

Affordable Housing Needs and Strategies

MAD RIVER VALLEY AFFORDABLE HOUSING: NEEDS AND STRATEGIES 2001 UPDATE

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INTRODUCTION/ PURPOSE/ HISTORY

The 1991 Housing Needs Assessment was developed in response to a perceived need within the Valley for a comprehensive approach to the problem of affordable housing. It was recommended in that first publication that the plan be updated on a five-year cycle. Ten years have passed since that recommendation and it was felt that 2001, a year in which much of the most current Census data would be released, would be a good time for an update.

The culmination of the Plan was a series of seven primary recommendations and four secondary that, if pursued, could contribute to an improvement in housing provision for low- to middle-income Valley residents. Given the importance placed on these recommendations, it was appropriate to begin a plan update by revisiting these suggestions in light of a decade of change.

The following report is intended to provide new data which will inform the discussion on affordable housing in the Mad River Valley towns of Fayston, Moretown, Waitsfield, and Warren. This report, in conjunction with the 2001 Strategies Assessment Questionnaire, will provide a look at current needs and historic performance in regards to affordable housing in the Mad River Valley. This report was made possible by a grant to the Town of Warren from the Vermont Department of Housing and Community Affairs through their Municipal Planning Grant Program. The Town of Warren then contracted with the Center for Rural Studies to perform the tasks at hand.

In the original study, only the towns of Fayston, Waitsfield and Warren were considered as the study area. Recognizing that the economic and social networks of the Valley include Moretown, we have expanded this study to include all four towns. The original investigators, DJK & Associates and Humstone Squires Associates, prepared the Housing Needs Assessment and the Housing Plan, respectively.

The body of the report is dedicated to a discussion of the results of the Strategies Assessment Questionnaire. Detailed comments, an interim housing needs assessment, and a sample inventory of affordable housing opportunities have been provided as appendices.

SURVEY

In late July 2001, a Strategies Assessment Questionnaire (see App. D.) was administered by mail to all members of the Moretown, Fayston, Waitsfield, and Warren

Affordable Housing Needs and Strategies

planning commissions and select boards, as well as certain members of Sugarbush Resort and Mad River Glen Ski Area, the Sugarbush Chamber of Commerce, the Mad River Valley Planning District and the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission. In this survey, Respondents were asked to rank each recommendation using a one to seven and a one to four Likert scale. These results were tabulated and are presented below in a slightly modified format.

Respondents were given a brief introduction to the project, along with a copy of the original report and suggestions for rapid review of the material. Margo Wade, Warren Development Review Board/ Planning Commission Assistant, contacted the chairs of each board to inform them of the importance of the coming surveys. A deadline of August 1st with a vacation date of August 15th was given. Due to the poor initial response, surveys were accepted into the early part of September.

RESPONSE RATE

In all, fifty-nine surveys were mailed and thirty-three were returned for a response rate of approximately 56%. Given the facts that the Valley is a relatively small geographic area and that two rounds of follow-up phone calls were made, this response rate is somewhat low. Possible factors that could have contributed to this are the timing of the survey – late July and early August is a traditional vacation time – or simply that some individuals may not have had the time to respond. Nonetheless, 54% is a respectable number and will give us an idea of the feelings of the Valley leadership on the issue of affordable housing strategies.

METHODS

After entering each strategy's ranking into SPSS statistical software, the responses were recoded and clustered to make the results more accessible. Instead of a 1-7 and a 1-4 scale, respectively, both groups of results were grouped into "Not a Priority, Low Priority, Medium Priority, and High Priority", based on their original rankings.

Based upon feedback from the Warren Planning Commission, the strategies have been presented based upon the level of support that each received in the survey. The percentage support for medium to high priority was combined and each strategy was ranked based upon that number. The primary and secondary strategies have been combined into a continuum of strategies. The number in parenthesis in each table title is the percentage of respondents that selected medium or high priority for that particular strategy.

SURVEY RESULTS

Discussion and elaboration are provided under each table. Respondent comments are often referred to and can be found in Appendix A.

