

# One Londonderry

**Londonderry Community Visit  
Report and Action Plan ~ May 2021**



Produced by the Vermont Council on Rural Development  
in partnership with the Vermont Community Foundation



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# I. Introduction

Located on the banks of the West River, in the northwestern corner of Windham County, Londonderry is a town characterized by abundant recreation opportunities, historic village centers, and many local businesses, from a local butcher shop and several restaurants, to alternative health care providers, a village market, and Magic Mountain. Londonderry is also a community of folks that care deeply for their neighbors. Neighborhood Connections, The Collaborative, local churches, the elementary school, and other groups and organizations offer a system of support and connection rare to a community this size.

Londonderry took part in VCRD's first-ever *virtual* community visit. While VCRD staff and the Visiting Team would have loved to visit the community in person, even in a virtual setting, the Londonderry community's sense of pride, energy and momentum, and numerous assets shone through. It shows real dedication and drive, during a global pandemic when people could divide and isolate, to instead decide to use this time to unify and connect – this is a testament to how committed Londonderry residents are to realizing a vibrant future for their town.

When VCRD was invited to work with Londonderry, this was clearly a community that was already on the move. Municipal staff and volunteers were working hard to address critical infrastructure and planning challenges. Community volunteers had organized "Project Londonderry," an initiative designed to look ahead and work towards a vision for a thriving economy and community. The Town came to VCRD not just to help bring forward new ideas, but also to help bring in new voices, hear from as many residents as possible, engage new volunteers and leaders, and to help build consensus and buy-in for the work ahead. From the choice to call the process "One Londonderry," to the community discussion and the overall structure of the initiative, the theme of coming together to build trust unity, and cohesiveness has been front and center.

It is not easy to choose priorities, and there are many other good ideas for action listed in the 'opportunities' section of this report that can inform the ongoing work of the Task Forces, but in the end, Londonderry selected solid priorities for action that will lead to a stronger and more vibrant community and economy for all including:

- **Expand Affordable Housing**
- **Develop a Community Center**
- **Revitalize the Village Centers/Main Street**

These initiatives set challenging but strategically achievable goals. There is a lot of work to do, but task force chairs have already come together to frame a cohesive structure and a path forward. With over 200 local people from all parts of the community participating in the process, it is clear that there is great energy in Londonderry for forward momentum and progress.

The Task Forces advancing these issues are already hard at work—please support their efforts, or join them by reaching out to their chairs (listed in the work plan section of this report). VCRD is prepared to support the efforts of Londonderry and we look forward to providing follow up help to the One Londonderry Task Forces as asked. We are also eager to continue to partner with and support existing local task forces and committees focused on economic vitality, recreation, and communications.

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There are many people to thank for making this Community Visit effort possible.

We would like to thank the Londonderry Selectboard and the Project Londonderry working groups who initially invited this process. We also deeply appreciate the work and leadership of the Steering Committee who helped guide the process from the beginning including: Vincent Annunziata, Chris Blackley, Kathleen Blackley, Pete Cobb, Sharon Crossman, Martha Dale, Esther Fishman, Annabelle Gray, Cindy Gubb, Larry Gubb, Peter Isakson, Tina LaBeau, Gail Mann, Georgeanne Mora, Maryann Morris, Kelly Pajala, Andrew Rackear, Elsie Smith, Barbara Wells, and Nicole Wengerd. Thank you also to all of the community leaders, groups, and organizations who worked to spread the word about the event and made sure everyone in town was invited and encouraged to participate!

Thanks also to the Northern Border Regional Commission, the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development, and the Vermont Community Foundation who all contributed funding to make this process possible.

VCRD calls state, federal and non-profit leaders to participate in Community Visit processes. We are proud of the partners we get to work with—and especially the One Londonderry Visiting and Resource Teams (listed in the back of this report)—they are the best of Vermont’s public servants.

Getting things done is all about leadership, and all of Londonderry should be grateful to those who’ve stepped up to serve as chairs of the task forces: Larry Gubb: Village Centers/Main Street; TBD: Community Center; and Patty Eisenhour: Housing. Sharon Crossman, a critical voice in bringing this process to Londonderry, will continue to provide leadership in the Planning Commission and communications; Martha Dale will lead the recreation task force; and Andrew Rackear will continue to lead the Economic Vitality working group.

VCRD especially wants to thank Elise Smith and Esther Fishman who stepped forward to lead this process as the Community Visit Co-chairs. Elsie and Esther will play an important role in coordinating and connecting these task forces and making sure to communicate with town leadership and the general public. Elsie has been a leader in Project Londonderry work, recreation efforts, and communications, and she will bring strong organizational and coordination skills to the initiative. Esther is a long-time resident, who is well connected across the community and will be an important voice in encouraging broad engagement and participation as the work moves forward. We are confident that Elise and Esther will be instrumental in helping to maintain momentum, continue collaboration, and drive forward!

At VCRD, we are so proud to work in places where community is real and strong, where local residents work together to get things done and make their communities the best they can possibly be. It was a great pleasure to work with the residents of Londonderry, who stand up for the town and who are lined up for the common good and best future for this wonderful community. We are eager to follow your progress and support your success!

## II. Vision for Londonderry's Future

*These points of vision were compiled from vision statements that were shared during Community Visit Meetings and supported by the majority of participants at the Resource Meeting and an online survey. The statements represent broad hopes that the majority of responding residents have for the long term good of the greater Londonderry community.*

### **Londonderry residents look to a future where Londonderry:**

- ❖ has enough housing in town for everyone who wants to live here.
- ❖ has jobs with good wages for residents that want to work in town.
- ❖ is affordable to anyone who wants to live here.
- ❖ is well integrated with the surrounding natural environment and natural resources.
- ❖ has a distinct village center that attracts young people & businesses.
- ❖ modernizes and thrives into the future, while keeping its rural, village character.
- ❖ celebrates and preserves its historic structures and is open to new innovative structures.
- ❖ is energy-independent, food secure, and walkable.
- ❖ is especially accommodating to folks at both ends of life (seniors & children).
- ❖ has ubiquitous affordable, accessible broadband that facilitates community connection.
- ❖ has a thriving and vibrant community center.
- ❖ is a safe, healthy and connected community.

### III. The “One Londonderry” Community Visit Process

VCRD’s Community Visit program is a way for towns to engage and bring together their residents, set common goals and directions in a neutral and facilitated structure, and access resources that will help them take action on those goals. **Here is a snapshot of the 5-month process in Londonderry:**



#### Planning Committee Meeting: January 6, 2021

On January 6, 2020, 19 local residents met virtually to plan for the launch of the Londonderry Community Visit process. This group came up with a name for the process – One Londonderry – and helped to plan the kick-off. They decided on forum topics and an invitation process. Through calls, e-mails, and flyers, this team worked hard to promote the kick-off.

The Planning Committee included Vincent Annunziata, Chris and Kathleen Blackley, Pete Cobb, Sharon Crossman, Martha Dale, Esther Fishman, Annabelle Gray, Cindy Gubb, Larry Gubb, Peter Isakson, Tina LaBeau, Gail Mann, Georgeanne “George” Mora, Maryann Morris, Kelly Pajala, Andrew Rackear, Elsie Smith, Barbara Wells, and Nicole Wengerd.

#### Step 1 ~ Kick-Off Forums: February 3, 2021

One Londonderry kicked off with four Zoom brainstorming forums. At the forums, over \_\_\_ action ideas were generated by the nearly 150 people who participated. 24 visiting team members participated, learning more about Londonderry and providing reflections to the community.

Visiting Team members included: Richard Amore, *Planning & Project Manager*, VT Dept of Housing and Community Development; Amy Bell, *Planning Manager*, VT Agency of Transportation; Ted Brady, *Deputy Secretary*, VT Agency of Commerce & Community Development; Jason Broughton, *State Librarian*, Vermont Department of Libraries; Chris Campany, *Executive Director*, Windham Regional Commission; Paul Costello, *Executive Director*, VT Council on Rural Development; Ben Doyle, *Executive Director*, Preservation Trust of Vermont; Rebecca Ellis, *State Director*, Office of Congressman Peter Welch; Alyssa Johnson, *Community Projects Associate*, VT Council on Rural Development; Jenna Koloski, *Community and Policy Manager*, VT Council on Rural Development; Nick Kramer, *Community and Policy Associate*, VT Council on Rural Development; Sarah Lang, *S VT Economy Project Manager*, Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation; Karen Mittelman, *Executive Director*, Vermont Arts Council; Jon-Michael Muise, *Vermont Area Director*, USDA Rural Development; Haley Pero, *Outreach Specialist*, Office of US Senator Bernie Sanders; Aly Richards, *Chief Executive Officer*, Let’s Grow Kids; Chris Saunders, *Field Representative*, Office of Senator Patrick Leahy; Jessica Savage, *Recreation Coordinator*, VT Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation; John Sayles, *Chief Executive Officer*, Vermont Foodbank; Gus Seelig, *Executive Director*, VT Housing & Conservation Board; Gabriel Sistare, *Small Business Recovery Navigator*, Brattleboro Development Credit Corp; John Tracy, *State Director*, Office of Senator Leahy; Mia Watson, *Research & Communications Coordinator*, VT Housing Finance Agency; Sue Westa,

Senior Planner and Community Development Lead, Windham Regional Commission; and Kevin Wiberg, Philanthropic Advisor for Community Engagement, Vermont Community Foundation.

## Step 2 ~ Community Meeting: February 25, 2021

After the kick-off, all of the brainstormed ideas were distilled into 19 key areas of action. Over 90 community members joined by Zoom on February 25<sup>th</sup> to narrow the list of priorities for community action. After lively dialogue and a dot-voting exercise, 3 action ideas emerged as key priorities. Participants then signed up for task forces that will convene to move these priorities forward.

## Step 3 ~ Resource Meeting and Task Force Launch: March 16, 2021

On March 16<sup>th</sup>, community members, facilitators, and resource team members came together virtually to develop action plans, identify resources, and form task force groups that will work in the months ahead to implement the priorities. From here forward, all action of “One Londonderry” is focused at the task force level.

Resource Team Members included: Chris Campany, *Executive Director*, Windham Regional Commission; Caitlin Corkins, *Historic Preservation Division*, VT Department of Housing & Community Development; Paul Costello, *Executive Director*, VT Council on Rural Development; Ben Doyle, *Executive Director*, Preservation Trust of Vermont; Alyssa Johnson, *Community Projects Associate*, VT Council on Rural Development; Jenna Koloski, *Community and Policy Manager*, VT Council on Rural Development; Nick Kramer, *Community and Policy Associate*, VT Council on Rural Development; Sarah Lang, *VT Economy Project Manager*, Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation; Jon-Michael Muise, *Vermont Area Director*, USDA Rural Development; Peter Paggi, *Director of Housing Development*, Windham & Windsor Housing Trust; Gretchen Rittenhouse, *Senior Housing Analyst*, VT Housing & Conservation Board; Gabriel Sistare, *Small Business Recovery Navigator*, Brattleboro Development Credit Corp; Mia Watson, *Research & Communications Coordinator*, VT Housing Finance Agency; and Sue Westa, *Senior Planner and Community Development Lead*, Windham Regional Commission.





## IV. One Londonderry Priorities

Determined by Londonderry residents at the One Londonderry Community Meeting  
February 25, 2021

*Proving that those who live, work and raise their families in a community are best qualified to understand its needs and potential, 90 Londonderry community members whittled down a list of 19 action ideas to 3 priorities that offer opportunities to enhance existing resources, and strengthen the town through exciting new ventures. Residents concluded the meeting by signing up for Task Forces in the selected areas.*

### **Londonderry residents selected three priorities for future action:**

#### **✓ Expand Affordable Housing**

Many residents see a crucial need for more affordable, safe, and quality housing for people of all ages and income levels. A Housing Committee could work with regional partners such as the Windham & Windsor Housing Trust to assess current needs and explore options including new development, co-housing models, multi-generational housing, and more. Additionally, the group could focus on a review of zoning and other regulations to improve housing development opportunities and access.

#### **✓ Develop a Community Center**

A group could form to develop a community center space in Londonderry to serve as a community gathering space, afterschool hub, youth center, potential childcare site, and more. Spaces for redevelopment could include the Mill Property, the Old Town Hall, or the group could consider new development to carry out these functions.

