents, and a demonstration area for forest management practices.
- Confine commercial, industrial, and residential development into centralized districts rather than allowing it to occur all along roads.
- Provide new landowners with information about Current Use, Coverts, and Forest Stewardship programs when they register their deeds with the Town Clerk.

AGRICULTURE

Recommendations:

- Ensure that farmers are represented on the Planning Commission & Selectboard and that their point of view is well-represented in decisions.
- Allow and encourage clustering of residential development so that landowners can sell some land and still maintain open land for agriculture.
- Reexamine zoning districts to find areas appropriate for decreased lot sizes so that residential development can be concentrated away from farming areas.
- Think of farms as small businesses and extend the same consideration and services to farmers as we do to other commercial/industrial entrepreneurs.
- Support Current Use Programs which provide property tax relief for land in farming and forestry uses.

GRANITE

Recommendations:

- Protect access to granite supply so that it can be quarried in the future as this becomes more economically feasible. Do not

allow surrounding land uses which will conflict with future extraction activities.

GRAVEL

Recommendations:

- Survey the town to identify gravel deposits which could supply future needs. This could be done by someone with a knowledge of geology. Follow up with actions to secure the site and ensure access and compatibility with surrounding land uses.
- Begin planning for the Town's long-term gravel needs.
- Consider the local availability of gravel when reviewing applications for subdivision. Make sure that the least amount of roadway possible is built.
- Make sand and gravel extraction Conditional Uses in the zoning ordinance and require reclamation of operations wishing to start up or expand.

BUSINESS & INDUSTRY

GOAL: TO IDENTIFY AND SUPPORT THE TYPE OF GROWTH WHICH WILL COMPLEMENT EXISTING FIRMS AND ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN RYEGATE.

Recommendations:

- Define business and industry in Ryegate's terms. Identify the type of growth which will complement existing firms and enhance the quality of life in Ryegate. Incorporate standards which will support the desired type and scale of development into the zoning ordinance.
- Form regional development committee with adjoining towns to plan and share benefits and costs of industrial and commercial growth.
- Make sure local communication and transportation infrastructure is up to date and maintained.
- Target the use of income from the town's previous Community Development Grant toward helping existing firms expand or diversify, or creating spin-offs from existing firms.
- Inventory farmland and work with farmers to develop an agricultural zone in town which compensates them for keeping their land open by allowing clustered housing in some areas.

HOUSING

GOAL: TO MAINTAIN THE CURRENT PATTERN OF SETTLEMENT AND OPEN LAND, AND THE EXISTING MIXTURE OF RESIDENTS OF VARIOUS AGE AND INCOME LEVELS IN THE TOWN.

Recommendations:

- Use soils and slope maps, maps of existing land use to determine site suitability for housing - septic system capacity, productive value for agriculture & forestry, proximity to roads & utilities - incorporate findings into zoning bylaw.
- Use soils, slopes, and land use maps to locate sites appropriate for residential development at higher density than is currently permitted. Consider smaller lot sizes in areas where there is already a concentration of housing.
- Reevaluate cluster (PUD) provision of zoning bylaw to make sure it serves the purposes for which it is intended; consider providing incentives for cluster development proposals in selected areas of town.
- Consider including provision for mobile home park(s) in zoning bylaw. Without this, any proposal to develop a mobile home park will be exempted from local zoning and receive review at the state level.
- Survey town residents over 65 years of age to find out what their housing needs are, and if these are being met. Or conduct an overall housing survey to identify problems, needs, and preferences of the entire town.
- Check into giving local tax break to elderly by deferring portion of property taxes on primary home until death or transfer of ownership.
- Make sure residents and property owners are aware of federal and state programs for weatherization, rehabilitation, and home financing by making information available through the town clerk, planning commission, and zoning administrator.

ENERGY

GOAL: THE TOWN OF RYEGATE WILL PROMOTE A REDUCTION IN LOCAL DEPENDENCE UPON COSTLY NON-RENEWABLE ENERGY RESOURCES BY ENCOURAGING CONSERVATION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL, RENEWABLE ENERGY

RESOURCES. THIS WILL BE ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH POLICIES WHICH INFLUENCE MUNICIPAL FACILITIES AND SERVICES, TRANSPORTATION, LAND USE, AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF RENEWABLE ENERGY RESOURCES.

ENERGY & MUNICIPAL FACILITIES & SERVICES

Recommendations:

- Consider total lifetime costs of vehicle and equipment operation (gas mileage, energy efficiency, useful life expectancy, operating costs) when making purchasing decisions.
- Conduct energy audits of all town buildings, especially Town Clerk's Office, to determine how much energy is used. Identify areas of energy waste and areas of potential savings, and identify areas for potential renewable energy modifications.
- Budget funds for weatherization of town buildings, carpeting for Town Offices.
- Support programs in schools for energy education; vocational programs to include energy efficiency for building trades, auto mechanics, consumer education, and driver education.

ENERGY & TRANSPORTATION

Recommendation:

- Maximize energy efficiency in laying out school bus routes.

ENERGY & LAND USE

Recommendations:

- Use zoning bylaw to encourage concentration of residential, commercial, industrial development in certain areas; discourage sprawl.
- Use site plan review to encourage maximum use of landscaping for screening from heat and wind, exposure to sun (applies to buildings other than one and two family dwellings and subdivision layout).
- Consider adopting provisions for clustered mixed use development (PUD- planned unit development) in zoning ordinance. This would encourage developers to submit plans for innovative site design and layout.
- Use site plan review to limit the amount of roadway constructed in subdivision design.
- Zoning administrator and/or town clerk distributes copies of energy resource list (below) and list of energy efficient appliances (from Dept. of Public Service) to every applicant for building permit.

RENEWABLE ENERGY RESOURCES

Recommendations:

- Make sure zoning ordinance allows building modification for solar or wind collection.
- Protect landowners' access to renewable energy resources (solar, wind, water power) through site plan review.

WATER QUALITY

GOAL: TO CONTROL SOURCES OF CONTAMINATION AND MAINTAIN OR IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF THE WATERS IN THE TOWN TO A LEVEL WHICH APPROACHES THE QUALITY OF 200 YEARS AGO.

Recommendations:

- Add erosion control standards to zoning ordinance. Limit the area of a lot which can be cleared or graded; require that construction be carried out in phases to limit the amount of earth exposed at any one time; require reseeded and replanting of graded areas within a limited amount of time; require silt fencing and haybale dikes during construction.
- Limit density of development on steep slopes (>15%) and/or shallow soils to prevent erosion and lower the density of onsite septic systems.
- **Consider extending setbacks from streams and wetlands to 75 feet. (This is the standard established for logging operations). Require that this buffer strip be maintained in natural vegetation to control runoff and erosion.**
- Require stormwater management plans for parking areas and roads over a specified length or slope.
- Arrange for better enforcement of existing municipal sewer ordinance, or amend the zoning bylaw to give Planning Commission jurisdiction over on-site septic system location, design, and installation. Contact Vermont Association of Conservation Districts (229-4982) for advice on this.
- Require language about septic system maintenance to be included in subdivision covenants.
- Adopt local road standards for erosion and runoff control during road construction, repair, and maintenance. Use "Vermont Backroad Erosion Control Handbook".
- **Build containment shed for Town salt pile. Put line item in Town budget to begin saving for this.**
- Protect wetlands under local zoning. Prohibit placement of buildings, roads, and utilities on wetlands and require protective buffers of at least 50 feet. Notify state Division of Water Quality of projects which affect wetlands - they will make a field visit to evaluate the wetland and delineate a buffer zone.
- Create a map of local wetlands at a scale compatible with property maps and other planning maps by using infra red photos already available for the Town.
- Create an overlay zone to regulate land uses in your Wellhead Protection Areas (WHPAs). Work with East and South Ryegate to develop source protection plans for their water supplies. (These plans are required for permit renewal)
- Create an overlay zone for shorelines of lakes and ponds to add special standards for vegetated buffer strips, setbacks, and septic system location. Attend NVDA workshops on Shoreline Zoning.

FACILITIES & SERVICES

GOAL: TO EFFICIENTLY PROVIDE ADEQUATE, SAFE, AND AFFORDABLE PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES WHICH SERVE THE NEEDS OF ALL TOWN RESIDENTS.

TRANSPORTATION

Recommendations:

- Establish a written road policy to clarify how private roads will be considered for take-over by the Town. This may help to limit the amount of land devoted to road construction in more remote parts of town where there is less likelihood of take-over.
- Adopt an access permit system so that all curb cuts will require a permit. This will enable you to control the number and location of access points onto town roads in order to minimize erosion and runoff which impacts adjacent town roads and culverts, and to ensure safe access.
- Continue long-range planning and budgeting for road maintenance and machinery expenditures.
- Check into state funding available for town road and bridge projects.
- Promote greater use of van and car pooling by providing parking areas near the Interstate.
- Promote greater use of walking and bicycling around town by providing lanes and/or paths.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Recommendations:

- Prepare a 5-year capital budget for equipment and construction.
- Consider adapting Fast Squad truck to transport patients.

SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL

Recommendations:

- Continue active involvement in Northeast Kingdom Solid Waste Management District.

PUBLIC WATER SYSTEMS

Recommendations:

- Add overlay zone to zoning bylaw for wellhead protection areas.
- Develop source protection plans for both community water supplies which identify all potential sources of contamination and suggest strategies for minimizing the risks coming from these sources.
- Enlist cooperation of land and home owners within wellhead protection areas to help minimize risks of contamination from existing land uses.
- Determine capacity of existing wells and plan for future supply-replacement in case of contamination, and additional supply to accommodate population growth.

COMMUNITY WASTE WATER DISPOSAL SYSTEMS

Recommendations:

- Ensure maintenance of leachfields, pump stations, and septic tanks.
- Alternate leach fields on regular basis.
- Clean septic tanks regularly (once or twice/year).
- Use chemical treatment of disposal fields to break up vegetation mats.
- Keep disposal fields mowed so roots don't clog the soil needed for filtering waste.
- Use capital budgeting to plan and finance expansion or replacement of these systems.
- Make provision for the proper disposal of sludge.

EDUCATION PLAN

GOAL: TO PRODUCE YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT ONLY EDUCATED IN THE TRADITIONAL SENSE, BUT WHO ARE READY TO MEET THE CHALLENGES THAT TODAY'S EVER-CHANGING WORLD WILL PROVIDE FOR THEM. TO KEEP THE PROGRAMS IN

PLACE THAT WE WANT TO CONTINUE SUPPORTING AND MAKE MINOR ADJUSTMENTS DUE TO CHANGES IN STUDENT NUMBERS AS NEEDS DICTATE. (Goals taken from the 1994 annual report of the school district)

Recommendations:

- Find ways to resolve the overcrowding for the middle school grades.
- Make every effort to continue and improve upon the educational programs that have been established during the 1993-94 school year.
- Maintain a quality education that will prepare BMU's students for the future.