Affordable Housing Needs and Strategies

Table 1. “Provision of Affordable Single Family Housing Units.” (96.9%)

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	CUMULATIVE PERCENT
Not a Priority	0	0	0
Low Priority	1	3.1	3.1
Medium Priority	11	34.4	37.5
High Priority	20	62.5	100.0
Total	32	100.0	

Over 96% of all respondents indicated that single-family housing was a medium to high priority. Given the median prices of for-sale single-family homes in the Valley in 2000-2001, it is not surprising that a considerable need exists here. Substandard camps and seasonal homes are the only units that fall into the affordable category and many would require significant investments to make them livable for a family. Condominiums continue to provide opportunities for single-family housing in the Valley, but have not historically been attractive to many. Realtors in the Valley, however, indicate that the housing shortage has increasingly led buyers to consider condominiums as an alternative to traditional housing units.

Table 2. “Towns should continually monitor opportunities for developing affordable housing.” (93.7%)

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	CUMULATIVE PERCENT
Not a Priority	0	0	0
Low Priority	2	6.3	6.3
Medium Priority	13	40.6	46.9
High Priority	17	53.1	100.0
Total	32	100.0	

Table 2 shows that more than 50% of the respondents give continuous monitoring a high priority. However, comments question whether the towns have the resources for doing this alone. There are calls for others to take the lead and for cooperation with non-profit organizations, residents, and large employers. The Warren Planning Commission recently formed an Affordable Housing Steering Committee to identify potentially developable sites to create new units of affordable housing in Warren or in the other Valley towns if none are available in Warren. This committee, comprised of PC members, employers, an architect, and a member of the Central Vermont Community Land Trust, is a tangible action supported by the survey results.

Affordable Housing Needs and Strategies

Table 3. “Support for Growth Centers and Infill and Infrastructure Improvements.” (86.7%)

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	CUMULATIVE PERCENT
Not a Priority	0	0	0
Low Priority	4	13.3	13.3
Medium Priority	5	16.7	30.0
High Priority	21	70.0	100.0
Total	30	100.0	
Missing	2		

Obviously a focus on growth centers is a priority with nearly 87% of respondents giving their support, but comments raise a caveat: increasing density in growth centers can create a N.I.M.B.Y. mentality. Some respondents indicated that residents are generally reluctant to give up what little space is left in the villages to more housing. There were some suggestions to concentrate new developments on the *peripheries* of growth centers. A variety of housing types was also called for. As the comments indicate, increased densities in the villages will likely require water and sewer improvements.

Table 4. “Municipal Action Through Plans and Bylaws.” (84.4%)

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	CUMULATIVE PERCENT
Not a Priority	0	0	0
Low Priority	5	15.6	15.6
Medium Priority	11	34.4	50.0
High Priority	16	50.0	100.0
Total	32	100.0	

The overall message from the comments was that the towns are on the right track with plans and bylaws, but the results were mixed over whether regulations can only allow development and conversion to happen or if they can, in fact, create incentives or overcome deficient sewer and water infrastructure. Density bonuses and identification of specific opportunities and properties were also mentioned as a priority.

Table 5. “Municipal sewer and/ or water supply systems, if developed, consider a set aside for perpetually affordable housing for low and moderate income households.” (83.9%)

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	CUMULATIVE PERCENT
Not a Priority	0	0	0
Low Priority	5	16.1	16.1
Medium Priority	14	45.2	61.3
High Priority	12	38.7	100.0
Total	31	100.0	

Affordable Housing Needs and Strategies

In Table 5, almost 84% of respondents give sewer and water set-asides a medium-to-high priority, but comments call for more research on their effect and available resources for allocation. Furthermore, as stated above, many respondents underscored the lack of sewer and water supply to for allocation.

Table 6. “Scattered Site Conversion of Existing Structures to Shared Elderly and Family Rental Apartments.” (81.3%)

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	CUMULATIVE PERCENT
Not a Priority	0	0	0
Low Priority	6	18.8	18.8
Medium Priority	18	56.3	75.0
High Priority	8	25.0	100.0
Total	32	100.0	

Over 80% of all respondents indicated a medium to high level of priority for this type of affordable housing strategy. Comments focused on the importance of re-using existing structures and trying to concentrate conversion and scattered site development in the villages. Water and sewer provision was a constant concern. A question of need and a call for more research were also evident in the comments.