#### **✓ Revitalize the Village Centers**

A group could form to work with regional and state experts to develop and implement a plan to revive, beautify, and redevelop the Londonderry village centers. Plans could find a balance for a design that protects the rural character of the community while creating a stronger sense of place, improved aesthetics, and accessibility. Plans could include signage, sidewalks, traffic calming strategies, bike lanes, benches, and more. The community could examine a 1% local options tax as a funding tool to support these efforts.

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### **Other Key Opportunities identified by the community:**

*Along with the three chosen priorities, the key opportunities listed below reflect other potential ideas for action that community members shared on Community Visit Day. Though these opportunities weren't chosen as priority projects through this process, community members may find the list useful as they look to expand on current projects or take on new ones.*

#### **Improve Internet Connection**

A Task Force could form to improve internet service by collecting data on existing coverage, connecting with resources and providers to explore possibilities, and accessing funding and support to improve connection.

### **Support Local Farms and Food Access**

A Task Force could form to explore a community food hub model and identify a space to hold a winter farmers market to improve access and support local farms year-round. The group could also host an annual seed swap and other events and expand access to community gardens.

### **Improve Public Transportation**

A Task Force could identify and promote ways to increase public transportation options such as partnering with the tri-town region to expand routes or frequency and looking at ways to link the villages and other nearby community centers. The group could also explore and develop creative alternatives such as a local ride sharing model.

### **Expand and Improve Recreational Facilities**

A Task Force could form to inventory current recreation needs and develop a strategy to improve current facilities as well as expand recreation opportunities that could include an indoor recreation center, an ice rink, a skate park, pickleball courts, curling center, parks improvements, and more. This work could also include improved access to recreational gear through a community equipment library or exchange.

### **Improve and Expand Pedestrian and Bike Infrastructure**

A task force could form to expand and improve the infrastructure to make the Londonderry area safe, accessible, and enjoyable for pedestrians and bikers with bike lanes and paths, biking and walking trail maps, a pedestrian bridge over the West River, a river-walk, sidewalk improvements, and improved connectivity between villages and other towns. These improvements could position Londonderry as a destination and hub for accessible recreation for families and individuals.

### **Boost Tourism and Marketing**

A Task Force could form to identify and implement strategies to document, showcase, and market Londonderry assets, amenities, and attractions to draw visitors to the area. The group could develop a web presence, brand and marketing, catalogue lodging and dining options, curate visitor information, and create packages and guided tours.

### **Develop Wastewater Infrastructure**

In order to improve opportunity for housing development, business expansion, and critical services such as childcare, a Task Force could develop and implement a plan to build a community wastewater system in Londonderry.

### **Expand Access to Quality Childcare**

Access to affordable childcare is a challenge for many in the Londonderry community. A Task Force could form to focus on this challenge and build on existing work to identify the gaps and find ways to meet needs and reduce barriers. The group could explore options to expand current offerings, develop new childcare options, and boost training and support for early education providers.

### **Develop a Co-Working and/or Incubator Space**

A Task Force could form to evaluate the feasibility of and explore the development of a local co-working space and/or incubator to offer a shared office space and training and resources for area business owners, remote workers, and entrepreneurs as well as studio space and equipment for artisans and makers.

### **Support and Foster Local Businesses**

A Task Force could form to identify and implement ways to attract, boost, and support local businesses. The group could reach out to small businesses and develop a network to coordinate and share resources, ad space, training, and help to address any challenges or barriers businesses face. Residents shared ideas for attracting businesses to town including a laundromat, a café, a retail outlet for local artisans, retail cannabis, and more. The community could consider a local economic development committee or a chamber model to carry out these strategies.

### **Redevelop the Old Town Hall**

A Task Force could create and implement a plan to renovate and redevelop the Old Town Hall as a community space for year-round gatherings, events, and community meetings.

### **Improve Community Communications and Unity**

Londonderry residents expressed a need to better connect with neighbors, bridge existing divides, and improve communication among different groups in the community. A Task Force could form to focus to create a communications strategy to share community events, information, and improve connection and unity. The group could explore strategies from physical kiosks and print newsletters to email listservs, a central website, an online calendar, or other local news and communications platforms.

### **Expand Community Events**

A Community Events Task Force could come together to plan an annual series of local events that could help to unify and connect the community. Events could include food festivals, holiday gatherings, foliage celebrations, recreation/sporting events, garden tours, and other exciting activities.

### **Coordinate Youth and Family Programming**

Many Londonderry residents expressed a need for more opportunities for families to connect and access programming as well as a need for activities for youth in the community. A Task Force could work to unite local groups and organizations to create a full calendar of programming that would provide enriching activities for youth, help to better connect youth and the community, and deepen connection among families.

### **Plan for Flood Mitigation and Resilience**

A Task Force could form to focus on improvements for flood mitigation and resilience. The group could review current needs and develop a plan to address flood plain issues, protect the villages, and suggest regulatory and structural changes to prevent further flood damage or erosion.

### **Increase Access to Alternative Health Care**

Londonderry residents celebrate the many alternative health care providers in town. A group could come together to boost access to these services by creating a central hub with space for a variety of health care providers. Additionally, the group could consider collective marketing and other strategies to boost awareness and use of these local providers.

# V. Task Force Action Plans

Resource Meeting, March 16 2021

*Londonderry Task Forces are comprised of community members and an appointed chairperson. On Resource Day committee members worked closely with a facilitator and a visiting resource team to develop step-by-step action plans and a list of human and financial resources to help achieve their goals. This final phase of the program marks the time when residents truly take ownership of the work, and begin the exciting process of turning ideas into action.*

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## ✓ Expand Affordable Housing

Community Chair: **Patty Eisenhour**

Facilitator: **Jenna Koloski, VCRD**

Resource Team Members: **Chris Campany, Windham Regional Commission**

**Peter Paggi, Windham & Windsor Housing Trust**

**Gretchen Rittenhouse, VT Housing & Conservation Board**

**Mia Watson, Vermont Housing Finance Agency**

Task Force Signups: Paul Abraham, Vincent Annunziata, Tony Bailey, Hilary Batchelor, Annis Bessette, Kelly Capen, Jeffrey Cavagnino, Devon Cohen, Richard and Martha Dale, Emmett Dunbar, Patty Eisenhour, Mark Frayne, Cynthia Gubb, Shannon Heidebrecht, Nancy Jensen, Nicole Wengerd, and Helena Wu

Many residents see a crucial need for more affordable, safe, and quality housing for people of all ages and income levels. A Housing Committee could work with regional partners such as the Windham & Windsor Housing Trust to assess current needs and explore options including new development, co-housing models, multi-generational housing, and more. Additionally, the group could focus on a review of zoning and other regulations to improve housing development opportunities and access.

## The Issue Today

- Rental housing is limited.
- Real estate values are high making it hard for new homeowners.
- There are no Affordable housing projects in town other than Smithhaven which is subsidized.
- Hard for employers to find employees because of tight market.
- Some businesses have bought houses and they are supplying their own housing (Stratton bought the Swiss Inn in Londonderry) – it's not enough and doesn't help community as much.
- Londonderry and many surrounding towns have housing priced under \$125K that sells very quickly because there just aren't many homes available in that range.
- There are some current municipal planning grants in place to look at water and wastewater study – nearing completion and just got MPG at end of December – RFP prepared to go out to submit applications for that.
- Lack of available suitable land for wastewater systems.
- The Church has an interest in doing a habitat for humanity build but are running into difficulty with getting help from the local Habitat for Humanity chapter.
- Rental vacancy rate is tight – 2.8% in Windham County.
- Only a buyer's market in the last year – historically hasn't been a housing market here.
- Problem = a large part of housing is established in Andover not part of Taconic and Green or Wardsboro – people have to commute to work in Londonderry.
- The Flood Brook system associated with the Taconic and Green – drives incredible value to housing here.
- Wastewater study is looking at small systems – need to find land where the soils are appropriate for that kind of very small system.

## Action Steps

1. Conduct surveys, inventories, and a public housing forum to collect information on the situation today. What is currently available in the community? What are the most pressing needs? Bring together employers, community members, and other experts to evaluate existing conditions today. It may be possible to work with the Planning Commission through their Municipal Planning Grant to find some answers to housing questions
2. Connect with the Planning Commission to understand the work they have done around housing – what has already been done? What is needed? Where could support be useful and how can the groups work together?
3. Committee education: Work together to develop an understanding of the options available. Identify and learn from other similar communities, especially resort communities, that have tackled housing. Bring in experts and resource leaders who can share what options may be available to address needs identified.
4. Identify actions that can help to meet the needs. These may include:
  - Look into options for Cooperative Housing
  - A look at zoning and policy in the town to open up opportunities for affordable housing development
  - Coordinated work with the whole region to solve the housing challenge
  - Invite Dominic from the Jamaica Cottage Shop to a discussion about tiny homes (and look at zoning changes to accommodate)
  - Redevelop the old hotel at the base of Magic
  - Develop tax breaks or other incentives for building affordable housing
  - With the planning commission – look at the possibility of Neighborhood Development Area Designation. This could come along with benefits to support housing development. This is an action item in the town plan.
  - Engage in community education to build support for zoning changes that would allow for affordable housing development, and increase publicity and buy in for affordable housing generally.
  - Look into whether short terms rentals could be used to capture funding for local housing opportunities
  - We have lost buildings in town from flood and fire, maybe we can look at in fill development in the villages – new development in the flood plain could be difficult.
  - Look at housing that is in the flood plan and develop and understanding of options for the future (buyouts, etc.)
  - Look at housing options for seniors

## Resources

1. The Windham and Windsor Housing Trust is in the process of looking at housing data in the region and can help to review. Contact Peter Paggi at [ppaggi@homesmatterhere.org](mailto:ppaggi@homesmatterhere.org).
2. The Vermont Housing and Finance Agency collects housing data that may be useful including:
  - A statewide housing needs assessment with a chapter on Windham County: [https://www.housingdata.org/documents/images/Chapter%2023\\_Windham%20County.pdf](https://www.housingdata.org/documents/images/Chapter%2023_Windham%20County.pdf)
  - Rent data in the region: <https://www.housingdata.org/profile/rental-housing-costs/median-gross-rent>
  - Short term rental info in the region: <https://www.housingdata.org/profile/housing-stock/short-term-rentals>.
3. Subscribing to realtor listings, Red Fin, and Zillow may help to give a sense for the local housing market
4. The Town Lister can help to find information as you survey the current conditions

5. The Windham Regional Commission can help to facilitate and coordinate conversations with other surrounding towns. Contact Chris Company at [ccampany@windhamregional.org](mailto:ccampany@windhamregional.org).
6. South Burlington has a housing preservation bylaw (after the airport expanded and they lost a chunk of their stock). Housing lost must be replaced. The details might be complicated, but worth looking into.
7. Nancy Jensen has tools that can help create graphs to show housing market trends.
8. VHCB can be helpful down the line if a specific site has been identified. Feasibility funds can help to look at specific projects and can help explore opportunities. Contact Gretchen Rittenhouse and [gretchen@vhcb.org](mailto:gretchen@vhcb.org).
9. Sarah Lang at BDCC could help reach out to employers of people that commute to and from Londonderry. Contact [slang@brattleborodevelopment.com](mailto:slang@brattleborodevelopment.com).

## Visiting Resource Team Recommendations

*After Community Meeting Day, Resource Team members, representing a wide array of professionals from across the state, submitted their recommendations for other potential actions and resources the task force might consider as it moves forward. These recommendations encompass their experience, past success, and consideration of the community's unique assets and needs.*

### Action Step Recommendations:

Form a permanent Housing Committee. That Committee could work with Windham & Windsor Housing Trust to determine area needs and possible solutions, particularly affordable homeownership. The Committee could explore a Housing Trust Fund to support some of this work. They may want to look into assessing the impact of short-term rentals, including assessing additional taxes/fees, which could be a funding source for the Housing Trust Fund. It's also worth looking at local zoning to see if any restrictions could be relaxed to promote development (although it sounds like the Planning Commission is already at work on this?). Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) could be encouraged (through zoning adjustments, town staff assistance, or even a revolving loan fund) but there is the potential that the owners would just use them for short term rentals, not affordable full-time rental housing

Review the state's new "Zoning for Great Neighborhoods" guide to help inform future zoning bylaw update needs: <https://accd.vermont.gov/content/zoning-for-great-neighborhoods>

Work with the Windham Regional Commission to review your bylaws and update to be more housing-ready and inclusive, and apply for a municipal planning grant to update bylaws.