RECREATION

Recommendations:

- Hire State Trooper to patrol public beach at Ticklenaked Pond.
- Purchase or lease land for another ball field.
- Cooperate with surrounding towns to supply more recreation opportunities.
- Involve schools, local youth groups in clean-up and construction of facilities at Ticklenaked Pond.
- Consider purchase of town forest to provide recreation, an outdoor classroom, and a source of wood. The wood could be sold to provide municipal revenue, used in heating town buildings, or harvested by town residents for home heating.
- Bring together local trail users - horseback riders, bicyclers, hikers, snowmobilers, ATVers, birdwatchers, etc. - to map existing trails and plan for extension, connection, and maintenance. Program could include purchase of easements or other compensation from landowners. There is currently grant money available for local trail systems.
- Emphasize trails and paths for non-mechanized recreation.

TOWN ADMINISTRATION

Recommendations:

- Prepare a 5-year capital budget and program for anticipated maintenance, improvements, and additions to town properties, buildings, and equipment. This would enable you to plan ahead for large expenditures, stabilize the tax rate, and take advantage of opportunities for outside funding and good deals on equipment and materials. After 1992, if the Town wants to have authority to bond for large projects, it will be required by state law to have a capital budget and program.

NATURAL AREAS

GOAL: TO ENSURE THAT THE REGION'S ABUNDANT FISH & WILDLIFE RESOURCES ARE PROVIDED WITH ADEQUATE HABITAT, AND THAT RARE AND ENDANGERED SPECIES OF PLANTS AND ANIMALS, UNIQUE NATURAL AREAS, AND SCENIC RESOURCES ARE PROTECTED WITHOUT UNDULY RESTRICTING PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS.

Recommendations:

- Develop a proposed land use plan based upon a comparison of the critical habitat areas (mostly deer yards) in town with current land use, roads, and physical characteristics of the land. Determine which of the town's many deer wintering areas are most appropriate for buffering from surrounding land uses.
- Contact local hunters and trappers to find out which of the identified deer yards still have good potential for use.
- Make maps and information about natural areas and wildlife habitat easily available to the public so that they are aware up front of potential complications in the development of their property.
- Invite the cooperation and participation of local individuals who are knowledgeable about the town's wildlife and natural areas -sportspeople, anglers, outdoors enthusiasts. Often just a word from these folks to their neighboring landowners will be enough to protect important/sensitive areas.
- Create an overlay zone for critical wildlife habitat and natural areas and make any development within this zone a Conditional Use.
- Require that domestic pets be controlled in residential developments which are near deer yards or bear habitat. This can be done through covenants as a condition for a conditional use permit.
- Promote the maintenance of large tracts of forest land by providing incentives for clustering development, especially in the 10 acre agricultural zone.
- Maintain connecting links between forested areas by identifying wildlife travel corridors and making sure that the adjoining land uses are buffered from those corridors.

- Maintain streamside and lakeside vegetation by requiring buffer strips with natural vegetation along streams, rivers, and shorelines (see water quality section of this plan).
- Protect wetlands from development by requiring an undisturbed buffer strip, and prevent runoff and direct discharges into wetlands (see water quality section of this plan).
- Discourage construction of private ponds unless fed by ground water or overland drainage. Require approval of a state fisheries biologist for construction of any pond on a permanent or seasonal stream or which requires use of a stream for supply or discharge of water.
- Minimize impacts of stream crossings during development by requiring strict erosion control measures, and that instream work be done between June 1 and October 1 of the same year. Require that the installation of culverts be approved by fisheries biologist to ensure that fish passage and habitat are maintained.

TAXES

GOAL: TO ACHIEVE AN EQUITABLE AND EFFICIENT SYSTEM OF TAXATION WHICH PROVIDES ADEQUATE FUNDING FOR TOWN SERVICES AND FACILITIES WITHOUT OVERBURDENING PROPERTY OWNERS.

Recommendations:

- Develop a capital budget and program for large expenditures so that the costs can be spread out over time.
- Make sure that town services are adequate to support new residential, commercial, or industrial growth.
- Adopt policies which minimize the amount of new roadway constructed to service new development, encourage development close to existing town roads, and set standards and limits to the number, location, length, and quality of the roads which will be considered for take over by the town.
- Make sure covenants for subdivisions contain language which clearly spells out responsibility for private road maintenance.

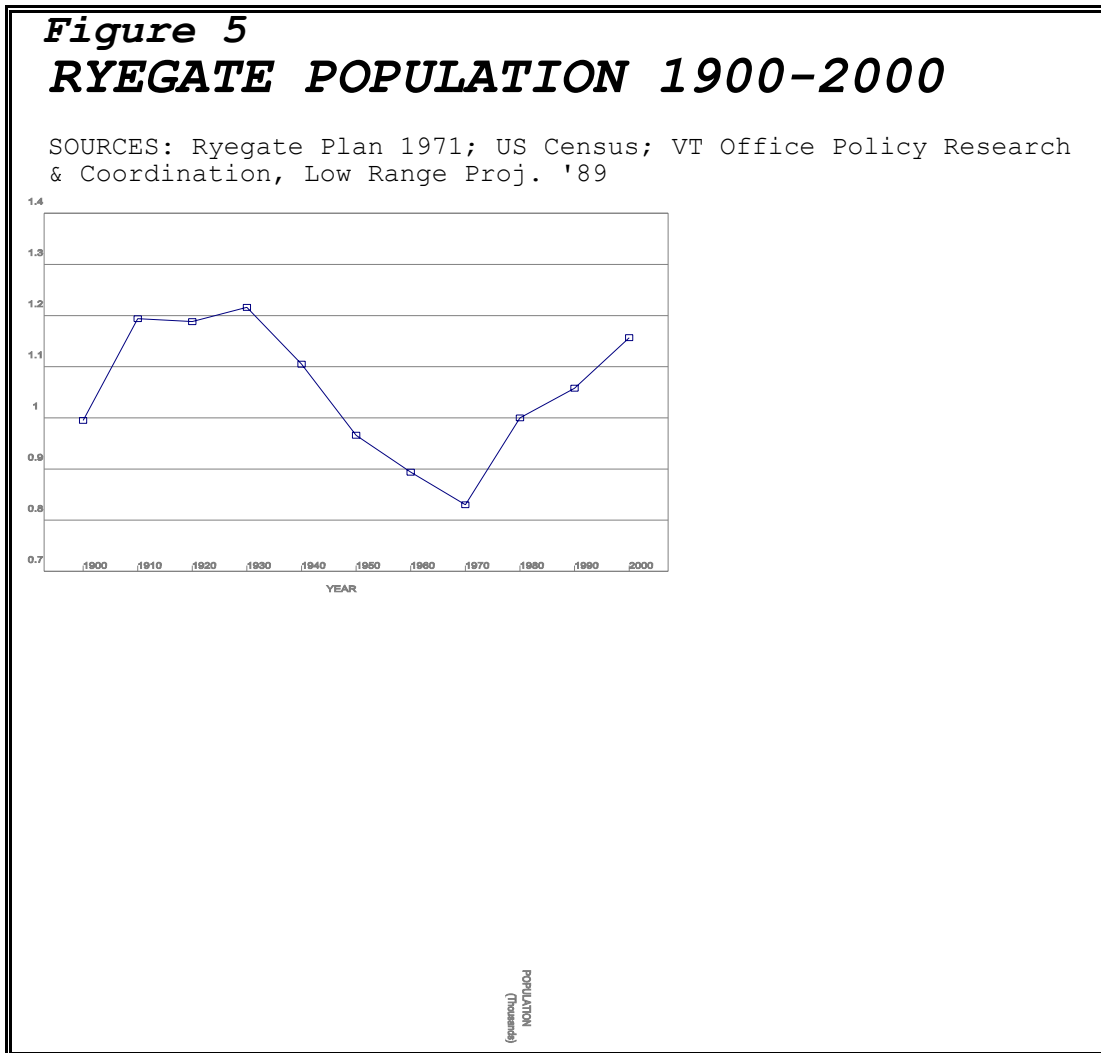
LAND USE

Recommendations:

- Revise zoning bylaw to insure that new development is occurring in areas that are 1) not environmentally sensitive and 2) already served by existing utilities and municipal services.
- Take actions to conserve existing agricultural and forest lands using tools such as purchase or transfer of development rights.
- Revise the zoning bylaw to require buffer strips around ponds and lakes or along streams and rivers.
- Encourage new commercial and industrial enterprises to locate in Ryegate that will provide jobs and tax revenues.
- Revise or replace the existing sewage disposal ordinance, if necessary, to protect water quality.

APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY PROFILE

Ryegate's early development during the 1770's was agricultural in nature, and small farms sprang up throughout the town. Large families were common, and Ryegate enjoyed steady population growth. During the early 1900's, other businesses began to move into town. A railroad was built along the Connecticut River. Stone quarries began operation, stone sheds flourished, and a paper mill was established. This activity resulted in a 20% population increase during the first decade of the century. This growth spurt rose to a peak in 1930, then declined to a low of 830 in 1970.



During the 70's, Ryegate again enjoyed a growth spurt, outpacing the rest of the county, and the state. The town's population growth slowed to just under 6% during the 80's, and is projected to continue steadily into the next decade.

**TABLE 11:
POPULATION 1960-2000**

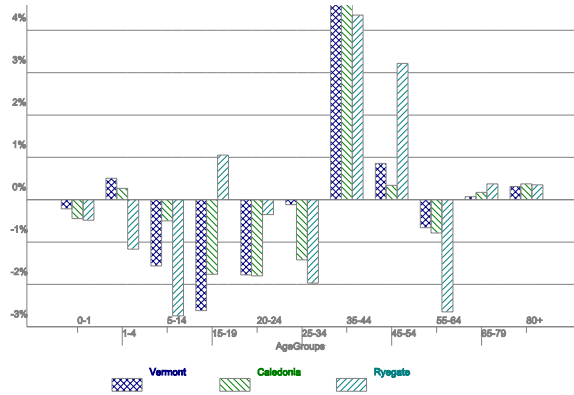
Year	Ryegate Persons	Percent Change	Caledonia Persons	Percent Change	Vermont Persons	Percent Change
1960	894	-7.5%	22,786	NA	389,881	NA
1970	830	-7.2%	22,789	0.0%	444,732	14.1%
1980	1,000	20.5%	25,808	13.2%	511,456	15.0%
1990	1,058	5.8%	27,816	7.8%	562,758	10.0%
2000	1,157	9.4%	29,346	5.5%	604,054	7.3%

SOURCE: U.S. Census, VT Office of Policy Research & Coordination, VT Population Projections, 1990-2005, Low Range, Dec. 1989.