Table 7. “Promote Economic Development – recognizing that good wages will improve a household’s ability to afford adequate housing.” (78.2%)

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	CUMULATIVE PERCENT
Not a Priority	1	3.1	3.1
Low Priority	6	18.8	21.9
Medium Priority	11	34.4	56.3
High Priority	14	43.8	100.0
Total	32	100.0	

Table 7 shows a favorable opinion concerning economic development as a strategy, but the comments tell a different story. Many question the towns’ abilities to fully capitalize on this tool, while others claim that economic development will only exacerbate the problem; an influx of employees will only tighten the housing market. Most respondents were cautious about overtly supporting economic development without first knowing exactly how the concept is defined.

Affordable Housing Needs and Strategies

Table 8. “Employer-Assisted Affordable Housing.” (68.8%)

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	CUMULATIVE PERCENT
Not a Priority	1	3.1	3.1
Low Priority	9	28.1	31.3
Medium Priority	11	34.4	65.6
High Priority	11	34.4	100.0
Total	32	100.0	

A high percentage of respondents indicated that employer-assisted housing was a medium to high priority. Comments reveal the range of opinions here better than the percentage breakdown. Some indicated their support of such plans but expressed doubt that such housing would become available in the current economic situation. The current economic downturn, coupled with Sugarbush’s new management makes prediction of the future housing situation quite challenging. It remains to be seen what the impact of the current tourism slump will be on the ski industry.

Nonetheless, Sugarbush and Mad River Glen do provide some employer-assisted housing. Sugarbush has 28 beds available in dormitories and rents as many as 36 condominiums annually to house seasonal employees. Mad River Glen similarly provides three units that combined provide housing for sixteen employees.

It was made clear by contacts at Sugarbush that the housing problem remains on the management agenda as the resort struggles to find and keep employees who have had to look outside of the Valley for housing.

Table 9. “Retention of At-Risk Housing.” (62.1%)

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	CUMULATIVE PERCENT
Not a Priority	2	6.9	6.9
Low Priority	9	31.0	37.9
Medium Priority	10	34.5	72.4
High Priority	8	27.6	100.0
Total	29	100.0	
Missing	3		

Table 9 shows that opinion over this strategy is somewhat dispersed. Comments showed a lack of clarity over what the “at-risk” issue involves. Many want more information about what units are in danger and to what degree. Several comments addressed the issue of maintenance and improvement of existing housing units. While not technically “at-risk”, many affordable units in the Valley are reported to be sub-standard.

The Vermont Community Land Trust has retained the Vermont Mobile Home Park in Waitsfield, which was at-risk at the time of the original study and remained so until 1998. Recent reports indicate that upgrades have been made to several of the trailers and that most are in very good shape, with one or two vacant and for sale.

Affordable Housing Needs and Strategies

Table 10. “Development of Subsidized Elderly Housing Project in Irasville.” (53.1%)

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	CUMULATIVE PERCENT
Not a Priority	8	25.0	25.0
Low Priority	7	21.9	46.9
Medium Priority	9	28.1	75.0
High Priority	8	25.0	100.0
Total	32	100.0	

Most survey respondents pointed to the current underutilization of Evergreen Place as a major issue. Individuals questioned both the demand for such a facility and whether or not the marketing was appropriate. One comment was particularly descriptive – “most Vermonters don’t want to leave their homes except on a stretcher.” Recent developments at Evergreen Place include a better marketing campaign. The facility now has Section 8 capability as well, which addresses a few of the questions raised in the comments. Cathedral Square Corporation of Burlington helped the Mad River Valley Seniors to fund the purchase and development of the site in Irasville three years ago, and since then, the facility has seen chronic high vacancy rates. This summer, Cathedral Square and a “work out group” joined together to address financial and residential issues. Despite some tensions between the Seniors and Evergreen Place, it is hoped that an increase in residents will improve the financial viability and community access to the facility.

Table 11. “Impact fees, if adopted, consider waiver for perpetually affordable housing for low and moderate income households.” (37.5%)

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	CUMULATIVE PERCENT
Not a Priority	3	9.4	9.4
Low Priority	17	53.1	62.5
Medium Priority	8	25	87.5
High Priority	4	12.5	100.0
Total	32	100.0	

Of all of the proposed strategies, impact fees received the least support with only 37.5% expressing a medium to high priority. Although potentially favorable, most planners do not consider impact fees and waivers to be appropriate planning tools for the Valley at this time. Cross-tabulation reveals that 75% of those who gave town planning tools a high priority gave impact fee waivers a low priority or none at all. That finding, coupled with the comments, gives the impression that an affordable housing strategy based on impact fees and waivers is not relevant to the Mad River Valley.