Think about developing through a different lens, with community members as your small scale developers. To learn more, you can watch/attend Incremental Development Alliance trainings on the small scale developer ecosystem and ways to make your town's regulations and processes more accessible. You can also hire IDA to assess your town's regulations. Find out more at [www.incrementaldevelopment.org](http://www.incrementaldevelopment.org).

Create a community housing needs assessment looking at quality, quantity, accessibility, and availability. Review socio-economic data to understand the issues and obstacles to residents' success.

Identify redevelopment opportunities and/or sites available in appropriate locations or consider municipally owned land as a way to decrease development costs.

Work with Windham Windsor Housing Trust to determine need and determine their interest in partnering on developing housing

Define specifically what affordable/workforce housing you're trying to address.

Consider working with neighboring towns on the issue. The best places for workforce housing may be in Londonderry or may be in adjoining towns or both. Infrastructure capacity (water and sewer) will be key. You'll want to talk about the development of housing where that infrastructure either exists or is feasible.

Incorporate housing into the Village Center revitalization discussion.

### **Technical Assistance/Peer Connection Recommendations:**

Vermont Housing Finance Agency built a toolkit to support local housing committees. Find it at: <https://housingdata.org/toolbox/steps-for-municipalities/housing-committees>.

Vermont Housing Data (<https://www.housingdata.org/>) has a lot of housing data at the community level as well as a housing toolbox, with resources on how to start a housing committee and what tools they can use to promote housing.

Southern Vermont Economy Project worked with IDA recently. You can view recordings of the sessions here: (<https://brattleborodevelopment.com/past-svep-programming-resources/>).

Windham and Windsor Housing Trust could be a key partner in this work. Visit <https://www.homemattershere.org/> or contact Elizabeth Bridgewater at [ebridgewater@homesmatterhere.org](mailto:ebridgewater@homesmatterhere.org).

Don't be afraid to think outside the established norms. Here's an example: <https://mlf.org/community-first/>.

### **Potential Funding Sources:**

There is, potentially, a lot of affordable housing money available in the next year or so, through VHCB and other agencies. For all of the options mentioned above, VHCB has feasibility funds grants of up to \$10,000 for initial project investigation and analysis to get you started. Municipalities are eligible recipients of these funds.

Home ownership - VHCB has Homeland Grants for home purchase assistance (contact Windham & Windsor Housing Trust) and also works with local Habitats through the same funding source. We have experience with Habitat chapters throughout the state, so may be able to help Londonderry's regional chapter be of more assistance. The Governor has indicated that home ownership is a target for some of the extra funds that may come VHCB's way, so we may have more resources this year than in the past.

Rental housing - VHCB expects to have extra resources in the next year or so for rental housing targeted to residents from 30% to 100% of median. Again, working with WWHT may be key. Your lack of infrastructure may make this a challenge - we usually see/finance projects with 10 or more units as it is difficult (not impossible) to do smaller projects with state/federal funds. One of the participants mentioned a senior housing need. While statewide demographics may support this, it is not necessarily a current state funding priority, especially as it appears that Londonderry already has apartments serving low-income seniors.

A municipal Planning Grant could support studies and planning around housing development. Visit <http://accd.vermont.gov/community-development/funding-incentives/municipal-planning-grant> or contact Jenni Lavoie at [jenni.lavoie@vermont.gov](mailto:jenni.lavoie@vermont.gov).

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## ✓ Develop a Community Center

Community Chair: **TBD**

Facilitator: **Ben Doyle**, *Preservation Trust of Vermont*

Resource Team Members: **Nick Kramer**, *VCRD*

**Jon “Max” Muise**, *USDA Rural Development*

**Gabriel Sistare**, *Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation*

Task Force signups: Pam Abraham, Paul Abraham, Bryce Bauer, Brian Clark, Heather Clark, Marjorie Daitch, Richard Dale, Emmett Dunbar, Deborah Granquist, Nancy Jensen, Sarah Kiefer, Elizabeth Labeau, Mary Lines, Justin Maciak, Kerry Mara, Maryann Morris, Diana Pagnucco, Peter Pagnucco, Paula Pelkey, Travis Schwartz, Lisa Sicotte, Elsie Smith, Jen Wasylko, and Nicole Wengerd

A group could form to develop a community center space in Londonderry to serve as a community gathering space, afterschool hub, youth center, potential childcare site, and more. Spaces for redevelopment could include the Mill Property, the Old Town Hall, or the group could consider new development to carry out these functions.

### Existing gathering spots / meeting spaces:

- Parish Hall
- Town Hall – Unheated, no water.
- Custer Sharpe House
- Middletown Road School House – Sold to a private person
- Londonderry Rescue Squad Building
- Londonderry Depot – Pay to enter. Owned by a non-profit that owns the West River Trail. Supports professional development for educators, seed swaps. Smallish. A little underutilized.
- Number of other structures, unheated, no water.
- Shoe Barn – Privately owned building at intersection of Rt 11 & Rt. 100. Vacant for 8 years. On the market. Key potential property given the location.
- The Old Dostel’s Inn & Lodging – Right next to Magic Mountain. Back on the market.
- Flood Brook School – multiple resources, have to reserve ahead of time. They tend to be generous with youth programming.
- Pingree Park – Public park with various amenities. Owned by the town. Good outdoor space.
- The Town Offices – Big meeting room available for rent.
- The Church in South Londonderry – hopefully finished very soon. Three spaces available.
- Free South Londonderry Library – has its own area with a trail
- Memorial Park
- Privately owned tennis center with mixed programming.
- Londonderry is the geographic hub for all the mountain towns.

No inventory of above spaces exists.

### Current leadership in this area:

Parks & Recreation Board in town that mostly manages maintenance & development of parks.  
No centralized recreational program.

Neighborhood Connections  
Youth Sports Group  
The Collaborative



## Action Steps

1. Consult with other towns / groups of same size that may have already done this work.
2. Include neighboring Mountain Towns in a regional conversation about a regional community center.
3. Create an assets map that includes appropriate / current uses for the spaces in town.
4. Gather input (needs assessment) from the broader community about what defines a Community Center. (Maybe a subcommittee takes this on?)
5. Present a vision statement to the broader community.
6. Create a story map to support this project?

## Other ideas for action

- Bringing in new Londonderry partners & community members.
- Describe the goal.
- Begin a budget assessment with help of existing organizations.
- Take a phased approach – focus first on increasing indoor heated spaces.
- Consider establishing a recreation director. Consult nearby models.
- Consider the potential to double as an emergency shelter.
- Consider the potential to expand access to technology.
- Create a story map to support this project.

## Resources

**Ben Doyle**, Preservation Trust of Vermont, [ben@ptvermont.org](mailto:ben@ptvermont.org)

**Jon “Max” Muise**, USDA Rural Development, [jon.muise@usda.gov](mailto:jon.muise@usda.gov)

**Gabriel Sistare**, Brattleboro Development & Credit Corporation, [gsistare@brattleborodevelopment.com](mailto:gsistare@brattleborodevelopment.com)

**Chris Company**, Windham Regional Planning Commission, [ccampany@windhamregional.org](mailto:ccampany@windhamregional.org)

**VCRD Community Leadership Guide** (Develop a Community Center Chapter on page 73):

<https://www.vtrural.org/leadership/guide> The guide has a much longer list of resources / possible funders.

## Visiting Resource Team Recommendations

*After Community Meeting Day, Resource Team members, representing a wide array of professionals from across the state, submitted their recommendations for other potential actions and resources the task force might consider as it moves forward. These recommendations encompass their experience, past success, and consideration of the community’s unique assets and needs.*

### Action Step Recommendations:

Explore and reach out to other Vermont communities that have recently created or expanded community centers, like Bridgewater and Wilmington. Rockingham is also working on a community center project right now.

Explore a feasibility study for the best sites and/or buildings for development of a community center and potential associated costs for each site/building. Then lay out various development and cost options along with fundraising and financing plan. Remember to look at capacity and potential septic upgrade needs. Survey

residents and area service groups to determine what services would be provided at each site. Build out a business plan to look at what is possible and what is sustainable over time.

Conduct a community survey regarding community center interest and what services residents would like to access at the center. Conduct an inventory of potential spaces to house a community center.

There seems to be great potential to bring together many of Londonderry's wonderful assets under one roof. The yoga/fitness/dance studio was named as a community asset and I believe it's located in the shopping strip - could that be moved to a community center? Is there potential to partner with Magic Mountain on after school care and/or youth programming, since they are interested in year-round family programming? Activate local artists- Lasser Ceramics, nearby glass studios, etc - who might partner with you to offer after-school workshops for kids. And as you know, there are terrific arts assets nearby in Weston, Dorset, and Kinhaven - I suggest reaching out to them about possible collaboration. Family art projects were mentioned as a possible bridge to bring together people from different generations and different "pockets" of the community. An indoor community center could also serve as a food hub in cold weather for Taylor Farm and other operations that offer cheese, jams, etc., year-round.

It may be beneficial to start by reviewing the VCRD Community Leadership Guide page 73. "Develop a Community Center". Then, start with an inventory of space and uses of the space available. It could be helpful to reach out to neighboring communities (Winhall and others listed in the guide) and discuss how they were able to accomplish their community center and ask about partners and resources used. Once space(s) are identified develop operational and programming plans and seek funding to implement the plan.

There are what feels like some community divides. Look to at least keep everyone informed of and invited to the project.

With a project like this, it is helpful to start small and stay flexible as the project moves forward.

Convene a group to make a plan to solve the waste water issue, which seems to be a key barrier for this project.

### **Technical Assistance/Peer Connection Recommendations:**

Find out more about the Bridgewater Community Center project here:

<https://bridgewatercommunitycenter.org/>.

Find out more about the Wilmington community center project here: <https://www.osccvt.com/>.

Connect with the Community Facility TA staff, Gabriel Sistare at the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation. He may be able to provide project support in an ongoing way. Email

[gsistare@brattleborodevelopment.com](mailto:gsistare@brattleborodevelopment.com).

Continue to be in touch with Let's Grow Kids, as perhaps we can find a solution to the wastewater barrier with some federal funds and reissue our original capacity grant. Contact Aly Richards at [aly@letsgrowkids.org](mailto:aly@letsgrowkids.org).

Southern Vermont Economy Project's Project Development workshop series may be helpful as the project moves forward. Visit <https://brattleborodevelopment.com/project-development-series/> or contact Sarah Lang at [slang@brattleborodevelopment.com](mailto:slang@brattleborodevelopment.com).

The group could hold a strategic funders meeting with potential funding partners. Review the list of funders on page 76 of the VCRD Community Leadership Resource Guide to identify potential participants or reach out to [alyssa@vtrural.org](mailto:alyssa@vtrural.org) to help coordinate.

The Preservation Trust could support the redevelopment of a historic building for this use. Contact Ben Doyle at [ben@ptvermont.org](mailto:ben@ptvermont.org).

## Potential Funding Sources:

A municipal planning grant could be used for planning and feasibility. Contact Jenni Lavoie at [jenni.lavoie@vermont.gov](mailto:jenni.lavoie@vermont.gov) or visit <http://accd.vermont.gov/community-development/funding-incentives/municipal-planning-grant>.

Find a list of funding and incentive sources through the Vermont Community Development program here: <http://accd.vermont.gov/community-development/funding-incentives/>.

A VNRC small grant for smart growth could support this project: <https://vnrc.org/small-grants-for-smart-growth/>.

The Arts Council's Cultural Facilities program could be a potential funding source. To learn more contact Michele Bailey at the Arts Council at [mbailey@vermontartscouncil.org](mailto:mbailey@vermontartscouncil.org).

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## ✓ Revitalize the Village Centers

Community Chair: **Larry Gubb**

Facilitator: **Paul Costello**, VCRD

Resource Team Members: **Caitlin Corkins**, *Department of Housing & Community Development*

**Alyssa Johnson**, VCRD

**Sarah Lang**, *So VT Economy Project Manager*, BDCC

**Sue Westa**, *Windham Regional Commission*

Task Force Signups: Paul Abraham, Faith Alberti, Chris Blackey, Kathleen Blackey, Marlene Boyaner, Peter Caradonna, Donna Chambers, Brian Clark, Heather Clark, Devon Cohen, Susan Collins, Sharon Crossman, Bill Elio, Samantha Elio, Esther Fishman, Bruce Frauman, Mark Frayne, Ben Freeman, Cynthia Gubb, Larry Gubb, Jane Hewson, Allison Hopkins, Bonny Johnson, Gary Kleiman, Mary Lines, Gail Mann, Andrew McKeever, Roger Melzer, Tom Metcalfe, Eric Mingorance, Kristin Nelson, Shane O'Keefe, Paula Pelkey, Taylor Prouty, Andrew Rackear, Guerrino Savi, Heather Stephenson, and Jon Tumler

A group could form to work with regional and state experts to develop and implement a plan to revive, beautify, and redevelop the Londonderry village centers. Plans could find a balance for a design that protects the rural character of the community while creating a stronger sense of place, improved aesthetics, and accessibility. Plans could include signage, sidewalks, traffic calming strategies, bike lanes, benches, and more. The community could examine a 1% local options tax as a funding tool to support these efforts.