The age distribution of the town's population will determine the amount and types of services which will be needed in the next five years. Like the rest of the state, Ryegate's population is "middle-aging". Over the last decade, the percent of the population in the age groupings below 35 has declined while that in the groups over 35 has increased (Figure 6). Town planning over the next 5 years should focus upon providing services, facilities, and housing opportunities for people in these older age groups.

Figure 6 CHANGE IN AGE DISTRIBUTION

SOURCE: U.S. Census 1980 & 1990



In 1980, Ryegate's residents compared quite favorably with those of the rest of the county and the state in their level of education (Figure 7). This level is another indicator of the types of services which residents may demand.

Figure 7
COMPARISON OF EDUCATION LEVELS

SOURCE: U.S. Census 1980

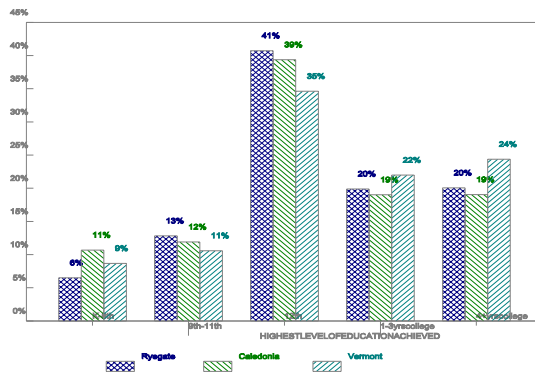


Table 12 illustrates how Ryegate's population groups itself into household units. The majority (69%) of the town's households have a married couple. This is a relatively high percentage compared to Caledonia County (58%) and the state (56%). About half of Ryegate's married couples have related children living with them. Approximately 7% of the households in town are composed of children living with a single parent, a bit lower than statewide and county averages. Average household size in Ryegate is 2.89 individuals, compared to 2.69 for the county and 2.67 for the state.

**TABLE 12:
HOUSEHOLD SIZE & TYPE 1990**

Total House- holds	--Married-- With Kids	W/Out Kids	One Person	Male With Kids	Female With Kids	Other House- holds	Average Household Size
361	133	114	56	13	12	33	2.89
% of total:	37%	32%	16%	4%	3%	9%	

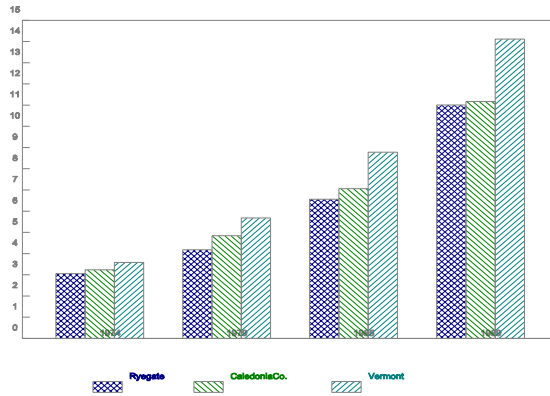
SOURCE: U.S. Census

INCOME

Vermont income tax return data can be used to assess general trends in income growth and to look at Ryegate's economic prosperity relative to the rest of Caledonia County and the state. Figure 8 shows per capita income, an average computed by dividing the total adjusted gross income by the total number of exemptions as reported on tax returns.

Figure 8 PER CAPITA INCOME 1974-1989

SOURCE: Vermont Department of Taxes



(continued)

Ryegate's per capita income growth tends to closely follow that of the county, remaining just below the average. Both are losing ground in relation to the state, and this trend increased noticeably during the 80s.

Table 13 shows per capita income of some of Ryegate's neighboring towns. This seems to confirm Ryegate's income status as about average for Caledonia County.

The averages shown in Table 13 may be misleading since they can be influenced by a few very high or low figures. Figure 9 shows income tax returns for 1989 by income range. The large number of returns in the lowest range reflect those filed by students and children with trust funds.

OTHER INCOME INDICATORS

As of the 1990 Census, 40% of Ryegate's families were considered low to moderate income. This means that these households earned less than 80% of the median household income for Caledonia County. This figure is used in evaluating the town's level of need for federal community development funds.

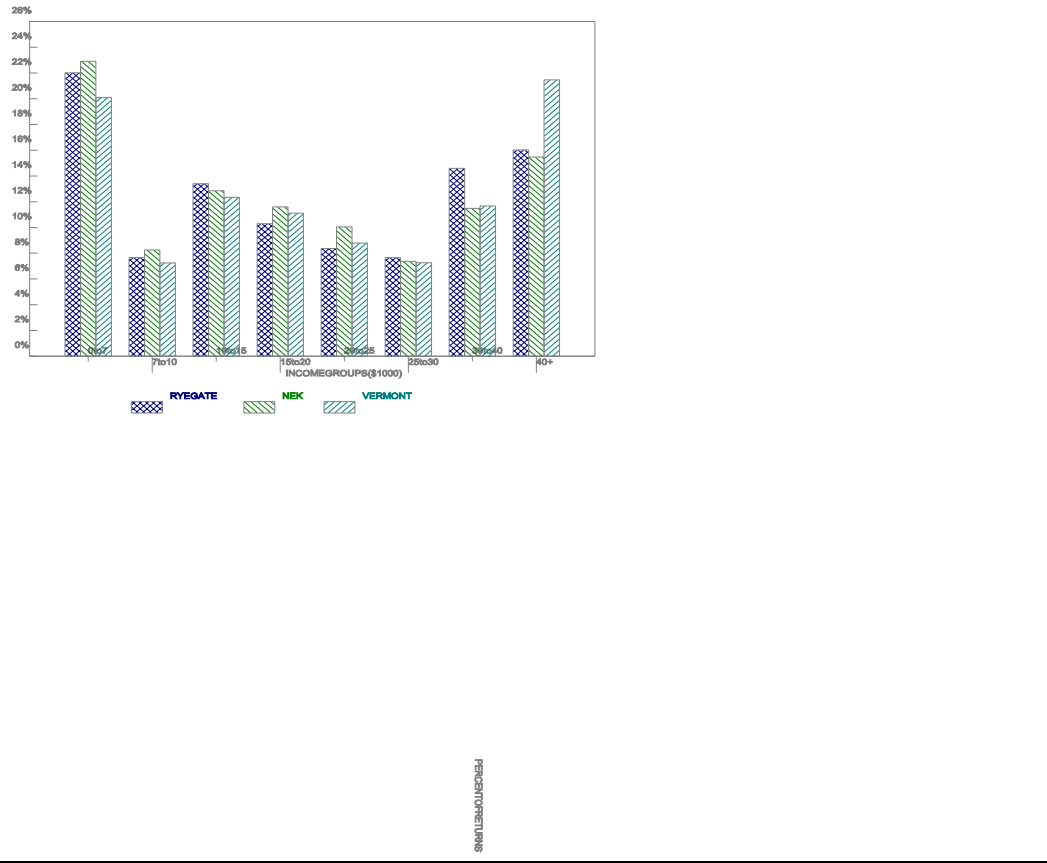
According to the Vermont Department of Social Welfare, as of January, 1991, 32 families representing 92 individuals (approximately 9% of Ryegate's population) were receiving food stamps. Fifteen families in town were receiving Aid to Needy Families with Dependent Children, and 36 households in Ryegate received supplemental fuel assistance during the winter of 1990-91.

Peacham	\$15,060
St. Johnsbury	\$11,675
Newbury	\$11,223
Ryegate	\$11,008
Barnet	\$10,995
Groton	\$9,499
Caledonia County	\$11,170
Vermont	\$14,117

SOURCE: VT Dept. of Taxes

Figure 9
PERSONAL INCOME TAX RETURNS BY
THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS 1989

SOURCE: Vermont Department of Taxes, 1989 Tax Statistics



EMPLOYMENT

After five years of substantial job growth, Vermont's economy began to slow in 1989. Employment reductions in manufacturing and construction activity are manifestations of this slowdown. Trade and service industries continued to expand, however. These two sectors now account for almost half the jobs in the state. Unfortunately, as shown in Figure 10, the average annual wages in trade and service are lower than all other industries except agriculture.