CRITIQUE/ FUTURE RESEARCH

It was our original intention to conduct this survey to generate a baseline of information regarding the initial recommendations of the 1991 housing plan. It is apparent that the survey has achieved this goal, and we have a clear understanding of the

Affordable Housing Needs and Strategies

attitudes and preferences that this sample of the Valley leadership has toward affordable housing.

While the data gathered by this survey is both helpful and informative, it is clear now that more questions should be asked. Not revealed in this survey were new and alternative strategies to the traditional ideas. More open-ended questions designed to draw out ideas and suggestions that were outside of the norm might have paved the way for new thinking on this stubborn issue.

Furthermore, a critical component of the revised affordable housing plan is the housing needs assessment. An interim assessment has been included as Appendix B pending the release of other key data from the 2000 Census next year.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Future Data

One of the limitations of this assessment at the present time is the lack of median household income data from the U.S. Census. The household is the primary unit seeking housing and it is therefore median household income rather than average annual wage or per capita income that determines which housing can be considered affordable.

The Census estimates that this income data will be available between June and September of 2002. It is our recommendation that the completion of this needs assessment be postponed until this new data is available.

Monitoring Needs

As suggested by the survey results, towns should continually monitor affordable housing needs and opportunities. Warren has taken the lead in this area with their newly formed Affordable Housing Steering Committee, but a more comprehensive, Valley-wide effort should be discussed as well. The fact is that the combination of micro-level data and trends combine to affect the housing market and a once-a-decade report does not represent sufficient monitoring.

Housing Needs

It is clear from the response to the survey that affordable housing remains a concern among local officials and that there are some clear preferences for how the issue should be addressed. Based upon this survey and the attached interim housing needs assessment, it is recommended that actions be taken that are in line with the strategies that received the greatest support.

One concern is the need for a better mix of affordable housing types. While the all-unit sale prices have not increased substantially over the last decade, the sale prices of single family homes have. It is no surprise, then, that the survey respondents selected "provision of affordable single family housing units" as the number one priority. Compared to single family homes, the median sale price of condominiums is significantly lower, and over half of all-unit sales in the past year have occurred in that sector. That fact, coupled with suggestions from realtors that more homebuyers are seeking

Affordable Housing Needs and Strategies

condominiums as an alternative to hard-to-find single family homes, reveals a trend that is in conflict with the goal to provide variety in affordable housing choices. It is clear that more affordable single family homes should be sought.

Appendix A.

DETAILED COMMENTS FROM 2001 SURVEY

The strategies have been re-ordered based upon the level of support expressed by survey respondents. Within each strategy, comments have been thematically grouped for ease of review. Some comments were not easily categorized and were captured in “other comments”.

Strategy #1. Provision of affordable single family units (96.9%)

Suggested strategies (N=4)

“Encourage methods for promoting affordable building lots.”

“The ski areas can buy up condos at the low end, build dorms or their own housing. Other employers are sympathetic but not large enough to construct their own. Older folks want their own children around but not children in general filling up schools. It will happen when a land owner and builder collude on a project they think will sell at a profit.”

“Include Habitat for Humanity.”

“The single most effective tool would be 0% loans for people that qualify. With 50% of equity gain at sale plowed back into fund – or something like that.”

High priority supported by evidence (N=8)

“Our recent 24-month search indicates 0 availability of affordable units that don’t require major cash outlays to make the units livable. It’s a market for only the upper classes of the economy.”

“Definitely the highest need.”

“Local working people need to be able to afford to work here.”

“Most people prefer owning own lot – not much affordable stock in the Valley.”

“There is an obvious need and demand for this in the Valley. People want to be able to live and work here.”

“Pricing of these units is escalating at a very rapid pace and has been short for a number of years.”

“Highest priority. But should be incorporated into a variety of housing types and affordabilities. Avoid concentration of only one range of affordability.”

“The cost of single family units continues to rise dramatically, outpricing many. Single family units can house a variety of household types and are consistent with the current housing stock and desires of many.”

Appendix A.

Other Comments (N=2)

“Not sure what this means – building new ones? who provides? If this just means make sure that SFUs are provided, yes, it’s a priority.”

“No more houses for this purpose.”

Strategy #2 – Towns should continually monitor opportunities for developing affordable housing (93.7%)

Important, but not necessarily the towns’ role (N=3)

“Not sure towns need to ‘continually monitor’. Others should take the lead.”