## Longer Term Action Steps

1. Londonderry will develop a Master Plan for the North Village that will guide potential redevelopment projects including sidewalks, the transportation corridor, village buildings, riverside, and infrastructure; this work will guide public private partnership for Village renewal. Recognizing the Master Planning process as a major long-term project with significant development scope, the Task Force is committed to not simply wait on the plan but to engage in shorter term actions listed below.
2. In its history of development, the Village turned its back on the River. It is time to turn back to it by developing a Londonderry Riverwalk; this holds tremendous opportunities for recreation, commerce and community.

3. Safe pedestrian travel from one end of the village to the other is of vital importance and an historical part of Londonderry's past, it is also interconnected with other aspects of community life with regard to an identifiable village center and economic development for existing and future businesses.

## Starting Points for Action

1. Work to develop a couple of key crosswalks.
2. Plan and implement a visible project connected to the riverside: benches or picnic tables that turn attention to the river.
3. Frame a 'Pop up' Riverside or Village Green Celebration with lights, music, local foods, canoeing—playing with what might be possible.
4. Evaluate ownership and access for key parcels on the river.
  5. Develop a Bike Stop—a place to gear up bikers with a kiosk sharing biking loops and maps, bike racks, signage, a place to rest and connect to the community, to celebrate bikers and draw in more activity to the village center.
  6. Hold a community visioning session around the village centers, buildings and riverside with charrettes and art, with ways for community members to share their ideas and get excited as a feature of the master planning process.
  7. Work to have radar speed signs put in place as traffic slowing/calming measure.
  8. Research necessity of retaining wall adjacent to former shoe barn and work towards its refurbishment or demolition, removal and regrading, should it be found to be unnecessary.

## Resources

1. Better Places Grants from the VT Agency of Commerce could be a funding source that would happen quickly and build opportunity for momentum around a pocket park, benches, picnic area on the river or other short to mid-term projects.
2. The Community Fund for Londonderry is a non profit that could receive and manage funds for this work.
3. Mimi has a list of potential funds and grants for village projects.
4. The Downtown and Village Center Tax Credit program is a potential source for redevelopment of the mill, or other privately owned buildings in the downtown that need investment.  
<https://accd.vermont.gov/historic-preservation/funding/tax-credits> Londonderry is a designated Village Center, so it receives priority for a lot of grant sources from the state.
5. Caitlin Corkins at the Agency of Commerce can help as a resource and referral agent for projects:  
[caitlin.corkins@vermont.gov](mailto:caitlin.corkins@vermont.gov) 802-828-3047
6. The VT Housing and Conservation Board has Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) funds that can provide grant writing assistance for rural communities. <https://www.vhcb.org/redi>
7. Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation (BDCC) can provide support and technical assistance and also have a process to support and train project developers in communities:  
<https://brattleborodevelopment.com/project-development-series/>
8. Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative (VOREC) is receiving significant new funds that could support bike, walking and other outdoor recreational infrastructure: <https://fpr.vermont.gov/vorec-community-grant-program>
9. The Windham Regional Commission can help with planning, facilitation and with grant applications, and have funding for brownfields work if pertinent.
10. An AARP Placemaking Grant could help visualize cross walks, pedestrian improvements, pocket parts and other projects.

11. VTrans has bicycle & pedestrian grant funding: <https://vtrans.vermont.gov/highway/local-projects/bike-ped>
12. As the Master Plan comes into completion, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), USDA Rural Development or the Northern Border Regional Commission could be major funders of transformational project for village revitalization.

## Visiting Resource Team Recommendations

*After Community Meeting Day, Resource Team members, representing a wide array of professionals from across the state, submitted their recommendations for other potential actions and resources the task force might consider as it moves forward. These recommendations encompass their experience, past success, and consideration of the community's unique assets and needs.*

### Action Step Recommendations:

Continue forward with Londonderry's current municipal planning grant award to develop a village revitalization plan. Work with a consultant to develop a physical vision for the village, improving the aesthetics, safety, and functionality of the village. Perhaps apply for future grants to develop a revitalization plan for South Londonderry village too.

Start or expand a village beautification program working with local garden clubs and community volunteers.

Continue to take advantage of the village center designation program and its benefits.

Search out grant programs that could help revitalize the village center through streetscape improvements, public space enhancements, and building rehabs.

Be sure to engage developers both locally or reach out to neighboring communities.

Work with property owners to bring empty spaces to life, even temporarily through Pop-up businesses & events. Connect Property Owners with Entrepreneurs who may be able to use spaces for pop up events/sales.

Provide incentives such as simplifying or fast-tracking redevelopment process in identified areas such as village centers.

Consider a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District.

Encourage or solicit public art installations.

Develop a River Walk, pocket parks or other green spaces and trail connections.

Create a Village Center event to bring attention to your efforts before redevelopment occurs. For example, the Festival on the Green in Storrs/Mansfield CT – before this new downtown was developed they began holding a small festival with an artificial turf green in a parking lot. <https://www.mansfieldmdp.org/> and <https://www.downtownstorrsfestival.org/>.

### Technical Assistance/Peer Connection Recommendations:

<https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/implement/physical-social-environment/neighborhood-beautification-programs/main>.

Southern Vermont Economy Project's Project Development workshop series could be a helpful way to get support and peer networking throughout this project. Visit <https://brattleborodevelopment.com/project-development-series/> or contact Sarah Lang at [slang@brattleborodevelopment.org](mailto:slang@brattleborodevelopment.org).

Localmotion could help with place-making and traffic slowing/safety initiatives to improve walk and bike ability. Visit <https://www.localmotion.org/>.

Rebecca Sanborn Stone and David Hohenschau of Community Workshop would be great consultants on your revitalization projects: <https://www.communityworkshopllc.com/>.

Contact Michele Bailey at the Vermont Arts Council about your placemaking ideas. Michele runs the Animating Infrastructure grant program, which supports projects that integrate public art into community infrastructure: <https://www.vermontartscouncil.org/grants/organizations/animating-infrastructure>. Contact [mbailey@vermontartscouncil.org](mailto:mbailey@vermontartscouncil.org).

For ideas and inspiration, look at the Better Block Bethel project, which revitalized downtown Bethel: <https://bethelrevitalizationinitiative.org/better-block>.

### **Potential Funding Sources:**

ACCD has compiled a funding directory to support initiatives like this. Find it here: <https://accd.vermont.gov/sites/accdnew/files/documents/CD/CPR/CPR-Funding-Directory.pdf>.

Londonderry could be a good fit for the Better Connections Program, which is co-sponsored by VTrans and ACCD. Visit <http://vtrans.vermont.gov/planning/projects-programs/better-connections> or contact Richard Amore at [richard.amore@vermont.gov](mailto:richard.amore@vermont.gov).

When it comes time for implementation of a master plan, Northern Border Regional Commission could be a major funding source. Find out more at <http://accd.vermont.gov/economic-development/funding-incentives/Northern-Boarder-Regional-Commission> or contact Kristie Farnham at [kristie.farnham@vermont.gov](mailto:kristie.farnham@vermont.gov).

Review the Vermont Community Foundation grant programs. The Spark grants may be a good fit for projects related to village revitalization and community connection. Visit <http://www.vermontcf.org/Nonprofits/AvailableGrants.aspx> or contact Kevin Wiberg at [kwiberg@vermontcf.org](mailto:kwiberg@vermontcf.org).

The Better Places grant program could support place-making initiatives in the Village Centers. Learn more at <https://accd.vermont.gov/community-development/funding-incentives/better-places> or contact Richard Amore at [richard.amore@vermont.gov](mailto:richard.amore@vermont.gov).

The State of Vermont Bicycle and Pedestrian program has grants available for work to improve walkability and bikeability. Visit <https://vtrans.vermont.gov/highway/local-projects/bike-ped> or contact Jon Kaplan at [jon.kaplan@vermont.gov](mailto:jon.kaplan@vermont.gov).

Recreation grants could fund parks, trails or other outdoor recreation facilities. Visit <https://fpr.vermont.gov/recreation/recreation-grants> or contact Jessica Savage at [jessica.savage@vermont.gov](mailto:jessica.savage@vermont.gov).

AARP often makes funding available for place-making projects that contribute to the vitality and livability of village centers. Contact Kelly Stoddard Poor at [kstoddardpoor@aarp.org](mailto:kstoddardpoor@aarp.org).

Contact the Windham Regional Commission about Brownfields Assessment and Cleanup. Contact Sue Westa at [swesta@windhamregional.org](mailto:swesta@windhamregional.org).

Consider using some one-time federal stimulus funds (ARPA) for an infrastructure investment that could allow for a wastewater solution that would spur not only a child care project, but also foment revitalization of the village center and other infrastructure improvements.

# VIII. One Londonderry Town Forum Notes

Compiled from focus group discussions held with over 150 Londonderry community members and the VCRD Visiting Team on February 3 2021, and through a paper and online survey.

*Although the prioritization work of the One Londonderry Community Visit Program requires a town to decide what is most important as it moves forward with Task Forces, nothing is lost in the process from the long list of concerns and ideas expressed in early community focus sessions. Many interesting and diverse thoughts are represented here, and are presented as a reminder of issues explored, and a possible foundation for future projects.*

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## Economic Development, Jobs, & Village Centers

Visiting Team: Paul Costello (facilitator), Alyssa Johnson (scribe), Richard Amore, Amy Bell, Ted Brady, Ben Doyle, Rebecca Ellis, Sarah Lang, Jon Muise, Gus Seelig, Gabriel Sistare, John Tracy, Mia Watson, Sue Westa

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### What are the Assets in this Area?

- Both the north village and south village already have designation as “Village Centers.”
- Strong volunteer base in town.
- Generous community; a lot of potential for private fundraising.
- The West River – scenic, historic for powering Londonderry in earlier years, fishing, wildlife habitat.
- Parks in Londonderry – Pingree Park, Williams Park (Farmers Market held), Memorial Park (swimming).
- Tennis Club / Center.
- Lowell Lake and Lowell Lake State Park.
- A water and waste water study is already underway laying the groundwork for potential sites in both villages.
- Supermarket.
- Magic Mountain.
- Jamaica Cottage shop – rapidly growing in the area.
- Growing small businesses.
- Central location between ski areas and town market; terrific place to be.
- Taylor Farm.
- Walker Theater – Arts.
- Service Center – has foods, gas stations.
- Local cheese manufactures and agricultural products.
- History with Burton and Hayes brother snowboards.
- Summer Farmer’s market.
- Engineer’s campground.
- SoLo farm and table – draws folks from around the world.
- Recreation – many opportunities, not just ski areas.
- Transportation network connectivity – two state highways.
- Jake’s and New American Grill restaurants.
- Centralized small town – bank, post office, library in South Londonderry, dump – self-contained.
- Garden Restaurant.
- Londonderry Butcher shop.
- The community is big enough to grapple with issues such housing for the as elderly, disabled, low income.
- Embrace people from all economic strata.
- Community Yoga.
- Mountain Valley medical center – walk in service with doctors available.
- Neighborhood Connections provides numerous services to the community.
- West River Trail – biking, riding, cross country bed.
- Catamount Trail.
- Biking ski area.
- Thrift shop on Main Street.
- Natural recreational opportunities – ski center, town forest, lakes, trails.
- Central gas station and other location.
- Flood Brook School – features for everyone including trails.
- Neighbors Pantry – bimonthly food distribution center.
- Arts and music that is accessible from Londonderry – Sundays on the Hill, others.
- West River – Utley Brook, Thompsonburg.
- Brown enterprises – supplier of a lot of types of equipment.
- Hunter Excavating.
- Fire departments and rescue squad.
- Green Mountain Pharmacy.
- South Londonderry library.
- The Chester Telegraph – an online newspaper that covers this area.
- The people that live here!
- Grandma Miller’s bakery, vet, psychologist – a lot of employment.
- Grandma Millers, and the pastries!
- Rotary Club – willing and able to help.
- Second home owners support local businesses, and some now attend school locally.
- Service community.
- MVMC and School district - Flood Brook School.
- Burr and Burton Academy.
- Montessori School.
- There is a Pre-K in the area.
- West River Farmers Market.
- Independence Day Parade.
- Taylor Farm, Anjali Farm.
- Compact / streetscape village.