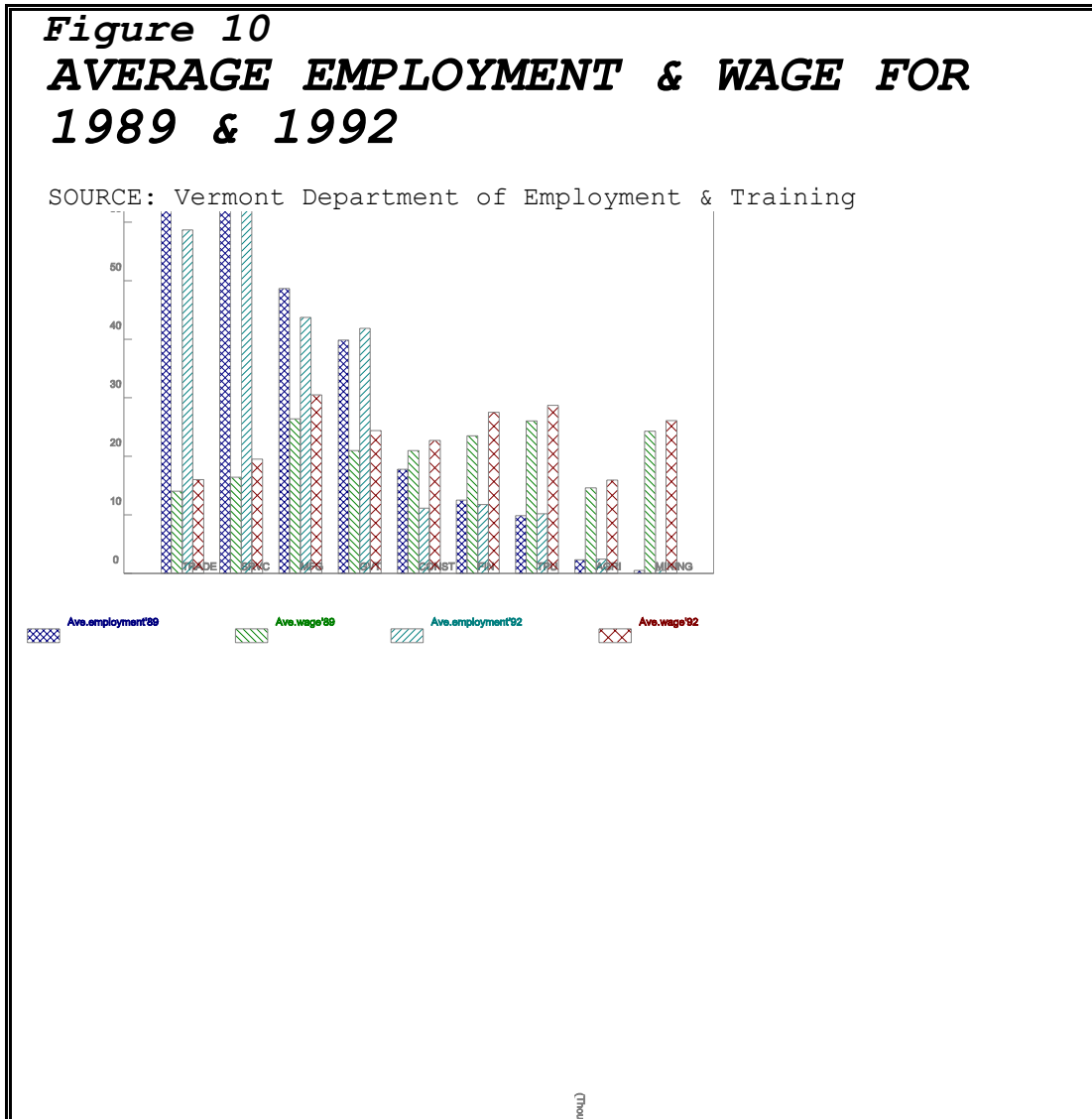
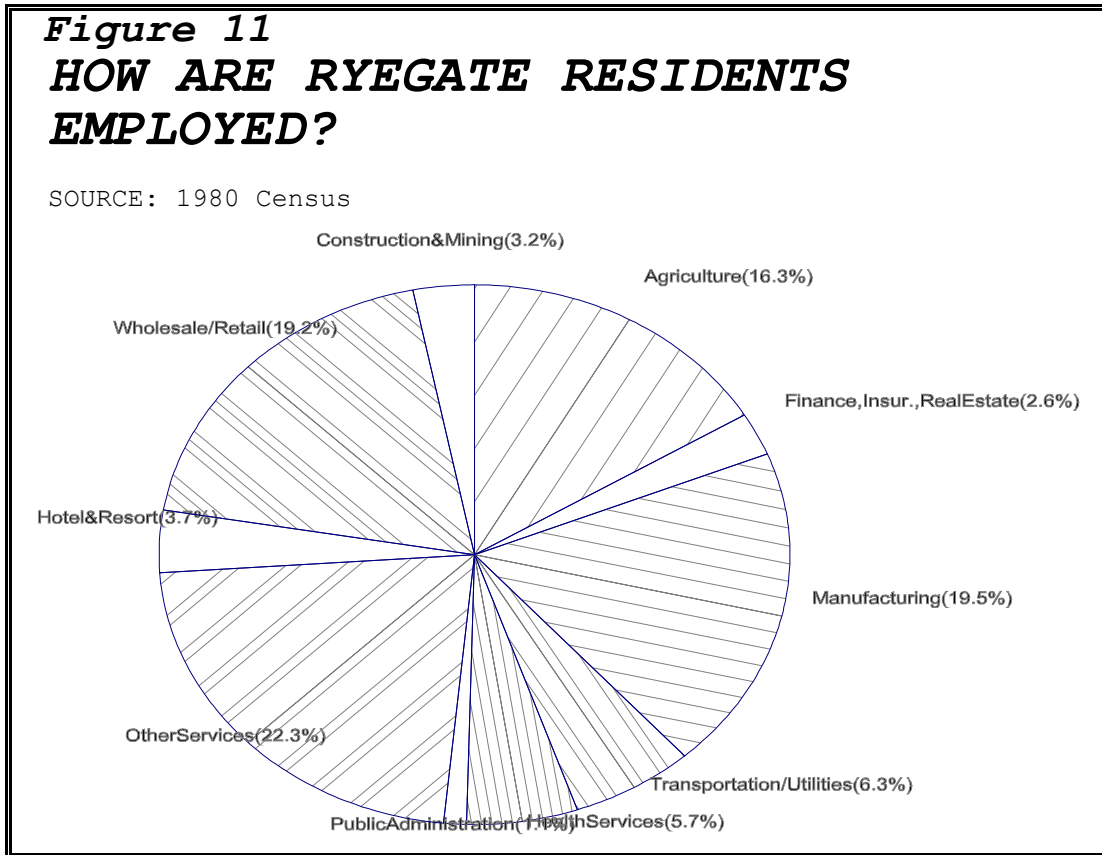


Figure 11 illustrates the employment of Ryegate residents as of the 1980 census. If the town's employment opportunities follow those of the rest of the state, we can expect that manufacturing, farming, and construction employment have decreased over the last decade, while more residents may be employed in service industries including healthcare, hotel and resorts, and trade (wholesale/retail). The education level of Ryegate residents is an indicator that the town's population may be changing to include people with more professional training who will seek employment in larger towns within commuting distance.



What might the future bring?. Figure 12 shows how Northeast Kingdom residents may be employed by the year 2000. Agriculture (AG) is projected to drop over 40% in its share of the region's jobs. Manufacturing (DUR/NDUR) shows very slight growth. The largest gains will be in services (resorts-RES, health-HEA, other services-OTH) and in trade (wholesale-WHO, retail-RET). Since these are the lowest wage sectors, workers will either have to settle for a lower standard of living, or work more hours to maintain

their current standard.

**TABLE 14:
TOTAL EMPLOYMENT COVERED BY
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE 1989**

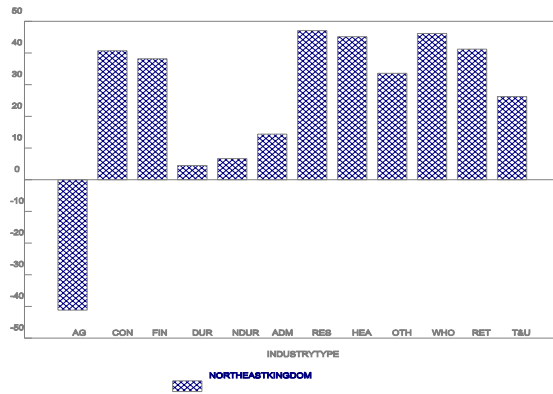
	Number of Employers 1989	Average Annual Growth 1984-89	Number of Employees 1989	Average Annual Growth 1984-89	Average Annual Wage 89	Average Annual Growth 1984-89
Ryegate	23	5.2%	211	5.3%	\$18,675	1.2%
Caledonia	951	2.8%	9,876	4.0%	\$17,538	4.3%
Vermont	21,343	3.5%	255,922	4.2%	\$19,487	4.9%

SOURCE: VT Dept. of Employment & Training. November 1990.

While the better educated Ryegate residents may be in a position to seek higher paying professional jobs, the overall economy and quality of life in the region will decline if there are no attempts to provide diverse employment opportunities, and to retrain the region's population to produce goods and services which are now in demand.

Figure 12
PROJECTED EMPLOYMENT
1987-2000

SOURCE: Vermont Department of Employment & Training 1989



PERCENT CHANGE

Number of Employers, Number of Jobs, Average Annual Wage:

As of 1989, Ryegate had 23 employers who were subject to the Vermont Unemployment Compensation Law (Table 14). The number of employers in the town grew at an average rate of 5.2% between 1984 and 1989, outpacing both the county and the state. Growth in the number of employees at these worksites also compares favorably to county and statewide averages. The average annual wage paid to workers employed in Ryegate is higher than the county average, but lower than that of the state. Ryegate's wage growth since 1984 has not kept pace with the county or the state.

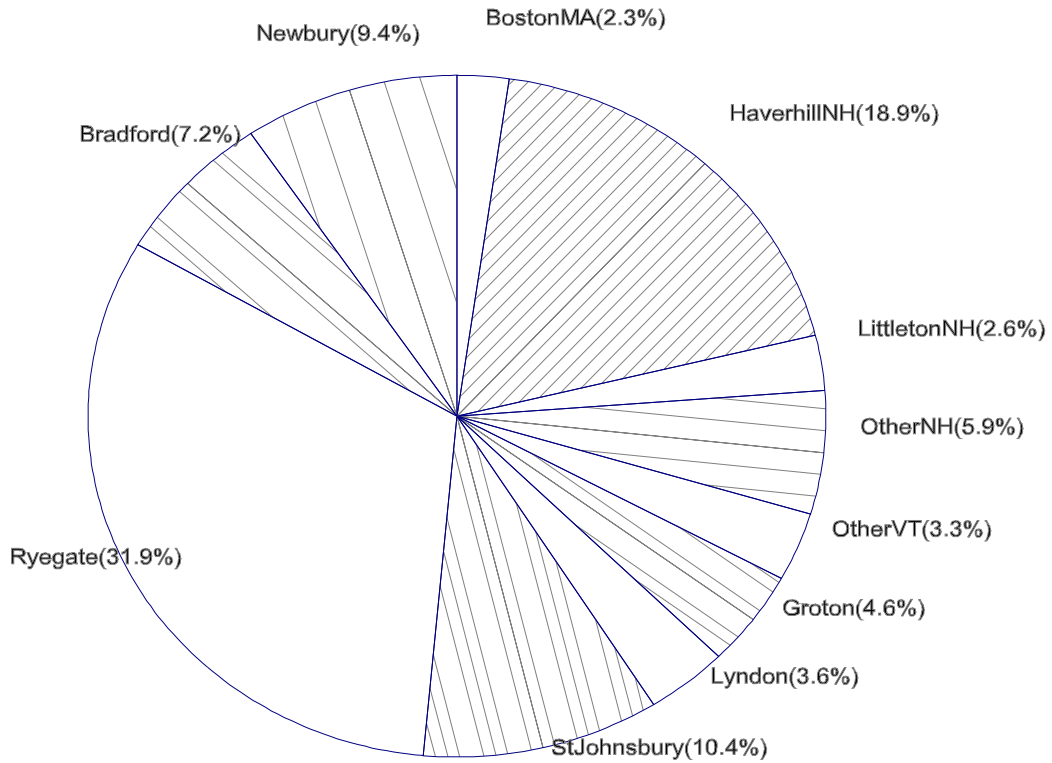
IS RYEGATE A BEDROOM COMMUNITY?