“It’s modestly desirable, but not a ‘hot button’.”

“Problem here is insufficient staff time to do everything. There are other organizations whose role is to monitor and develop affordable housing.”

Some outside or oversight help would be beneficial, within some bounds (N=5)

“It would help to have an office (Valley-wide) to monitor this, and seek funding for projects.”

“Of course – how to hold them to it is the question.”

“VCDP used for Evergreen Place and Vermont. Next?”

“They need first to identify the need, then goals and objectives for a solution, then the monitoring will be in an intelligent context.”

“They should embrace need and those willing to work out solutions.”

Other comments (N=2)

“Monitoring is important but it may be more beneficial to educate the community about the situation and proactively address the neighborhood issue.”

“Look for opportunities whenever they come up – work with large employers like Sugarbush to make opportunities happen.”

Appendix A.

Strategy #3. Support for Growth Centers and Infill and Infrastructure Improvements (86.7%)

Municipal infrastructure needs (N=4)

“Sewer, sewer, sewer!! Infill’s a great idea but people are crazy about losing space to housing. Good design and outreach!”

“Irasville growth center Master Plan and Municipal water and sewer.”

“Usually need municipal water/ sewer for multiunit affordable housing complexes.”

“Very limited areas for this (Waitsfield, Warren), but a good general goal. Work out septic and water issues first.”

Some growth on the periphery OK (N=3)

“Irasville growth center concept should be abandoned.”

“Sprawl has become a politically [in?]correct concept. But I am not sure why a little spreading out of growth rather than crowding existing areas can’t be a compromise solution.”

“Best opportunities are on periphery of existing growth centers – focus efforts.”

Potential issues with growth centers (N=4)

“People in growth centers resist this. How to accommodate them and ‘plan well’ is task...”

“Within reason – smaller scale than presently contemplated – no active draw to increase population.”

“Strong support among planners and town officials. It runs into opposition when all costs are not borne by the ‘users’ – which needs definition.”

“N.I.M.B.Y. kicks in.”

Growth centers are a good idea and should be included in plans (N=5)

“Compact settlements are more user-friendly, efficient, and have a community identity making them very important to the viability of the town and the area as a whole.”

“Must provide for in town plan to maintain character in area. Improvements of affordable housing should be identified and incorporated in a plan.”

“Growth centers both residential and commercial.”

“The proposed growth center should be able to accommodate a variety of housing types. Apartments, single family, higher density, in different price ranges.”

Appendix A.

“Plans need to be better established.”

Strategy #4. Municipal action through plans and bylaws (84.4%)

Towns play a minor role in housing provision (N=4)

“This is ranked last only because it’s so obvious – every plan and bylaw in the Valley should incorporate language to facilitate affordable housing. BUT – planning and regulating are only small aspects of the equation. Numbers to educate folks about the serious problem and what these numbers could mean for the Valley [a completely different place!].”

“Do what we can as a town but town is not central to its success.”

“Other than encouragement for such projects (zoning regs. are not a hindrance as far as I know) I don’t know what would be needed.”

“Plans and bylaws can allow things to happen. They cannot create them or provide economic engine.”

Towns can and should play a greater role in providing incentives (N=6)

“Key – catch Fayston’s now as [they are] rewriting it; Warren and Duxbury just re-did theirs.”

“Keep up the good work that the towns are already doing.”

“Leadership.”

“Adjusting regulations may facilitate the construction of more affordable units.”

“Important to give incentives through density bonus and other means, based on clear objectives in town plans.”

“The towns have continued to amend plans and bylaws to support affordable housing. Ongoing efforts and attention should be paid to identifying specific properties, trends and needs in each town.”

Other Comments (N=3)

“Second story residential requirement in growth center a good idea but difficult without water and sewer.”

“Not sure existing bylaws allow/ encourage affordable housing.”

“Tough to implement in the Valley’s current state.”

Appendix A.

Strategy #5 – Municipal sewer and/or water supply systems, if developed, consider a set-aside for perpetually affordable housing for low- and moderate-income households (83.9%)

Set asides should have a role in an affordable housing strategy (N=4)

“Good idea.”

“Absolutely. This is municipal government money being used to compensate for imbalance in our economic system and needs to happen.”

“Key component of plan - density is key to solving problem and septic is a problem when discussing density.”

“Provided the set-aside serves as an incentive to build the housing in the first place.”