- Local artists and galleries.
- Lots of small businesses supplying products, food, services.
- Town lands with unmarked hiking trails.
- Several auto mechanics and parts store.
- Auto Supply hub.
- Churches.
- No big box stores. All locally owned businesses.

- Mike and Tammy's, Maple Leaf Diner and Jelley's.
- Green Mountain Market – Donna Korpi.
- From a recreational asset standpoint, Magic Mountain and the surrounding Glebe Mountain area offers alpine ski touring (uphill) opportunities as opposed to strictly downhill skiing.
- Local building and landscape contractors.

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### What are the Challenges?

- Route 11 is an asset and liability. Vehicles can speed through without stopping.
- No public transportation – challenging to get around without a vehicle.
- No laundromat for 25 miles.
- Water overall, and lack of wastewater in both Villages – can't sell properties or create new ideas for properties.
- Structures in Village Center within floodplain.
- Broadband connectivity – not the worst but not great. All at the mercy of Xfinity. More options low than high geographically. Limited capacity.
- Buildings in the North Village that are abandoned or not being utilized – Mill owner decided not to be open. Squeaks house next to the Mill.
- Loss of structures due to flood or fire, especially on Main Street.
- Not an active small business organization for recreation / tourism packages – recently rejoined Ludlow Chamber, which is the nearest one.
- Don't have an ED committee (PL?).
- Village aetiques – not very attractive.
- No money – municipality doesn't have funding for municipal projects and maintenance.
- Lack of affordable housing.
- Small local businesses – can't offer wages that match what the housing issue is.
- Biggest challenge is lack of long-term affordable housing while working at a local business – makes it hard to draw in new residents.
- Lack of housing located in places that are accessible without a vehicle.
- Retaining new residents – amenities?
- Folks travel to work for jobs, complicating childcare.
- Childcare has been a challenge for a while – collaborative working on it.
- Majority of business district zone in the flood plain. Little option for physical growth in our village centers.
- Xfinity/Comcast owns the area.
- Cellular service reception needs to be improved.
- The town center is also not very walkable. There are no sidewalks in the town.
- The aesthetics of the village Main Street and intersectional 11/100. Chester and Weston can be an inspiration.
- There is a lack of smaller more affordable housing for employee/work force.
- Affordable and pedestrian oriented housing especially as exacerbated by the current pandemic. Age in place living, supportive housing, multi-dwelling living in general is needed.
- 60% out of state ownership but not occupied. About 70% are occupied due to it being a rental property.
- Areas zoned for business are limited.
- Seasonal economy with seasonal customer surges, thus hard for year-round employment.

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### Opportunities: What Should Be Done / What Action Can Be Taken by the Community?

- Ability for pedestrian pathways for connectivity.
- Clean up downtown.
- Expand zoning for business expansion.
- Bike Trail – have a map that shows how centralized we are – easy and printable thing to do.
- Traffic calming/streetscape improving for walking in the south Village – so it is walkable.
- Pedestrian bridge over the West River.
- Partnering with tri-mountain towns for public transportation.
- Lost ability to put in things with Federal money – 50-50 vote.
- Better internet – Low? road doesn't have access.
- Shatter the myth that improvements will raise taxes – if we attract more businesses we will have a lower tax rate.
- Creating an incubator space – have people on the front space.
- Places to meet with other people while they work.
- Businesses have ads constantly – want to hire people, but have to bring them in. Need workers and places to live – key part of recruitment – some have to buy housing.
- Sense of place for Village Centers.
- Local Chamber of Commerce.
- Guided tour packages.
- Ski and Stay package.
- Coordinated marketing campaign that would lift all boats.
- Reliance on tourism is a bad model – available real estate scooped up by folks making money.
- Affordable housing – Windham Windsor Housing trust has some programs.
- Create a Laundromat.
- Need to reach out and organize.
- Infrastructure – water/sewer.
- Jamaica Cottage Shop – 70+ employees. Growth – trying to recruit for 12-15 positions – where do you find people? Lacking Labor pool – can new residents add?
- Housing – median income level housing – workforce housing – large disparity.
- Mountains have bought old inns – is there a way to do this?
- Be open to retail cannabis industry – select board needs to move faster forward.



- 1% Local Option Tax.
- Combining marijuana and recreation.
- Water problem for downtown Londonderry.
- Financial assistance from the select board.
- What do you do with segment of the population that doesn't want change?
- North Londonderry and South Londonderry – big deal to change zip code – bring the communities together – central community center on Luinette(?) land.
- South Village more quiet.
- Wastewater.
- Childcare.
- Digital infrastructure – need state assistance to do it.
- Never know what's going on – no central dissemination of information.
- Sharing of information about hiking trails.
- Create task forces to work with select board – work on grant writing, etc.
- Elevate youth voices – bring youth needs and voices to the table.
- Share contact information from the group at the meeting.
- Energize entrepreneurial spirit – create awards.
- Municipal planning grant.
- Get second home owners more involved in town problems.
- Work with what we have, such as town parks and town land. Current options are outdoor and seasonal – create a year-round or winter rec space.
- Spruce up a parking lot.
- Flood Brook school – utilize existing space.
- 6-9 timeframe is tough for young working families. Have food and childcare at future meetings to bring folks in.
- Clean up downtown.
- Build a pedestrian bridge over the West River.
- River walk path around downtown.
- Water treatment – biomimicry based.
- Create a sense of place for our village centers.
- Food hub/year-round expansion of the farmers market (it was tried, but had few food vendors).
- More cottage industries creating Vermont products. Think of "Bernie's Mittens."
- There is also the issue of waste water management. Our businesses can't grow without this.
- Co-working space.
- Biggest employment issue (recruiting) is the lack of affordable housing in the area.
- In addition to housing, the general cost of living in our region is very high (i.e., Londonderry Village Market, electricity and heating costs, etc.).
- We own our own energy and internet – cooperatively owned/run.
- Affordable "workforce" housing. Not just investors purchasing property to rent on AirBnB and make bank from fleeting tourists.
- Marijuana retail sales.
- Public transit link between North and South village.
- Flood Brook School as a community hub.
- Our town owns multiple land parcels that are underutilized at this point for things such as water, sewer, housing, recreation. Money obviously is a major roadblock.
- Flood Brook idea – bring in speakers, expand the library, food classes & hub for local farms, pickup sports, outdoor concerts, community garden.
- Although we have great and plenty of town land and town parks, we need a four-season Rec Building to sport and gathering together in the cold months.
- The intersection of Route 100 and Route 11 is a key crossroad. The right business would thrive here and also could make a statement about our town.
- The town website needs a refresh - It is in the works and about to be reviewed.
- It would be nice to have a central news source. Right now we have just a little blurb in outside newspapers.
- Love the idea of a farming food hub - especially for winter. Winter Farmer's market?
- Magic has turned their tubing park into a terrain park, open Fri and Sat night (4-7). There are so many kids/adults (local and from other towns) enjoying the park. I really agree that an indoor recreation space would really benefit town. What immediately comes to mind is a skating rink.
- Though not all these trails are in our town, we are within a couple of miles from the Catamount Trail, Appalachian Trail, and Long Trail. Outdoors are amazing.
- Bristol community housing project is an interesting model to look at for affordable housing and community development.
- Assets - pooling resources from surrounding towns that access Londonderry (Landgrove, Weston, Peru).
- Some of those people may stay after the lockdown too. and get involved.
- Take over control of route 11 and route 100 through town
- Being a sending town is a plus for many.

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## Reflections of the Community Visit Team

- Amazing to see how far the group has come in eight years since initial meetings about a village revitalization process. There is a lot of community/social capital and leadership, and support at the state.
- Hearing need to engage with second homeowner community, which is a great opportunity, and way to engage with newcomers. Want to keep them in schools. Great opportunity to explore further.
- Emphasis on infrastructure – outdoor recreation and water/wastewater. Create support to help villages thrive.
- Few communities this size that have this level of resources – build on what you have.
- So many folks on this call, the list of assets could go on and on.
- Is there a way to leverage food, rec economy, arts and culture? How can they marshal together? Are they meeting together already?
- A better and more vibrant community helps everyone.
- Heard a need for wastewater infrastructure. The state DEC will look at decentralized systems and 150 villages in Vermont are looking into this, some of which is NBRC supported.

- Work with the community – doing a lot of work with PL already. The people here are the ones who will get things done – you will do these really great projects – trainings with folks for Southern VT Economy project.
- Amazing community – confluence – so many things coming together and going for the community. Success is eminent! In econ, infinite amount of time to be – Village centers and zoning is something you can build off of. Outreach and marketing is also key. Planning Grants are awesome and become implementation resources.
- Greatest asset was the energy on the call!!
- Gliieb lands – need for affordable housing with workforce – easier to build with infrastructure – committee to focus on the issues. Potential to partner with other communities?
- Event that is reflective of an engaged and sincere community.
- There is capacity to help with support and important engagement at BDCC through Gabriel’s position
- Streetscape – may be time for it. Magic Mountain has vastly improved.
- Wastewater is a challenge, and the community should figure out a way to address it.
- The community seems to have narrowed in on what you need – wastewater is a challenge – what can you do about this?

## Housing & Transportation

Visiting Team: Paul Costello (facilitator), Alyssa Johnson (scribe), Richard Amore, Amy Bell, Ted Brady, Ben Doyle, Rebecca Ellis, Sarah Lang, Jon Muise, Gus Seelig, Gabriel Sistare, John Tracy, Mia Watson, Sue Westa

### What are the Assets in this Area?

- Windham & Windsor Housing Trust is an asset; could be a great potential partner for exploring affordable housing options. Housing projects are complex with multiple funders and infrastructure that needs to be in place. You just can’t snap your fingers and have a housing project appear.
- Neighborhood Connections as an organization. They are working on transportation and saving money for a van to fill gaps between what is covered by Medicaid rides.
- There are major routes through town – Routes 11 and 100.
- Smith Haven provides congregate living for seniors and disabled folks. It is the only subsidized affordable rental housing in Londonderry and was built in 1981: <https://housingdata.org/find-rental-housing/DOARH-property-list/property-detail/smith-haven>.
- Beautiful rivers.
- There are rides for medical appointments for folks disabled or over 65.
- Bike/ped transportation – trying to connect to people by pathways to places.
- Recreation working group.
- Scenic Byway through Route 100
- Attractive environment along with transportation.
- Land is available.
- Robust energy efficiency programs offered by the state.
- Old Dostell’s hostel at Magic Mountain could be a potential redevelopment site. Has water and sewer.
- Excellent road crew and roads.
- Property in South Village – old post office.
- Complex between the north and south village.
- Barn that houses a couple of businesses but also has empty space.
- Structures coming up for sale – eligible for or on the National Historical register.
- Great history with buildings and cool architectural details (S Londonderry post office).
- Smith Haven is senior/disabled housing.
- We have a great road crew and a top notch town garage for equipment storage and repair. A new salt and sand shed compliments the work they do on our 52 miles of roads.
- VTrans recently (2020) conducted a road safety audit for the north village

### What are the Challenges?

- Septic system that is “hanging on with duct tape”.
- Empty buildings in the downtown – old mill, was a restaurant.
- Not a lot of newer homes – many homes built in the 60s and 70s for ski areas
- Main issue for recruiting is the lack of housing. Business owners compile rental as much as possible. Some folks travel up to an hour to get to work in Londonderry.
- Housing is very expensive.
- Maintenance of employee housing can be challenging
- Route 11 as a primary east-west road and has a lot of large truck traffic with homes being trailered through the community.
- No pedestrian facilities - no crosswalks in either village.
- No sidewalks in the North Village.
- Though the speed limit is 30 miles through town, the speed is much faster than that. Need traffic calming. Limited traffic enforcement – some hired state police, but don’t usually stop folks for speeding.
- Town budget is \$5000 for VSP and there is ongoing discussion about policing.
- Lack of identifiable Village Center.
- No fixed route transportation that serves the mountain town community.
- Income/age restrictions for existing rides – and only for medical rides.
- Only one blinking traffic light in town
- No pedestrian crossings.
- You need wheels to get around – if you can afford a car, you are able to get around.
- Plan from after Irene to connect both sides of Route 11 that now house Williams Park where the Farmer’s Market happens.