Approximately 70% of workers living in Ryegate commute out of town for work. By comparison, towns like St. Johnsbury and Lyndon are defined as job centers because over 60% of the residents work within their community. According to the 1980 Census, the size of Ryegate's commuter population is about average for Caledonia County.

As shown above, about half of Ryegate's resident workforce is employed within Caledonia County towns of Ryegate, St. Johnsbury, Groton, and Lyndon. Over a quarter travel to New Hampshire to work. Another 17% work in the Orange County towns of Bradford and Newbury. Other Vermont towns which provide work for Ryegate residents include Barnet, Topsham, and Barre. Other New Hampshire towns are Bath, Hanover, Lincoln, and Monroe. (These figures are based upon the reports of 307 of 331 Ryegate workers who responded to the 1980 Census.)

Figure 13
WORKPLACE OF RYEGATE RESIDENTS

SOURCE: 1980 Census



APPENDIX B: HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

THE DEMAND FOR HOUSING

POPULATION GROWTH

Since a growth spurt sent Ryegate's population ahead by over 20% during the 70s, the rate has continued to slow, and is projected to grow only 6.6% during this decade. The Town's population growth may be further subdued by poor economic conditions throughout the region.

AGE DISTRIBUTION

The "baby boom" generation is now moving beyond their first-time home buying years, and their pressure on the entry level housing market should moderate. However, the proportion of Ryegate residents over 65 is on the increase. Housing options for residents in their older years will be an increasingly urgent consideration.

MIGRATION

Caledonia County has not experienced the high immigration rates of other areas of the state, probably due to declines in the farming and manufacturing economies. However, easy access to I-93 makes Ryegate attractive to retirees and second home shoppers. The town's high housing prices (see Table 19 below) reflect this influence.

NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS

The way the population groups itself into households is also a factor which affects the demand for housing. Nationwide and within Vermont, household size declined dramatically during the 1970's, and has continued to decline more slowly since. This trend is partly due to families having fewer children. However, the decrease in the number of individuals living together is also due to the breakup of extended family households, an increasing number of single-parent households, and the larger number of elderly who are choosing to remain in their own homes.

In Caledonia County, average household size decreased from 3.1 to 2.7 during the 70s, and to 2.6 by 1985. According to the 1990 Census, Ryegate's average household size remains relatively high at 2.89.

A decrease in average household size corresponds to an increase in the number of households (Table 15). The number of households in both the town and the county is increasing at a faster rate than population is growing. A greater number of housing units will be needed to shelter the same number of people.

THE SUPPLY: HOUSING UNITS

Number of Units:

Estimates shown in Table 16 suggest that Ryegate's estimated year-round housing growth is the lowest of any town in Caledonia County. Unlike the county and

the rest of the state, Ryegate's population is growing faster than its year-round housing stock. This may reflect the town's relatively high average household size.

According to Health Department Estimates, seasonal units comprise a little over 19% of Ryegate's housing stock (Table 17). Although this is more than the average for the county, only Waterford, St. Johnsbury Lyndon, Hardwick, and Sutton have a smaller proportion of vacation properties. Ryegate actually lost 20 vacation units during the 80s. These 20 are most likely conversions to year-round use, and represent the growth in that category.

**TABLE 15:
POPULATION & NUMBER OF
HOUSEHOLDS 1970-1990**

	# of Households		Population	
	% Increase	% Increase	% Increase	% Increase
	1970-80	1980-90	1970-80	1980-90
Caledonia	28.8%	12.0%	13.2%	7.0%
Ryegate	24.2%	12.0%	20.5%	6.0%

SOURCE: U.S. Census 1970, 1980, 1990; Office of Policy Research and Coordination; Department of Employment and Training, 1989

**TABLE 16:
YEAR-ROUND HOUSING
UNITS 1980-1988**

	---- Housing Units ----		Population	
	1980	1989	% Chg.	% Chg.
	Census	Est.	1980-89	1980-90
Ryegate	354	374	5.6%	8.5%
Caledonia	9,919	11,512	16.0%	7.2%
Vermont	187,958	219,786	17.0%	10.1%

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census; VT Dept. of Health, 1989

RENTAL UNITS

According to the 1990 Census, 60 of Ryegate's 366 occupied housing units (16%) are occupied by renters. This percentage has remained fairly constant since the 1980 Census. The average rental unit in town houses 3 people in 6 rooms. Median rent from Census data is \$361. According to information from the 1990 Census, 67% of Ryegate's rental units were built before 1940.

CONDITION & AGE OF HOUSING UNITS

Volunteers from the Northeast Employment and Training Organization, Inc. (NETO) visited housing units and interviewed owners and occupants in Orleans, Essex, and Caledonia Counties during a 1981 survey of housing conditions. They surveyed 51 housing units in Ryegate (13% of the existing housing stock), chosen through a random sampling process. Results are shown in Table 18.

The NETO assessment included exterior walls, foundation, roof, heating, and plumbing systems. If a unit received a "below average" rating on any one of these critical elements, it was classified "substandard.". If the unit received a below average rating on two or more critical elements, it was considered "dilapidated.". Substandard units were considered suitable for rehabilitation, while dilapidated units were unsuitable.

While the sample of housing surveyed in Ryegate is quite small, the results strongly suggest that a very large percentage of the town's housing stock could benefit from rehabilitation. Information from the 1990 Census reinforces this evaluation: 299 of the 531 housing units in the town (56%) were built before 1940.

**TABLE 17:
SEASONAL HOUSING
UNITS 1980-1989**

	1980	1989	% Chg.	% Total
	Census	Est.	80-89	Housing
Ryegate	118	98	-16.9%	19.3%
Caledonia	1,692	2,033	20.2%	14.7%
Vermont	35,328	43,728	23.8%	16.3%

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census; VT Dept. of Health, 1989

LINKING SUPPLY & DEMAND

MEDIAN SALES PRICE OF HOMES

**TABLE 18:
HOUSING CONDITIONS 1981**

	Total Units Surveyed	Substan. Units	Substan. % Total	Dilap. Units	Dilalp. % Total
Ryegate	51	38	75%	8	15%
Caledonia Co.			51%		
NEK			41%		

SOURCE: Final Report, NETO Housing Inventory Project, 1981

Figure 14 and Table 19 shows the median sales price for homes throughout Caledonia County as reported 1988-1990. During 1988 and 1989, Ryegate's home prices were among the highest in the county. In 1990, sales prices in other towns jumped almost to the same level (Figure 14). Although most Caledonia County towns are now in the \$80,000 - \$100,000 price

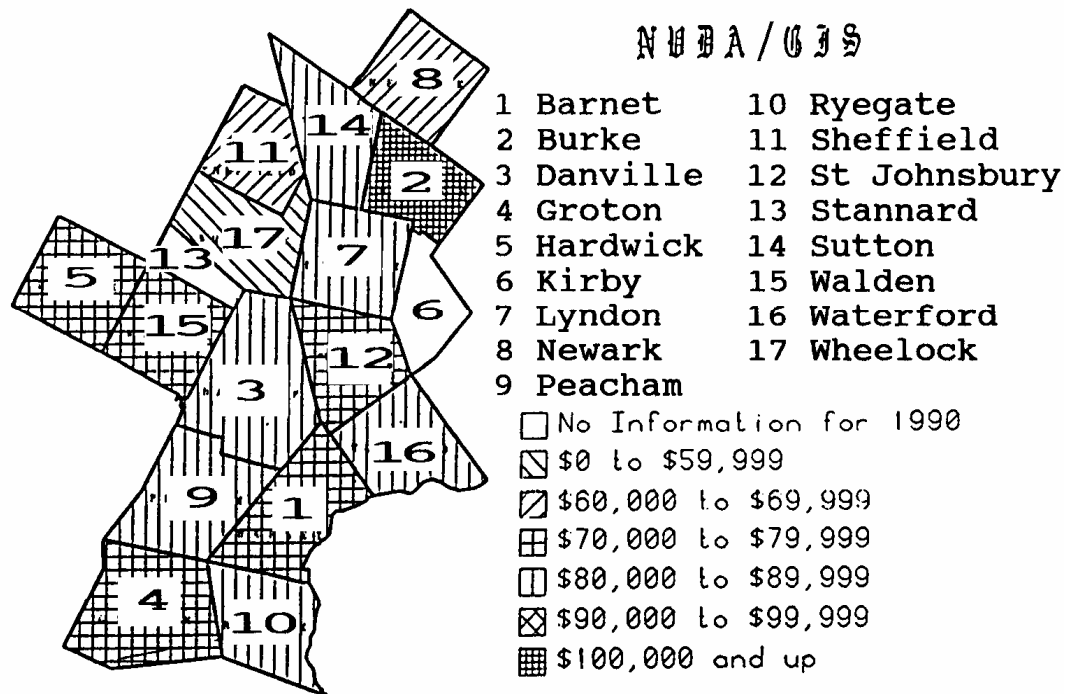
range, the change in price over the last three years ranges from 78% in Waterford to 417% in Newark. Ryegate's increase over the three year period is about average at 143%. It is important to note the number of sales these figures are based upon. The data for towns with a small number of yearly sales is less reliable.

PER CAPITA INCOME & HOUSING COSTS

Whether housing is affordable for Ryegate residents depends upon a combination of the factors described above along with a wide variety of national, regional, and local influences including housing sales prices, construction costs, land costs, mortgage interest rates, property taxes, and the expectations of buyers and sellers in the housing market. One way to assess affordability is to compare increases in cost with increases in income over time.

Figure 14
MEDIAN RESIDENTIAL SALE PRICE
FOR CALEDONIA COUNTY 1990

SOURCE: County Home data



**TABLE 19:
MEDIAN RESIDENTIAL SALES PRICE
1988-1990**

	1988 Sales	# Res Sales	1989 Sales	# Res Sales	1990 Sales	# Res Sales	% Change 1988-90
CALEDONIA	\$33,000	968	\$50,000	481	\$79,500	194	141%
Barnet	\$30,000	60	\$55,000	32	\$71,750	8	139%
Burke	\$29,000	72	\$58,000	22	\$110,000	16	279%
Danville	\$37,500	93	\$49,500	36	\$86,000	11	129%
Groton	\$20,000	37	\$59,900	23	\$70,000	5	250%
Hardwick	\$29,500	89	\$45,250	57	\$77,810	14	164%
Kirby	\$25,000	19	\$75,000	8		0	NA
Lyndon	\$35,000	154	\$62,500	74	\$80,000	32	129%
Newark	\$12,000	40	\$20,000	10	\$62,000	6	417%
Peacham	\$45,000	24	\$43,050	13	\$87,000	9	93%
Ryegate	\$36,000	42	\$70,000	22	\$87,500	8	143%
Sheffield	\$19,000	35	\$32,000	20	\$60,000	6	216%
St Johnsbury	\$59,000	155	\$65,000	98	\$78,500	52	33%
Stannard	\$25,000	14		1		0	NA
Sutton	\$24,000	37	\$27,000	16	\$80,000	9	233%
Walden	\$22,000	41	\$33,500	29	\$78,500	8	257%
Waterford	\$45,000	25	\$89,500	14	\$80,000	6	78%
Wheelock	\$26,155	31	\$22,000	6	\$54,000	4	106%

SOURCE: County Home Data (from Property Transfer Tax Records)

**TABLE 20:
MEDIAN RESIDENTIAL HOUSE SALES
AND PER CAPITA INCOME 1988-1989**

	Price 1988	Price 1989	%Change 88-89	Income 1988	Income 1989	%Change 88-89
Caledonia	\$33,000	\$50,000	+52%	\$10,686	\$11,170	+4.5%
Ryegate	\$36,000	\$70,000	+94%	\$ 8,924	\$11,008	+23.0%

SOURCE: County Home Data; VT Tax Statistics

According to data compiled from property transfer tax records, the median price of a house in Ryegate almost doubled between 1988 and 1989, while residents' incomes increased by only 23% (Table 17). The median residential sale price rose to \$87,500 in 1990, another 25% increase over the previous year.

As shown in Table 18, fair market rents in Caledonia County rose just slightly less than per capita income grew during the last decade. This makes sense since rents rise and fall with the market which, in this case, depends upon what prospective renters can afford to pay.

WHAT IS AFFORDABLE?

National and state housing policies agree that renters and homeowners should expend no more than 30% of their gross income on housing costs. Lenders typically will not issue loans which require borrowers to expend more than 28% of their gross income for mortgage or rent payments, insurance, and taxes. Since there are no yearly figures published for gross median household income, this assessment estimates the income which would be required to make housing rental or ownership affordable for Ryegate residents.

**TABLE 21:
INCREASE IN RENT
COMPARED TO INCREASE IN
INCOME**

Caledonia County	1980	1989	% Change
Fair Market Rent (2-Bedroom Apt.)	\$273	\$395	45%
Per Capita Income	\$7,537	\$11,170	48%

SOURCE: U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development; VT Tax Statistics.

**TABLE 22:
INCOME REQUIRED TO PURCHASE
\$87,500 HOME**

Interest Rate	8.75%	8.75%	10.5%
	5% down	10% down	20% down
Down payment + Costs:	\$6,375	\$10,750	\$19,500
Mortgage	\$83,125	\$78,750	\$70,000
Monthly Payment (30 yrs.)	\$629	\$600	\$640
Taxes & insurance/month	\$125	\$125	\$125
Monthly Housing Cost	\$754	\$725	\$765
Required gross income	\$30,160	\$29,000	\$30,600

will need a 20% down payment and will pay 10.5% interest over 30 years.

Purchasing a Home.

Estimates from the property transfer tax records indicate that the median sales price for a house in Ryegate in 1990 was approximately \$87,500. Table 19 illustrates the income and cash demands this price places upon a prospective home buyer. If the buyer can access a state or federally subsidized mortgage, they might receive a rate of 8.75% over 30 years with a 5 to 10 percent down payment. If they must use a conventional mortgage, they

**TABLE 23:
FAIR MARKET
RENTS BY NO.
OF BEDROOMS
FOR CALEDONIA
COUNTRY 1990**

No. of Bedrooms	Fair Market Rent*	Income
0	\$290	\$11,600
1	\$351	\$14,040
2	\$413	\$16,520
3	\$517	\$20,680
4	\$580	\$23,200

* Fair market rents include the costs of utilities

SOURCE: Dept. of Housing & Urban Development (HUD)

In addition to monthly payments, the home buyer must have the savings necessary to cover the down payment plus purchase costs. For a \$87,500 home, these up-front costs range from \$6,375 for a subsidized loan with 5% down to \$19,500 for a conventional mortgage with 20% down. Respondents to a study recently conducted throughout New England, identified this initial cost as the greatest barrier to home ownership.

Table 20 shows the gross yearly household income which would be necessary to make a Caledonia County apartment affordable according to the definition above.

Land Prices. The cost of land is an important factor in the price of housing. The sale price of open land in Ryegate, according to property transfer tax reports during 1990, ranged between \$917 and \$20,000 an acre for parcels of 10 acres or less. The median price was \$1,800 an acre. (The median is the middle figure of all sales reported and is not skewed by extreme values as is the average.). By comparison, the median price of parcels of open land 10 acres or less was \$1,250 per acre in Barnet, and \$1,600 per acre in Peacham. There were relatively few sales of open land in the town reported, and this may help to account for the high price. The price of land makes Ryegate a difficult choice for first-time home buyers.

SUMMARY

The housing needs assessment section reveals several housing issues which could be addressed at the local level. The ageing of the population

in general, and Ryegate's propensity to attract retirees will create demands for housing options appropriate to the special needs of the elderly. At the other end of the spectrum, households entering the housing market for the first time could make use of innovative financing methods or any arrangements which would ease the up-front costs of home purchase. One way to lower land prices is to make more land available for residential development. This initiative will need to be balanced with the desire to conserve land for agriculture and forestry. Finally, rehabilitation of existing structures would help to preserve neighborhood property values, reduce the cost of fuel and utilities, and provide more options for both rental and purchase.

APPENDIX C: ENERGY RESOURCE LIST

Vermont Energy Action Line, Dept. of Public Service, 1-800-642-3281.

Answers inquiries on home energy conservation, renewable energy systems; provides car-pool matching services; and information on energy grant applications and weatherization

Vermont Industrial Energy Conservation Advisory Program, Dept. of Public Service, 1-800-642-3281.

Provides on-site energy visits and recommendations to industry through volunteers from business, government and academia.

Vermont Dairy Farm Energy Efficiency Demonstration Program, Dept. of Agriculture, 828-2500.

Pilot program to demonstrate cost effectiveness of energy-saving equipment in milk cooling, water heating, and other tasks on dairy farms.

Energy Rated Homes of Vermont, Dept. of Public Service, 865-3926.

Maintains a statewide home rating system which provides a means of assessing energy use and savings potential of homes at the time of purchase or refinancing. Identifies areas where homeowners can save money by making energy improvements. Trains lenders, appraisers, and realtors in the benefits of energy efficiency to potential home buyers.

Wood Energy Program, Dept. of Public Service, 1-800-642-3281.

Provides up-to-date information on newest technologies in wood burning for residential, commercial, and industrial use and on methods of dealing with wood wastes.

National Appropriate Technology Assistance Service, US Dept. of Energy, 1-800-428-2525.

Offers both technical and business assistance. Provides engineering information on energy systems design, problem solving, safety procedures, installation measures and locating local technical support. Assistance with lighting, waste-to-energy technologies, home energy conservation, do-it-yourself solar heaters, furnace retrofits, mobile home weatherization, and more.

Energy Conservation Planning and Interest Reduction Programs for Schools, Public Housing, and State-Supported Non-Profit Organizations, Dept. of Public Service, 1-800-642-3281.

Provides funding for technical studies and to reduce interest on loans taken to install energy conservation measures for schools, public housing authorities, and state-supported nonprofit organizations.

Institutional Energy Conservation Program, Dept. of Public Service, 1-800-642-3281.

Provides information on energy conservation to Vermont institutions; recommends awards of federal matching grants to Vermont schools and hospitals for technical analysis and installation of building efficiency improvements.

Energy Efficient Mortgage Program, VT Housing Finance Agency, 865-3926.

Makes available energy efficient mortgages based on ratings and recommendations of the Energy Rated Homes Program for existing and newly built homes. Allows homeowners to complete energy improvements and obtain larger mortgage loan due to reduced energy costs.

Facility Construction and Major Power Purchases by Utilities, Dept. of Public Service, 828-2811.

Represents the public interest in Public Service Board proceedings that review siting of proposed generation and transmission facilities and major power purchases.

State Power Purchases, Dept. of Public Service, 828-2811.

Purchases and resells power, on a non-profit basis, directly to Vermont residential and farm consumers, Vermont utilities, and out-of-state utilities.

Publications Available from the VT Department of Public Service.

Energy Efficiency Recommendation for Residential Development

List of Energy Efficient Appliances

Vermont Residential Fuel Wood Assessment, 1987-88

Grant Applications

APPENDIX D: WATER RESOURCES INVENTORY

The eastern two-thirds of Ryegate is in the Upper Connecticut River Basin. Tributaries in this system include Wormwood Brook, Manchester Brook, Lower Symes Pond, Upper Symes Pond, and Coburn Pond. There is an area of the Connecticut of Class C water .3 miles in length from Ryegate Paper Company 500 yards downstream.

The Wells River contains naturally occurring fisheries for Brown, Rainbow, and Brook Trout, Northern Pike, Large- and Small-mouth Bass, and Walleye. Upper Symes Pond covers 20 acres at the confluence of McLain and Wormwood Brooks in the north central part of town. Upper Symes has a 3,836 feet of undeveloped shoreline protected by The Nature Conservancy and the VT Dept. of Fish and Wildlife. Natural heritage sites (rare or endangered species or critical wildlife habitat) have been identified on this pond. Water flows from Upper Symes to Lower Symes Pond through a series of wetlands.

Lower Symes Pond covers 57 acres. Its shoreline is totally undeveloped with native stands of cedar hemlock and birch. The east side of the shore has small ledges. Extensive areas of wetland are present, especially on the northeast shore. Total depth is 2.6 meters with a mucky bottom. There is some relatively rare aquatic vegetation and good wildlife habitat. Natural Heritage Sites have been identified here as well. Water flows from Lower Symes Pond toward the Connecticut River through Manchester Brook. Farms along the watershed, and shoreline logging activity may pose threats to water quality in both Upper and Lower ponds.

Ticklenaked Pond, covering 48 acres in the Wells River watershed, is classified as a eutrophic pond by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources. The classification is based upon high concentrations of phosphorous, a nutrient which stimulates plant and algae growth. Eutrophic lakes are typically shallow with abundant algae, mucky bottoms, warm water fisheries, and murky water. Approximately half of Ticklenaked's shoreline is undeveloped. There are five camps on the west side of the pond, 14 at the north end and 10 on the east side. The Town owns a public access on its north end. Recreational uses are small motor boats, fishing, and swimming. Shoreline development, sewage disposal from camps, and shoreline agricultural uses are all sources of water quality problems at Ticklenaked Pond.