- Have tried to get sidewalks by Williams Park and by the church – not enough traffic to warrant the crosswalk.
- Folks get run off the road walking to the supermarket
- Challenges of Air BnB and vacation rentals; there used to be year-round housing available.
- Folks who can rent do rent through short term, for high income amounts.
- Existing housing stock doesn't supplement what is needed. There current stock is depleted or high end. Rich and poor divide.
- There is a need for "fresh state" housing. This would require grants and investments for section 8 and other housing.
- Mill and post offices are tear downs.
- Municipal land across from Hearthstone Village – Pingree park.
- Workforce vs. section 8 housing >> workforce housing for workers who are not upper middle class
- The current low-income housing facility is small - only 20 units.
- Limits by access to transportation at low income housing resulting in some people hitchhiking in winter to get to services.
- housing is very expensive

### **Opportunities: What Should Be Done / What Action Can Be Taken by the Community?**

- The town has the ability to regulate Air BnB and short-term rentals through an ordinance or change in zoning bylaws. Section in zoning rewrite that could address this. Proposals could include that short term rentals are allowed only in houses with full time residents, or would need a permit
- Review the zoning bylaws – where housing can go?
- The Planning Commission is working with a consultant on a wastewater study in both Villages
- Invite Windham Windsor housing trust to talk about their programs.
- Consider new models of housing – cohousing, different age groups and family units together. Using shipping containers or other alternative housing?
- Go Vermont programs.
- Post-bus system in Europe as a potential model
- Create an inventory of what is available in the community
- Have a conversation with Brandywine hotel are there inns/hotels that could be converted? Out of range of funding, but for the right amount could be an option.
- Incentivized housing projects in the bylaw for many years – but don't get that type of application
- Make incentives for a developer support the housing – right now trending towards higher end housing because it makes more money.
- Concerns with New Jersey policy of mandating a certain amount of affordable housing.
- Smith Haven is a classic high density single family housing development. This could be a low-cost solution and easy place for a transporting device to go to, but there is a 2 acre minimum for housing right now.
- Some motels shifting their rental policy.
- Smith Haven – have a conversation with THM (developer). Do they have interest in investing in other properties?
- Investigate a housing co-op where businesses and the town get together? Employee housing is an incredible asset.
- Tax abatement on new development has been very effective in Manchester, where they give 5-10 year tax abatement.
- Communicate with navigational system providers (i.e. Google Maps). Local roads are used by heavy traffic and get a lot of wear and tear. Can they direct folks to use more state highways?
- Windham regional commission has looked at this and may be able to provide input.
- Incentivizing land use and building use for public benefit has been recently been mentioned in discussion.
- We are also seeing the Snowdon Motel and Magic view motel shifting toward some weekly rentals and more longer-term housing as opposed to overnight.

### **Reflections of the Community Visit Team**

- The train station and West River trail can be key drivers of economic development. Tremendous opportunities and assets. Creating a master plan for North Village is great; walkable villages are key to equal access. There could be resources through Better Places in the future.
- The fundamental building of a community is a diverse housing stock. You are one community based on lines on a map; talk with neighboring communities about what they are doing. Folks using Section 8 or HUD RD housing could be making more than \$15 an hour; working class Vermonters need this support. We want to make this a real priority for the region and help those in need and attract more young people here.
- Has there been consideration of the river as transportation or a focus on walkability or a river walk? A lot of historic Vermont communities are returning to the river as a focal point.
- Response: It was built for transportation on logs as mills. We are history strong! yet this will not Now fit with in building and water regulations. The Biggest impediment to affordable housing and business.
- The community is operating like it was built for cars not for people.
- "Housing is where jobs go to sleep at night" AND it is the right thing to do – everyone needs a safe and affordable home.
- It could be useful to create a housing commission to have a group actively focused on these issues.
- There is a wealth of ideas in transportation and expanding new forms of public transportation, such as on demand and micro services. The also relates to climate change and carbon reduction.
- Project development series run by BDCC could be a great resource for stewarding projects. Current work with Rockingham to cultivate developers in the community vs. attracting them from elsewhere.
- SVEP Project Development Series (Link to 2020 series, but more to come on 2021 series):

<https://brattleborodevelopment.com/past-svep-programming-resources/#1593184765297-84c6bfee-62ea>

Cultivate small scale developers from within the community--resources: Intro to Small Development lecture:

<https://brattleborodevelopment.com/past-svep-programming-resources/#1609426265547-549d07c6-9549>

Upcoming training for Vermont by the Incremental Development Alliance on becoming a small scale developer:

<https://brattleborodevelopment.com/public-events/small-developer-virtual-seminar-with-ida/>

- People are better employees when they don't have to travel that far. A strong housing market is great if you are selling and really hard if you are buying. Short term rentals might need to be addressed as a statewide issue.
- Key to have a housing committee focused on this as a fundamental issue.
- Changing trends of white elephant buildings being turned into housing (or torn down).
- The group can invite state and regional expertise into communities to show them their assets and have a discussion. For example, housing development on the Sugarbush access road where— Sugarbush sold the land cheaply.
- Some communities create their own housing funds and provide down payment assistance for young people. VHCB is happy to partner however is appropriate.
- Housing projects are more risky without public water and sewer.
- Transportation and housing are interrelated. If there is focus on downtown villages and communities with proper water and

sewer, might be able to accomplish a lot of the things you want.

- The broader community of Vermont is full of amazing people doing amazing work, and a lot of people are doing work to make housing action. Having a committee is key and then allows you to invite resources and look at other models that can be replicated and learn some of the pitfalls.
- Partnerships are key. There are major entities in the region that could be partners for housing and transportation.
- A Windham Region nonprofit that provides education on shared housing: <https://sharinghousing.org/>.
- The governor proposed significant weatherization funding in his budget. With an aging housing stock, this could be a key opportunity.
- Consider how space is made for car vs. people. Try to make it feel like folks should slow down.
- Labor and materials can be expensive in Vermont, and good sites can be taken. Housing committee can explore some of these issues.
- Dept. Housing and Community Dev Enabling better places can be a resource: <https://accd.vermont.gov/content/zoning-for-great-neighborhoods>.
- It is great that you recognize the need for housing.
- Missing middle housing is a challenge beyond Londonderry and Vermont. Want to focus housing in downtown to keep housing where you really want it for walkability, etc.
- Every community that has water and sewer did it at some point!

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## Youth, Families, & Childcare

Visiting Team: Jenna Koloski (facilitator), Nick Kramer (scribe), Jason Broughton, Chris Campany, Karen Mittelman, Haley Pero, Aly Richards, Jessica Savage, John Sayles, Kevin Wiberg

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### What are the Assets in this Area?

- Really active parks department has improved access to existing parks.
- West River Montessori school.
- Good group of really dedicated teachers in local schools, dedicated to making things happen.
- Sports organizations in town, Nordic club, West River association.
- School gym for use for community events.
- SBAA – Basketball & other sports
- Wealth of outdoor physical spaces, parks trails etc.
- Nearby mountains: Magic Mountain for all seasons, not just winter.
- South Londonderry Fire Department does a Truck or Treat every year.
- Neighborhood Connections – wide range of social services to support families. Everything from food access support to transportation.
- Lots of community-oriented local businesses that are willing to support families and events.
- Terrific health center in downtown Londonderry. New family doctor coming in June.
- Children's dance program for kids of all ages.
- Nearby communities with whom there are long-standing reciprocal relationships.
- Vibrant and active group of volunteers in the rescue squad.
- Local Library serves both youth and older population fairly effectively. Host book clubs and art exhibits.
- Local farmers market which draws from neighboring towns.
- When it comes to crisis, this community does amazingly well. Saw this during Irene, COVID. Folks are willing to help each other.
- Community forum can be a useful outlet and often a space for sharing incredible stories of generosity.

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### What are the Challenges?

- Limited 0-3 childcare options.
- The Collaborative actively trying to open a child care center for years, running into septic limitations.
- State regulation makes licensing for in-home childcare facilities difficult.

- Difficulties in finding an adequate workforce. Hard to maintain part-time staff.
- Lack of affordable housing makes it hard to attract young families and build a tax base.
- Affordability of childcare is an issue.
- Older community has transportation challenges, exacerbated by the rural nature of the community. Hard for folks to get to appointments, shopping etc.
- Lack of things for young families to do. No movie theatres. Lots of outdoor play spaces, fewer indoor options. What do you do with tiny humans?
- Lack of recreational opportunities for non-athletic kids.
- Many of the available sports opportunities have high price tags to equipment. Other families can't afford the transportation back and forth down the mountain to allow their kids extra-curricular opportunities.
- That all high schoolers go to Manchester creates a kind of disconnection within that age group.
- There are pockets of disconnection. Once kids enter school, the schools often become families' social nexus.
- It takes a lot of effort to be/get connected.
- There are distinct socioeconomic groups in the community experiencing very different financial realities. These communities rarely overlap or intersect.
- There are often intergenerational gaps. Folks with kids are disconnected from folks without, or folks whose kids have already moved away.
- Limited communications channels, many that do exist are not online safe spaces. Topics on community forum can quickly become contentious.

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### **Opportunities: What Should Be Done / What Action Can Be Taken by the Community?**

- Develop affordable housing.
- More programming for families - connect community partners to leverage both internal and external programming resources
- A community center that could double as an afterschool hub and event center.
- Sports equipment exchange.
- Old Town Hall in desperate need of rehabbing. Could be a space used for something. Currently only 3-season. Used in the summer.
- Elders would like to be able to age in place. Multi-generational cohousing developments. We all have things to give to each other.
- The Smith Haven complex – independent living but in communities. Could we replicate that elsewhere in town? This seems super needed.
- I think about the new library in Manchester. If we could build something like that, it would likely pay dividends to the community over the long run.
- As we continue to finish rebuilding our church building, we'd love to be able to host more community events.
- There are natural pairings with surrounding towns based on school districts. What we don't have is a central, moderated online instantaneous communications hub. Let's bring these groups together to form a communications network.
- Given the challenges in housing a single communications hub, an alternative could be to appoint a dedicated individual whose job would be to collect information and disburse through existing communications networks.
- Town-wide sewer infrastructure could help lay the groundwork for child care center development.

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### **Reflections of the Community Visit Team**

- It sounds like there are a lot of great building assets – recreation, active church space, health center. The question seems to be how to leverage these assets forward into action.
- I'm hearing the theme of community collaboration in many different ways. It sounds like the connections and systems and bones are in place to move a lot of these action ideas. From across the board, it sounds like you need some simple unlocking barriers like wastewater, and then there are systemic barriers that exist at the state level (regulations, wages etc).
- A lot of what we've talked about here seems fairly common. Recreation can really be one of the things that bring people together. It's absolutely true that gear can pose an initial financial barrier for a lot of folks. There's definitely state funding available to help support that. There's also funding available to help support professionalization of the parks department, if that winds up being the route you all go.
- I'm also impressed by all the resources that already exist, not only in Londonderry, but also in the surrounding communities. It seems like there may be an opportunity for partnership and regional collaborative.
- Glad to hear that folks use the library locally. I hear community in the sense of conversation, and a thinking out of the box. What could the old town hall become? What could we do with our library. You all could be the innovation hub for all the mountain towns.
- Londonderry has some of my favorite artists. How can you activate those artists to knit together some of those resources to drive forward community projects in a way that bridges gaps?
- For inspiration look to the Icelandic model: thinking about the 3rd space when kids aren't at school or home.
- Please feel free to reach out to our Congressional Delegation.

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## Recreation, Health, & Wellness

Visiting Team: Nick Kramer (facilitator), Jenna Koloski (scribe), Jason Broughton, Chris Company, Karen Mittelman, Haley Pero, Aly Richards, Jessica Savage, John Sayles, Kevin Wiberg

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### What are the Assets in this Area?

- A lot of alternative health practitioners in the area and different services. We need to do a better job with unified marketing and have a central place to offer services.
- Many talented health practitioners and healers.
- At Magic Mountain there are so many kids coming and enjoying night terrain park at Magic Mountain.
- We have a yoga, fitness, dance studio in town. Offer that space for community events and programs in an open space
- Pharmacy, health clinic, Magic Mtn, Lowell Lake.
- Only sleigh ride opportunity in southern VT at Taylor Farm – lots of land for people to recreate on and a farm that is open to the public.
- The Collaborative is a great organization that keeps kids aware of health and safety and drugs.
- Middletown Farm.
- Anjali Farm.
- Magies Farm.
- One of the only dedicated health teachers for a k-8 school in the area. Our kids get more health classes than many other kids in VT right now.
- We a Dark Zone on the east coast of USA for Astronomy.
- Have a health center in town with great medical providers.
- New family doctor coming into town.
- The rescue squad is all volunteer and all free.
- The food pantry/food shelf and the grocery store, farmers market, farms, etc. corner store, mike and tammy's – many food/grocery assets. We could grow more what the food shelf does.
- We have 2 community parks as well.
- Parks have swimming, tennis (and pickleball), basketball, baseball...
- Art and historical society – a lot of opportunities for the arts and music.
- Theater in Weston.
- Kenny Haven (?) music.
- Music on the Hill in Weston.
- we have a lot of trails in our town that run through people's private properties. These trails are open to the neighbors. Wouldn't it be great to make these more broadly available somehow.
- West river sports association and flood brook recreation run youth recreation sports programs – robust numbers.
- West River Trail is wonderful for hiking, biking in warmer months and snowshoeing in Winter. They are now grooming xcounrty trails now.
- We have major trail and other outdoor recreation resources in town and in adjacent towns - Catamount Trail, Long Trail/Appalachian Trail, new mountain bike trails in the national forest, gravel roads for biking, camping resources....
- Outdoor recreational resources are huge – both commercially based and parks and public lands.
- We have two lakes for Kayaking and canoeing- Lowell lake and Gale Meadows. Also, over 200 people play Pickleball in the area. We need more courts!
- We have the only Wolfdog Sanctuary in VT. Not open to the public but we do educational work, would love to work with FloodBrook in the future!
- A lot of birdwatching.
- West River Tennis – has brought in people from all over and tennis center is open to residents.
- Efforts going on with Pickle ball courts and paddle tennis
- Project Londonderry is creating a resource guide of all the assets that Londonderry and surrounding towns can offer to the community.
- Planning Commission working to preserve open spaces.
- Project Londonderry looking into a River Walk.
- There are community gardens at Flood Brook.

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### What are the Challenges?

- Indoor facilities face challenges being able to survive during covid.
- Challenge is getting setup ready to go with pickle ball and tennis.
- Magic mountain community has the magic outing club – the challenge it faces is trying to connect and communicate with people outside of magic mountain community. Not enough communication and outreach.
- lack of safe bike trail/roads into and through town. Route 11 with major truck traffic, narrow side roads with fast local traffic.
- working families with a lack of transportation for children's activities.
- Mountain Valley trails also facing challenges reaching out and getting more people involved.
- No central information about any programming/available resources. It shouldn't be so hard to find out what is going on recreationally.
- The winter months sports are outdoor. yes, the tennis center is there, and should be built upon. How do we gather and sport indoors in the winter in Londonderry. 1. Privately at the tennis center or 2. Publicly at FB School with limited access and availability.
- Great but dangerous place to ride a bike. A bike path Londonderry is a great but dangerous place to ride a bike A bike trail would be great. As would a walking trail along the river and connecting the two villages.
- Tied to housing, but also health/wellness: Lack of aging in place housing for our aging community.

- Lack of big indoor recreational spaces. It is hard to negotiate for time in school. With the covid crisis that is not available.
- There are challenges with having things run (like Flood Brook athletic assn) solely with volunteers.
- We have an Olympic cross-country ski training team that is based in our area in the summer and fall, but there have been conflicts over road use; similar issues have come up with organizing biking events in the area.
- Have some flat trails that are more accessible but that is more difficult in the winter months – most things are hilly so are not as accessible.
- Transportation is a huge issue. A big initiative right now to deal with the challenge of how to get people to store, appointments, etc. There was a ride share program but covid stopped that.
- We're lacking a community center for multi-age gatherings and events that support community vitality and mental health
- long story short, no place to walk on our streets or indoors in the winter months.
- Food insecurity.
- Lack of housing for healthy aging in place.
- We lack sidewalks for people to get around safely.
- Local food pantry has dramatically increased what it's providing – twice the number of people tapping into services.
- This is an expensive place to live – local market is expensive – a lot of people are struggling right now.
- No way for people to get down to Price Chopper – we don't have a system to help.
- Challenge to get elderly folks to food – no way to get it.
- Challenge for people with substance use to travel to get to their required services.
- Barriers to accessing mental health services.

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### **Opportunities: What Should Be Done / What Action Can Be Taken by the Community?**

- Place for alternative health practitioners.
- Skating rink.
- Curling center.
- Third idea would to be have a ReCenter built on town Prouty land abutting the tennis center on Rte 100.
- Redevelop the Town Hall as a community center space.
- The addition of sidewalks in town would benefit the elderly for walking in winter months.
- In Nantucket they have a local card to get a 15% discount on local market – that could be interesting to try here.
- Create a space or find a space to have an indoor/winter farmers market.
- Improve sidewalks and connectivity through the main and north village – plowed sidewalks in the winter would improve recreational opportunities in the winter.
- There is an opportunity for Londonderry to be known for family activities together – come together, come here to Londonderry and bike the West River Trail – improve that trail to be more engaging for those looking for an adventure. Create a name for ourselves in a specific category.
- Thing that gets young people outdoors is geocaching – can expand the network of geocache concept in Londonderry – engaging and multigenerational.
- Londonderry could be the central hub for the regional outdoor recreation - start a brew pub, public access bike shop, coffee shop, outdoor picnic area, co-working space. A place for people to congregate.
- Integrate food access and “healthy communities” in town plan and zoning review.
- River walk way along the west river – take advantage of that asset with a trail system – link pathway along river with flood protection.
- Inn to inn hiking or biking network.
- Use the library for community communications. We could be the one that brings it all together and pushes it back out to the community.
- Would love to see an in-town trail next to the West River. An incredible asset in South Derry towards Jamaica. Rutland converted an in-town piece of land to a bike trail and have paid members and donations – a way to make some money to pay for things like that.
- develop a series of regular/annual food festivals/foilage festivals/mt biking or alpine touring events to attract people and support local recreational businesses.
- Garden tours, Christmas lights drive/event.
- Improve bike lanes in town (project Londonderry is exploring)
- If project Londonderry is building a directory of assets, alternative medicine practitioners should be included.
- Could do an “indie pass” – pass for yoga, acupuncture, etc. and package together – buy a bundle or wellness pass maybe with a discount.
- In Colorado, some towns have “reengineered” the rivers through towns that have chronic flooding problems to create river parks for kayaking, picnicking, camping AND mitigate flood problems... Check out Lyons CO as an example.
- To improve youth health and wellness we must think of them and create way and space for a healthy, safe, fun, and activity-based programming in a central location.
- Taylor farm can offer community garden space.
- Community rideshare app could help alleviate the transportation problem.
- Host a community seed swap/plant swap/perennial swap – food crops and medicinal herb crops.
- West River trail depot is a building with some space that could be used for community events – could be used for a winter market.
- We should develop a community kiosk to share information on training and services and recreational opportunities, other area info.
- Londonderry email newsletter.
- An official Facebook page for marketing local products would be helpful.
- Project Londonderry is looking for a preservation trust grant to redevelop the Town Hall and that could be a communications center for the community.
- We should put together a digital bulletin board. We have a Facebook group but things shift quickly there – another type of bulletin space would be helpful.

- Another hub / gathering idea - there are a lot of independent small-scale craft, artists, creative but independent people. Centering a place with studio space, shared tools or studios, with a gallery to showcase (sell) their work. Could bring people in and be a working economic creative place to gather. - coffee shop at the day, wine bar, local cheese, at night.
- The library should play a big role in communications and connection. They are an incredible asset.
- The Chamber has a little building in the plaza that had great information – it could be better utilized to share info locally – should have a paid person who would be there every day to share information. Would need to work to get traffic in there.
- Creating a Project Londonderry website that would have a lot of the information that people would be seeking. In conjunction with the resource guide that might help with communications.
- Expand the Open Studio Weekend guide book to become a printed guide available year-round.
- Health and wellness idea - center Flood Brook school as a community center for learning, health and wellness.
- School has a library, kitchen, space for speakers, indoor and outdoor gatherings, indoor and outdoor recreation... great potential for year-round, 7-day a week use.

## Reflections of the Community Visit Team

- This is an extraordinary community. I am seeing more of a focus on this group than I have seen in many other communities. There is a lot of opportunity here. I have visited many times and Londonderry is a spectacular place. The challenges and the opportunities that I'm seeing are identifying a hub to connect. Glad to hear about the discussion around food insecurity and the opportunities to address those challenges. Really excited to see how this comes together.
- A lot of resources, creativity, and ideas. It's a lot about making connections – both to trails and also intangible connections in terms of communications. I really liked the grouping of buy local, recreate local, local wellness – grassroots approach is a great approach. Some ideas you might want to think about – Sen Sanders is a big fan of community health centers. Perhaps they could be a resource around local food, communications, etc. Some capacity may be needed to coordinate on the recreation side. You are connected to the National Forest – maybe they could be a partner.
- Londonderry is an arts mecca in southern Vermont. Some of my favorite artists are there – as you describe assets, are there ways to mobilize and activate artists to advance goals for the town? Have artists design benches for the river walk for example. Think of arts alongside recreation. I am glad to hear that you applied for funding for the old town hall – there is state support for that and for a river walk project as well.
- Londonderry has a lot going on and some challenges around connecting and coming together. There could be opportunities to connect both in crisis and in times of celebration. Great rec resources – seem to be issues around accessibility and affordability. Something as simple as an equipment swap could go a long way to show a young person their community cares for them. There is an important role for youth!
- Londonderry seems like the town has arrived – infrastructure, passion, ideas, and creative thoughts that are already in action. It is a matter of targeting – communications to targeted supports to unleash wonderful assets for all. Maybe there is just one link missing to really expand access and build on the existing assets.
- Things that could be considered from what I'm hearing – telehealth should be explored when looking at older Vermonters. On the recreation side – I am excited to hear about Londonderry as a dark zone. If Londonderry is interested in, you have to plan. Next solar eclipse comes in 2024 – plan to be a showcase spot! I heard an unconscious loud statement that Londonderry would like to be an outdoor enthusiast playground – go for it!
- There is often a moment when the community needs to say, “who are we doing this for?” most of the time, it's current residents with an eye to the future. Important point that the community is starting to ask itself. There is a ton of state support for this.
- It has impressed me that Londonderry has talked about what you want to do for yourself – not what to do for others.