Surface water quality is affected by activities which occur all along the watershed including landscaping, road construction, logging, and the construction of private ponds. In Vermont, the most common form of pollution to surface waters is the introduction of nutrients and sediments resulting from land runoff. Over the years, silt and other substances accumulate and cause algae and weeds, reduced water clarity, and changes in the fish and wildlife communities. Lakes are eventually filled in by silt and weed growth. These sources of pollution can be controlled by regulating land uses along river and streambanks and shorelines.

Activities on the shoreline directly impact surface water quality. Placement of septic systems too close to the lake; inadequate soil erosion control during construction, removal of natural vegetation along the shore, poorly designed drainage from roads, buildings, and parking areas. These factors can be brought under control through special shoreline zoning districts, setbacks and buffer zones along streambanks and shorelines, and regulation of onsite septic systems.

The town may want to make sure that some shoreline remains undeveloped in order to preserve public access for recreation and enjoyment. This might be done by cooperating with conservation groups who buy easements to protect land, like the Nature Conservancy. Public access could also be secured if the town purchased easements or development rights to shoreline parcels, or negotiated less formal agreements with shoreland owners.

WETLANDS

Wetlands are areas of land where soils are saturated with surface or ground water frequently enough to support vegetation which requires these saturated conditions for growth and reproduction. Such areas include (but are not limited to) marshes, swamps, sloughs, potholes, fens, river and lake overflows, mud flats, bogs, and ponds. Wetlands are identified according to vegetation, soils, and hydrology.

Wetlands perform many functions which contribute to the quality of both surface and ground water:

- Water storage for flood water and storm runoff.
- Area where surface water enters the ground to renew ground water supply.

- Act as a filter to remove contaminants.
- Provide fisheries and other wildlife habitat.
- Lowers temperature of surface waters through discharge or shading
- protect shorelines and streambanks from erosion.

In addition, wetlands provide other values as well:

- Unique aesthetic qualities.
- Recreational opportunities.

Wetlands have been mapped by the US Dept. of Interior and each Town Clerk has National Wetlands Inventory maps for their town. Vermont's Wetland Regulations designate most of those inventoried as Class 2 Wetlands, and require a 50 foot vegetated buffer zone between the wetland and any adjacent development. In addition, local planners are required to notify the Water Quality Division of the Agency of Natural Resources of any development proposed in a wetland.

In Ryegate, there are large areas of forested and scrub/shrub wetlands on both sides of Manchester Brook below Lower Symes Pond. The southern tip and northwest spur of Ticklenaked Pond are wetlands. Travelling west out of Ryegate Corner, there are large wetlands on both sides of the Ryegate/Groton Road (town highway #5). There are also many areas of open water and scrub/shrub wetlands along the Wells River in South Ryegate.

Interested persons should check the maps in the Town Clerk's Office for other local wetlands. The National Wetlands Maps are not considered a complete or totally accurate inventory of all wetlands in the state. Their information will be supplemented and corrected as better information is obtained.

GROUND WATER

Water which is contained within the soil and rocks below the ground surface is considered ground water. Ground water storage and travel is determined by topography and by the composition of the soils and rocks in which it is confined. Ground water is the source of over 90% of the drinking water for rural areas in Vermont. It is replenished through rain and surface water which percolates down through the soil. Any activities which introduce contaminants directly into the ground - underground storage tanks, leach fields, agricultural activities - can affect ground water. Since surface waters may also travel underground, ground water can be contaminated by sources which introduce contaminants at the surface as well.

Wellhead Protection Areas (WHPAs). A wellhead protection area is defined as "the surface and subsurface area surrounding a water well or wellfield, supplying a public water system, through which contaminants are reasonably likely to move towards and reach such well or well fields". There are two WHPAs in Ryegate - surrounding the public water supplies administered by the South Ryegate Water Coop and East Ryegate Fire District #2.

These areas have been mapped by the Vermont Dept. of Health, and are shown on maps on file in the Town Clerk's Office. In order to obtain or renew a permit to use a well as a public water supply, the utility must develop a source protection plan which inventories current land uses within the WHPA, identifies potential threats to the water supply, develops local strategies to protect the water source, and provides a plan for location and provision of alternate drinking water supply in the event of wellfield contamination.

Planning for the protection of these public water supplies is best done in cooperation with the local planning commission, since implementing the plans will require that certain land uses within the WHPA be controlled, monitored, or prohibited. Examples of such land uses are underground storage tanks, agricultural activities, onsite septic systems, and municipal salt piles. One way to control land use within a WHPA is to create an overlay zone within the town zoning ordinance. The overlay would prescribe standards for land use within the areas mapped as WHPAs. Some communities have arranged to purchase land or easements to protect their public water supplies.

SURFACE WATERS

Most of the surface waters in Ryegate are considered Class B by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, Water Quality Division. They are suitable for bathing and recreation, irrigation and agricultural uses, fish habitat, aesthetics, and public water supply with filtration and disinfection. The western third of the town lies in the Wells River basin. This includes Darius James Brook, Jewett

Brook, Tannery Brook, Clark Hatch Brook, Hanson Pond and Ticklenaked Pond. A 4 mile segment of the Wells River, from Boltonville Dam to upper railroad bridge in South Ryegate, is classified as "C" quality water - "suitable for recreational boating, irrigation of crops not used for consumption without cooking; habitat for wildlife and for common food and game fishes indigenous to the region."

Sources: National Wetlands Inventory, 1977; NVDA Undeveloped Shoreline Inventory, 1991; Vermont Lakes Protection Program, 1991; Vermont Rivers Study, 1986; Vermont Wellhead Protection Program, 1990; Vermont Wetland Rules, 1990

APPENDIX E: RYEGATE PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC SURVEY 1991

The Ryegate Planning Survey was mailed to 675 households in February, 1991. The mailing list was compiled from the town's Grand List and the voter check list. Additional survey forms were made available at the Town Clerk's Office and the South Ryegate Store.

86 completed surveys were returned for a response rate of 13%.

RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Your age: Total Responses:85
19 or under - 0% 19-24 - 0% 25-34 - 5%
35-44 - 32% 45-64 - 40% over 65 - 25%

Do you own or rent your home?: Total Responses:82
Own - 94% Rent - 6%

Which area of Ryegate do you live in?: Total Responses:85
North - 13% South - 25%
Ryegate Corner - 20% East - 15%
Non-resident property owner - 25% West - 1%

How long have you lived (or owned property) in Ryegate?
Total Responses: 85 less than a year - 0%
1-5 years - 20% 6-10 years - 13%
11-20 years - 32% 21 or more years - 34%

1. Planning can mesh with other private and public efforts to achieve a variety of goals. Please indicate the level of priority which you feel we should give to each of these goals - (H)igh, (M)edium, (L)ow, or (D)on't Know.

PROTECTION OF WATER QUALITY emerged as a high priority for 86% of those responding while another 12% felt that this goal should receive at least moderate attention. CONSERVATION OF AGRICULTURAL LAND, PROVISION OF ADEQUATE WASTE DISPOSAL, and ENERGY CONSERVATION were designated as high priority goals by over 70% of respondents.

Respondents seemed to distinguish between the RIGHTS OF DEVELOPERS versus those of private property owners in general. Protection of the rights of developers was assigned a low level of priority by 70% of respondents. However, 64% felt that the planning commission should give high priority to PROTECTING PRIVATE PROPERTY VALUES.

**TABLE 24:
LEVELS OF PRIORITY**

	Responses	High	Med	Low	Don't Know
Water Quality	74	86%	12%	1%	0%
Agricul. Land	73	74%	16%	10%	0%
Waste Disposal	74	72%	26%	3%	0%
Energy Conserv	71	70%	21%	8%	0%
Property Values	76	64%	25%	9%	1%
Forest Land	73	60%	27%	10%	3%
Wildlife Habitat	74	59%	34%	7%	0%
Health & Safety	73	52%	37%	8%	3%
Roads	70	49%	41%	10%	0%
Regional Issues	73	47%	29%	22%	3%
Town Services	73	44%	37%	18%	1%
New Industry	73	36%	14%	48%	3%
Housing	74	30%	31%	34%	6%
Comercial Devel.	70	27%	27%	43%	3%
Recreation	69	25%	36%	36%	3%
Developers' Rights	73	12%	16%	70%	1%

Seven respondents added recycling to the list of goals in the space provided. Other additions included doing something about high taxes, maintaining rural atmosphere and quality of life, and attracting a company to install cable TV service.

2. What do you feel are the three most important goals for the planning commission to pursue?. Total Responses:61

Twenty-three responses mentioned forest land, agricultural land, or open land. Fifteen specified the importance of attracting industry. Fourteen stressed environmental and conservation priorities. More than 10 respondents mentioned taxes, housing, and waste management. There were 13 responses which placed importance upon control and/or encouragement of growth, balancing needs for jobs with environment, maintaining quality of life or rural character, and regional planning.

3. What do you like most about living in Ryegate?. Responses:61

Responses revolved around rural atmosphere - open land, quiet, privacy, and quality environment. "The people who live here" and "good highway access" received several mentions.

4. What do you like least about living in Ryegate? Responses:52

TAXES were the most frequent response. Other popular answers were the ROADS and LACK OF COMMUNICATION AND COOPERATION between different parts of the town.

5. Are there particular areas of the town where you would like to see residential/commercial/industrial development encouraged or discouraged?. Please tell us which areas.

This question received a low rate of response, and answers about where to encourage or discourage residential, commercial, and industrial development were predictable. Most respondents would keep the character of the areas of town much as they are now. Some residential development is acceptable in all parts of town, especially Ryegate Corners. South Ryegate is seen as the best place for commercial development, and East Ryegate for industrial growth. Several respondents would discourage any commercial or industrial growth anywhere in Ryegate. Development is encouraged at the I-91 interchange, and discouraged in areas of farm, forest, and other open land. Several responses specified that new commercial growth should be clustered in one area.

6. How important is each of the following in determining the acceptability of new development in Ryegate?

**TABLE 25:
IMPORTANCE OF VARIOUS
FACTORS IN DETERMINING THE
ACCEPTIBILITY OF NEW
DEVELOPMENT IN RYEGATE**

5 = Very important; 1 = Not important; 0 = No opinion

Responses	5	4	3	2	1	0	
Adjoin. Properties	80	48%	10%	30%	4%	1%	8%
Tax Benefits		43%	15%	26%	4%	6%	6%
Jobs		36%	15%	26%	8%	6%	9%
Business Oppor.		28%	14%	26%	13%	9%	11%
Service Burden		41%	26%	19%	4%	1%	9%
Popula. Increase		31%	18%	26%	9%	5%	11%
Environmental		59%	15%	15%	3%	0%	9%
Social/Cultural		16%	14%	34%	14%	13%	10%
Local Control		36%	20%	18%	8%	9%	10%
Traffic		30%	20%	25%	9%	8%	9%
Design		39%	11%	15%	16%	8%	11%

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS seem to be the most important consideration in the acceptability of new development for survey respondents. EFFECTS UPON ADJOINING PROPERTIES and TAX BENEFITS TO THE TOWN also are deemed important. Write-in responses included regional impacts, product usefulness, developer's reputation, and the overall contribution of the development to the town.