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## Additional Action Ideas

Here are the ideas residents contributed through a paper and online form

- Since we're located in the middle of such an important winter sports area, I've always felt it would be nice if we could better honor that.
- Have a monument or memorial for Jake Burton Carpenter, founder of Burton Snowboards and co-creator of the modern snowboard. From what I understand, Carpenter came up with his prototype for what would become the first snowboard while working in "a barn" here in Londonderry. Do we know where this "barn" is or was? Is there any way we can do something to recognize the heritage at this site?
- Open a small skate park somewhere in town. Even just a little half-pipe would be a lot of fun, and it'd go a long way towards honoring our part in sports history and showing that we're not ashamed to be associated with it. I think making a gesture like this would tell young people that we embrace skateboarding and other local extreme sports, and that this would do a lot to encourage a sense of community pride.
- need faster, more stable and reliable Internet. This pandemic has shown the world how critical an infrastructure is for working virtually/remotely from home, and I definitely don't get the sense we have that here. Remote work and socializing these days requires the Internet, and doing so here has been nothing but frustrating.
- Bring back sidewalks!
- Drive in movie theater.
- The downtown needs to build a septic system for the buildings along the river.
- Pickleball courts either at Pingree or at the old Swiss inn.
- Connectivity through safe ways of travel for pedestrians and cyclists in both villages of South Londonderry and Londonderry.
- Localized, independent "micro" wastewater systems developed in South Londonderry near Mainstreet and Rte. 100-S and Londonderry by Rte. 100-N.
- Cooperative strategic plan for a shared economic and community asset development initiative.
- Develop coordinated tour packages that combine recreational activities with meal and lodging options that support Londonderry small business. These should be branded under a common "Londonderry Outdoors" or similar marketing campaign and used to support and build a tourism/recreation economy that will increase foot traffic for local Londonderry small business (hardware/pharmacy, etc).
- Seek grants/technical assistance to GIS map out trail/connectivity options between North and South village and then east over Glebe/Magic mtn, North along Uteley brook to landgrove, West to flood brook and Peru and South to West River Trail. Legal support for getting landowner agreements/permissions to allow hiking, snowshoeing, mt. biking, alpine touring on trails and maintenance agreements.
- Make a more walkable, nice to hang out around "downtown" area and also make some sort of center for South Londonderry, support local farmers which are a big draw for the area, community events (whenever Covid is not a problem), more affordable housing & transportation, laundromat.
- Our own energy generation and internet, co-op health care model including alternative/complimentary modalities, our own hyper local food system, innovative biomimicry water cleaning systems, ban "forever" chemicals. Be a model town of how all these systems intertwine and benefit each other and be sustainable.
- Transportation, such as even just a weekly "people mover" to Manchester so people can go to an affordable supermarket.
- Better centralized information so people can know what is going on.
- During COVID it would have been nice to find a way to be able to take nature walks with another senior. Glad to hear there will be a town map showing walkable trails.
- We need a pedestrian bridge over the West River to connect the Marketplace to Main Street.
- To make it attractive, simple and rewarding for individuals and groups to become more civically engaged. In Londonderry and America the values of governance, administration, fiscal policy, community organization and development are rich with tradition and pride. But those same traditions often intimidate residents who might otherwise meaningfully contribute. Of course apathy is already a widespread constraint. With greater communication and collaboration, I hope citizens will enjoy the fulfillment of demonstrated values, or at least recognize the consequences of inaction and indifference. I am speaking mostly to myself.
- Sidewalks or bike paths.
- Community rec center especially for youth.
- Sewer/septic for businesses.
- Visible farmers market presence.
- Project Londonderry and the Planning Commission need to approach the flood plain issue in the north village before they continue working on finding a place for a septic system. Installing a septic system in Pingree Park, used by many people in town, would not be compatible with many of the uses of this park.
- Satisfactorily dealing with, and resolving, the continuing issue of flooding, especially in Londonderry's main village area and also in South Londonderry.
- Preserving and improving upon the village character and charm in both north and south village areas.
- Coming up with the small village equivalent of what would be - in a bigger city -- a full urban redevelopment plan, that would include preserving as many historical buildings and property in the two village areas as can be preserved, but also modernizing all structures.
- Finding a way to improve walking areas in the two village areas (north and south), including the installation of sidewalks if possible, as it can be somewhat dangerous at present to try to walk on the side of the road in both areas -- but especially the north village -- given all of the traffic on Route 11.

- Bicycle lanes on some of the more well-traveled roads, especially in the northern village, because in times of heavy traffic vehicles sometimes get way too close to bicyclists hugging to the side of the road.
- Improved internet access for all Londonderry residents and property owners and not just those fortunate enough to have access to something like Comcast cable.
- The Mill property in Londonderry would be a good site for a community center, or other uses like an indoor farmers market, antique shops, indoor food vendors, etc.
- Further improvements to Pingree Park, including adding a second tennis court, more widespread publication of the existence of the dog park, better parking, water fountains and port-a-potties, etc.
- Make Londonderry a year-round recreational destination.
- Improve the appearance of the town – primarily the main thoroughfares – to entice more attraction to the area by individuals and businesses.
- Invest more money into law enforcement – particularly the VT State Police.
- Improve the appearance of the main street and work to increase business throughout the town. There are quite a few areas in Londonderry and South Londonderry that we could tidy up to make the town more welcoming.
- Once people are here we need to keep their attention, improving the parks and gardens throughout the town will make people want to sit on a bench and relax or take a walk through town. Have businesses that offer entertainment, a dollar general would be a gift from the stars, and small dining options that allow people to sit down and enjoy the view as we can build outside and plan a more Covid safe environment. The town has potential, it will be a lot of work, but it will improve the sustainability of the town and the lives of the residents.
- Attracting a coffee roaster/ bakery/ cafe to the Londonderry shopping center. High quality baked bread and other products, and great coffee in a community eating space would be a welcome community experience.
- Complete rezoning work based on 5-year master plan. Enhance the look/feel of the village with beautification projects.
- Wastewater treatment system.
- Affordable housing.
- Improved recreational trails.
- Walkable pedestrian oriented environment with affordable housing options – to include options for seniors aging in place. Welcoming community, to include neutrality by board members on social media sites not sanctioned for business by the town, VT vs out-of-staters mentality is damaging, diversity and inclusion. Leveraging possible outdoor recreation for economic vitality. Community visioning for the plaza to retain tenants, provide services and job opportunities while capturing multi-use benefits of commercial/residential potential.
- There must be available childcare in the area to retain new families! There is a very limited lack of spaces and those spaces are priced very high.
- Sidewalks.
- Spiff up the IGA strip mall and parking lot, plant new trees to replace ones taken down.
- Ensure that the community is safe by supporting state & local police as well as rescue squads, etc.
- Create a public septic system.
- Child Care is crucial to jobs for families.
- Affordable, energy efficient, net zero housing for single, families and elderly.
- Continue the Neighbors Pantry for food assistance.
- Central facility for ALL AGES to gather for indoor activities, meetings large and small, a place for high school students to wait or meet until parents can pick them up. There are so many needs for a safe, clean space to access. BUT we are a small town and need assistance, our tax base is much too small. We would be a stronger community with more families living and contributing to the town, not just wealthy people buying up properties for seasonal or vacation enjoyment.
- Town septic.
- community center.
- established park and rec department.
- try to give downtown some charm; help the strip mall be nicer; fix parking lot.
- Increase Vermont-style business: Provide a retail outlet for local artisans to show and sell their wares, similar to the farmer's market, but a year-round, indoor resource to advance small business activity, as well as attract visitors to the town. A creative "consignment" store with a Vermont feel. Could be a great project for our community to share in creating – from the space, to finding the artisans, to promoting the wares, to working in. The time it would take to go "live" with such a resource could align nicely with our pending recovery from the pandemic.
- Encourage participation in town activities: Create a program to encourage residents to sign up for specific tasks related to community projects – a more active approach to inclusion than what we now list on the website or get via email. For example, many folks I know would be happy to share their talents for discreet activities and tasks where they know they have skills or interest, but are not interested in Committee work or open-ended project work. (For example, I am transitioning from working to retirement. I have grandchildren living out of state whom I want to be able to have visit and whom I wish to visit for periods of time once it is safe to do so again. It would be great if our website had a list of activities or tasks (with description, related dates and time commitment), needing volunteers so we could encourage greater participation but also respect the time constraints of folks.)
- Encourage neighborly behavior: When I was a girl, I lived in a rural area of New Jersey. Once a year, our small town had a "job fair" – any resident of the area could come and set up a table and a sign advertising for either volunteer or paid help with seasonal jobs – from barn raising (I know, no one does that anymore...), to sheep shearing, to taking food to shut ins, to house painting, to shoveling out stoops for older folks – you get the idea. It coincided with a BYO picnic with local musicians and hay rides. And lots of people in the community helped one another throughout the year. These days, we

could accomplish something similar with an online message board also.

- Let's keep Londonderry a rural town: I am not in favor of "fancying" us up with lots of sidewalks, street lights, street signs, or flash of any kind. We have chosen to live in the mountains, and while there are certainly conveniences and ways to be helpful to those visiting our community, please do not turn Londonderry or South Londonderry into suburban-looking or acting towns. I have an old bumper sticker in my kitchen that says "keep Vermont weird" – that is our charm, that is why people come here in the first place – once it's gone, we can never get it back.
- Inclusiveness: It is becoming increasingly difficult for folks of modest means to live in our community. Perhaps we should consider creating affordable housing to attract young families and others who want to live here but who cannot afford much. There are numerous beneficiaries: the families moving

here, our town, our schools, etc. We are currently a very white community. I am not certain how we become more inclusive, but I do believe in my heart that we need to address this issue.

- It would be nice if there was some sort of public transportation – perhaps from here to Manchester.
- Make the place more welcoming, cheerier, have music again, smile as often as possible, find more safe places for kids to have fun.
- I would like to see more local manufacturing businesses for employed residents. Creative businesses.
- I would like to drive down Main Street and not be embarrassed. 1) Remove the shoe barn + landscape property as entrance into Londonderry. 2) Repair wall across from The Mill. Surface wall with faux stone. 3) Plant trees along Main Street where possible. The 3 elms the garden club planted after H. Irene by William Park are doing well. 4) Help merchants and residents improve their curb appeal.



## VII. One Londonderry Community Visit Participants

Pam Abraham	Elysia Doty	Marty Judge	Vince Presciti
Paul Abraham	Maya Drummond	Aimee Junker	Lana Prouty
Faith Alberti	Emmett Dunbar	Tom Kauffmann	Taylor Prouty
Teri Andersen	Darcy Duval	Colleen Kelly	Jessica Putnam-Phillips
Vincent Annunziata	Bidi Dworkin	Sarah Kiefer	Andrew Rackear
Victor Badaracco Sr	Jeremy Dworkin	Gary Kleiman	Karen Rackear
Cindy Badolato	Patty Eisenhaur	Stephen Kolman	Bob Ray
Tony Bailey	Becky Eliastam	Katherine Krents	Kim Ray
Ruth Ann Barrick	Bill Elio	Laurie Krooss Mullen	Will Reed
Hilary Batchelor	Samantha Elio	Joel Kuhlberg	Ward Ricke
Bryce Bauer	Helen Ellis	Irwin Kuperberg	Cindy Samson
Ken Bauer	Mary Esposito	Elizabeth Labeau	Guerrino Savio
Robert Benezra	Nicholas Everett	Tina LaBeau	David Sawyer
Brad Berggren	Paul Feinberg	Stephen Lally	Travis Schwartz
Stephen Bergleitner	David Fenton	Mary Lines	Carolyn Scully
Annis Bessette	Lisa Fischhoff	Jane Mackugler	Buzz Seeley
Chris Blackey	Marge Fish	Cherise Madigan	Sheila Selden
Kathleen Blackey	Esther Fishman	Scott Madison	Lucy Sherburne
Josh Bond	Katrina Fleck	Gail Mann	Lisa Sicotte
Rick Bouchier	Bruce Frauman	Kerry Mara	Elsie Smith
Wendy Bowditch	Mark Frayne	Alina Marsfelder	Jonathan Sporn
Marlene Boyaner	Ben Freeman	Margaret Mazer	Heather Stephenson
Mary Butera	Tom Gabriel	Mrinalini Mazumdar	Meredith Stock
Barbara K Butts	Patricia Gagnon	Rick McDonough	Chad Stoddard
Annie Campbell	Dennis Gallagher	Andrew McKeever	Heather Swinburne
Kelly Capen	Justin Gibbs	Tim Medland	Steve Swinburne
Peter Caradonna	Jacqueline Gold	Roger Melzer	John Thibodeaux
Debbie Carleton	Deborah Granquist	Thomas Metcalfe	Whitney Thibodeaux
Jeffrey Cavagnino	Annabelle Gray	Jeanne Meyer	Jon Tumler
Donna Chambers	Bobby Gray	Eric Mingorance	Max Turner
Brian Clark	Cynthia Gubb	Thomas Montalbine	Jennifer Veech
Heather Clark	Larry Gubb	Lotus Moon	Sharon Wagner
Bonnie Cobb	John Hankin	Georgeanne Mora	Christine Wasyliko
Judith Cobb	Maureen Hassett	Maryann Morris	Jen Wasyliko
Pete Cobb	Geoff Hatheway	Kathy Mosenthal	Barbara Wells
Devon Cohen	Frances Heberts	Matthew Mosher	Bob Wells
Robert Collins	Shannon Heidebrecht	Andy Nadraus	Nicole Wengerd
Susan Collins	Jenny Henning	Kristin Nelson	Matt Whitcomb
Katie Conn	Jane Hewson	Shane O'Keefe	Tom Widger
Wayne Conn	Allison Hopkins	Diana Pagnucco	Jacqueline Wiley
Martha Cowles	Kippi Horton	Peter Pagnucco	Russell Williams
Sharon Crossman	Charles Howard	Jennifer Paine Frank	Margot Wright
Jim Dagostino	Peter Isakson	Kelly Pajala	Helena Wu
Marjorie Daitch	Mary Ives	Emily Pannkuk	Dianne Yelton
Martha Dale	Tom Ives	Paula Pelkey	and many more...
Richard Dale	Nancy Jensen	James Philip	
Allison Dalziel	Bonny Johnson	Dennis Pinkernell	
Scott Denkman	Caroline Jopling	Nancy Pinkernell	
Sandra (Sandy) Diaferio	John Jopling	Judith Platt	

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