7. The town should plan to channel new growth into areas which are already developed in order to limit the cost of providing

services. Choose the answer which best describes your response to this statement.

Total Responses:80

Strongly Agree-12%. Agree-53%. Disagree-12%

Strongly Disagree-4%. No Opinion-19%

65% of respondents expressed agreement with this statement. However, a large number declined to express an opinion.

8. Cluster development is a method to preserve open land and reduce the costs of providing services. This is accomplished by increasing building density on a suitable portion of the land and legally restricting the use of the remainder of the land.

Should the Planning Commission encourage clustering for

New commercial development?. Yes-66%. No-20%. No Opinion-14%

New residential development?. Yes-45%. No-41%. No Opinion-14%. Total Responses:80

Cluster development has more support for commercial uses than for residential. In fact several respondents mentioned commercial clustering in their write-in responses. Respondents were almost evenly divided for and against residential clustering. There are also many who expressed no opinion about this issue.

9. Which kinds of development would you like to see in town?. Please indicate whether you would like (M)ore, the (S)ame as now, (L)ess, or (D)on't Know.

63% of respondents indicated a desire for more home-based employment opportunities in Ryegate. Over half the respondents would like more single-family housing and more agricultural activities. 44% would like to see less multi-family housing development in town.

10. Is it important to conserve Ryegate's forest and agricultural land?. Total Responses:80

Forest land: Yes-90% No-6% No Opinion-4%

Agricultural land: Yes-85% No-9% No Opinion-6%

Responses to this question indicate a somewhat greater inclination toward conservation of forest land than agricultural land. This may be due to concerns about farmers' property rights, or the large amount of forest land in Ryegate.

11. Some Vermont groups are trying to permanently protect farm and forest land by buying conservation easements. Should the planning commission look into this option for preserving

Total Responses:80

Farm land? Yes-73% No-19% No opinion-9%

Forest land? Yes-74% No-16% No opinion-10%

12. Have you encountered "No Trespassing" signs on land which you have used in the past for hunting, snowmobiling, walking, or other recreation activities?. Total Responses:80

Yes-50% No-45% No Opinion-5%

13. Should the Planning Commission look into ways to maintain public access for recreation on private land?. Responses:80

**TABLE 26:
WHICH KINDS OF
DEVELOPMENT WOULD YOU
LIKE TO SEE IN TOWN?**

M = More; S = Same; L = Less; D = Don't Know
Responses M S L D

		M	S	L	D
Profes. Services	69	46%	46%	3%	4%
Home Bus/Ind.	71	63%	34%	0%	3%
Agriculture	72	53%	42%	6%	0%
Industry	69	45%	30%	23%	1%
Single-Fam. Housing	69	58%	39%	1%	1%
Multi-Fam. Housing	66	20%	33%	44%	3%
Rental Housing	67	18%	49%	25%	7%
Forestry	69	43%	43%	9%	4%
Motels/Hotels	66	20%	48%	27%	5%
Restaurants	68	29%	51%	18%	1%
Tourist Attract.	66	24%	58%	17%	2%
Recreation	68	37%	53%	7%	3%
Vaca. Homes	68	28%	47%	22%	3%
Day Care	65	46%	38%	3%	12%

Yes-43% No-45% No Opinion-12%

14. It is reasonable and acceptable to prohibit certain types of land use in some parts of town while allowing them in others.

Total Responses: 80 Strongly Agree-14% Agree-55%
Disagree-8% Strongly Disagree-9% No Opinion-9%

15. Does Ryegate have enough housing?. Please indicate whether you feel the town should have more (M), less (L), or about the same (S) amount of each type listed below. If you have no opinion or don't know, circle DK.

59% of the respondents said they would like to see more housing for the elderly; 58% would like less mobile home parks. 50% think there should be more affordable housing for middle-income earners.

16. Renovation and rehabilitation of existing housing should be a priority in Ryegate.

Total Responses:80
Strongly Agree-29% Agree-46%
Disagree-5%
Strongly Disagree-6% No Opinion-14%

**TABLE 27:
HOUSING PREFERENCES**

M = More; S = Same; L = Less; D = Don't know

Responses	M	S	L	D	
Single Family	69	43%	52%	0%	4%
Duplex	67	25%	46%	16%	12%
Elderly	69	59%	30%	3%	7%
Mobile Home Parks	69	14%	23%	58%	4%
Mid-Income	72	50%	35%	6%	10%
Low-Income	71	32%	41%	15%	11%
Rental Apartments	70	20%	44%	27%	9%
Rental Houses	70	19%	50%	23%	9%

Responses to this question indicate strong support for actions to facilitate upgrade of existing housing stock in Ryegate.

17. If you could change just one thing about Ryegate, what would it be?. Total Responses: 57

Respondents expressed a variety of wishes including a golf course and better radio reception! However, many said they want the town to stay the same, or even to go backward to a quieter time. Other preferred candidates for change were TAXES, ROADS, SCHOOLS, and LOCAL OFFICIALS.

18. Comments and Suggestions (Including comments written in response to all survey questions)

- Rejuvenate the downtown area.
- Try to attract light industry and/or tourist attractions.
- Don't get too carried away.
- Make it possible for natives to live and work here.
- Broadening the tax base is ineffective.
- Have a town plan that delineates commercial clusters, and stick to it.
- Any tax or business benefits from growth are outweighed by demands for services - growth costs everyone more and the environmental losses decrease the quality of life.
- Help keep rural character by not allowing those sodium vapor lights. - you can't see the stars anymore.
- From the quality of this questionnaire and its sense of humor, I feel we are fortunate to have a planning commission that is looking ahead as you are. We trust your judgment.
- Maintain the current rural atmosphere.
- If people like developed areas let them move to one.
- Make sure there is public access to all waterways.
- No one should be allowed to snowmobile on private land but should be allowed access to fish waters on it and hunt on it only with permission.
- Improve what's here.
- Seek federal funds for elderly housing.
- Who pays the taxes when land has conservation easements?
- Please provide results of this survey to all taxpayers.
- Include both resident and non-residents on planning commission.

- Get drivers to slow down in town.
- Decide what we want town to look like in next 5 years.
- The town needs a full or part-time business administrator. The current selectman system should be replaced. I do not believe the current system is responsive to peoples' needs.
- Good luck.
- Try to draw business or industry to create work.
- Encourage more home-based business opportunities.
- Consider the town's future by looking at the impact (of development) upon the town's younger population.
- Work on positive growth, conservation and priorities like improving education.
- Construct on-off ramps to I91 to encourage industry.
- Strong control of recreation areas to prevent noise, vandalism.
- Good balance with environment.
- Center commercial & industrial in certain areas and not spread throughout the entire town.
- Don't try to be bigger, better, than other towns. Try for only moderate growth and economic security.
- No need to have a quiet and clean place to live if you can't afford to live there.
- Judge each project on its own merits.
- Provide a balance of conservation of agricultural and forestry areas, combined with residential and enough industrial growth to make the area economically viable without destroying its charm.
- Newsletter for area events.
- Give senior citizens more help with taxes.
- People that hold positions in town favor their friends and relatives, don't treat everyone equally.
- If you say you're going to do something, make sure you do it. Such as fixing back roads. Taxes should not be same for people on back roads as for people on blacktop.
- Make jobs available.
- Bring in industry so taxes go down.
- Keep the town fully informed on commission work and goals. This survey effort is good.
- Provide town services more fairly to all areas, including class III roads.
- We like it the way it is - leave well enough alone.
- No more wood chip plants.
- Give thought and study to benefits if E. Ryegate Church could be developed as a Community Center.
- Less down-country influence.
- Planning commission should disperse.
- We need more business to provide revenue.
- If we are to keep paying taxes in our town we must be able to make a good living here.
- Keep Ryegate a small rural town.
- Determine the primary characteristic the town will aim for - and go for it.
- Get some new blood into the group running the town.
- Find a way to take the main tax burden off the home owner by encouraging more industry in certain areas of town.
- Come up with a master plan to prevent in Ryegate what has happened in MASS, CT, etc - uncontrolled growth.
- Lower taxes on farm and forest land.
- Has to be growth in town to support school and services.
- Make it easy for more industrial development.
- Present town plan is adequate!. Don't waste taxpayers' money on additional survey.
- Work for easing of acts 250 and 200.
- Enforce regulations on the books at present time.
- Abolish practice of burning fallow fields.
- Put development exceeding a certain value to a vote for approval after public hearing.
- Protect Ryegate from over-commercialization and population increase.
- Encourage agricultural use of land.
- Protect rivers, ponds, and streams, including Ticklenaked Pond.
- Try to keep and bring back farms.
- Bring the 1992 Superbowl to Ryegate.
- Keep Ryegate a farming community.
- Progress Backwards.
- Keep talking to the community about planning for change. Democracy in action is best and be sensitive to the fact that you are

not elected officials.

- Stop zoning from running our lives. If a man owns an acre of land it's his as long as he keeps it neat and clean. Who is zoning to tell him he can't put up a tool shed or build on a room?
- Let property owners alone (each do as he wishes with own property).
- Limit the number of mobile homes.
- Formulate a plan to encourage jobs and growth in the community rather than a no growth anti-business mentality.
- Should be able to put a trailer on any land you want to buy.
- Keep Ryegate from becoming a town like Newbury where the town tries to control the people.
- Thank you for putting out this questionnaire to gather people's opinions.
- Remove barriers and let the market decide (which kinds of development and how many).
- Be consistent in your actions. You should not penalize one person while letting your friend slide for the same violation.
- Recognize non-resident homeowners as a vital and integral part of the community.
- Recreation appears to be the best resource as well as tourism to bring more dollars from outside Vermont.
- Safeguard needless exploitation of Ryegate's rural landscape to unwarranted development.
- Listen carefully to arguments that make sense and dismiss irrational arguments even if they are for your cause. Give both sides the respect they deserve as long as they are rationally thought out.
- Lower taxes for retired people.
- No Decker plant.
- Make the three villages more attractive.
- Avoid the mistakes of Lebanon, NH in growing.
- Get a new board with younger blood.
- Need police protection and up to date fire equipment.