Unsure about how this could help and no capacity to allocate (N=3)

“What set aside? Exemption from fees and taxes?”

“First we need to find the capacity to allocate!”

“How does this encourage affordable housing? Just enables it if a project comes along...”

Other comments (N=2)

“In Warren Village we should take into account the amount of disposable area beyond what we need for existing development – consider peripheral areas as well.”

“This is a great idea except that Act 250 will/may close this option, as it did in Warren.”

Strategy #6. Scattered site conversion of existing structures to shared elderly and family rental apartments (81.3%)

Yes! (N=5)

“Yes, best not to build anything new unless really needed.”

“Use what’s already there!”

“Always maintain existing.”

“Concentrate conversions and new units near existing village and commercial centers – scattered development will happen anyway.”

“Include condos.”

Appendix A.

Yes, but... (N=7)

“Depends on location; both types of housing should have access to services, particularly when there’s little in the way of viable public transit.”

“Good idea in the villages of Waitsfield, Warren, and Moretown but sewage needs to be in place.”

“Shared use makes sense for diversity but management a concern. Young families need opportunity to rent and begin their life.”

“Shared units and apartments are important and can make good use of larger existing structures (barns, etc.), but septic can be a problem.”

“Sure but what does this mean? Identify or inventory?”

“Zoning is trying to protect residential character in historic Waitsfield Village. Municipal water and sewer will test the ability to achieve and maintain density of residential use.”

“I think both need more research first.”

No (N=3)

“Not sure how viable this option is but certainly sounds good. The market is crazy so even lousy places are expensive to purchase and renovate for decent living. Not sure the market demand is there [for shared elderly/ family housing].”

“Not sure this is needed.”

“I am not aware of a demand for this type of housing.”

Strategy #7 – Promote economic development – recognizing that good wages will improve a household’s ability to afford adequate housing 78.2%

Economic development will worsen the situation (N=3)

“Will only further stress existing tight housing market.”

“This is a myth. The low pay jobs still need to be done!! More economic development will only make affordable housing harder to find.”

“Unfortunately, this is a double-edged sword because it creates greater demand in a supply-short market.”

This may be acceptable, but we need more information about specifics (N=5)

“Business owners have stated that they cannot attract employees, wages do not keep up with the cost of housing.”

Appendix A.

“Everyone promotes clean economic development and higher wages but it’s not really a municipal effort unless the town owns incubator space, gives tax rebates, etc. But it can’t control wages.”

“Careful about ‘promoting’ anything. Let’s address what’s already here, let nature take its course, and be prepared with scaled down infrastructure.”

“What kind? How to promote companies that pay well? How do you do this without sacrificing other critical aspects of Valley’s quality of life?”

“Livable wage is great. But what do you mean by ‘promote economic development’ – grow or what?”

Other comments (N=3)

“Create a criteria and policy that quantifies all of the relevant issues. Good is a subjective term.”

“Top priority – but Act 250 provides an active disincentive to economic development in this area.”

“Of course a livable wage will not support a \$250,000 2 bedroom ranch.”

Strategy #8. Employer-assisted affordable housing (68.8%)

Effecting labor supply (N=4)

“Given our recent experience, I imagine employee-housing would be critical for a company’s survival – especially the bigger Valley employers.”

“Include Sugarbush.”

“This to me is of vital importance – supply of labor is effecting all tourist-related business in the Valley.”

“Most likely participant is Sugarbush...”

How would this work? (N=5)

“Essential to hold them responsible and provide reasonable accommodations. Need to develop plans as to how to do this.”

“Would like to hear more about how to make this work.”

“Too complicated.”

“Sugarbush should subsidize – low-wage employees can’t afford housing.”

Appendix A.

“Not clear how many employers can support this idea.”

Other Comments (N=4)

“Would certainly be appropriate for the larger employers, but less so for the small businesses.”

“Ski areas at present are not financially committed to this and would be tough to move in present economic climate.”

“This is directly related to the wages paid by the employer and further by requests from municipalities for assistance and permitting.”

“Helps to maintain consistent population and consistent involvement.”

Strategy #9. Retention of at-risk housing (62.1%)

Maintain and improve condition (N=2)

“Especially important to upgrade existing marginal housing and secure its affordability into future – Mad River Meadows.”

“Yes, of course, but need to improve condition of the one by laundromat – really bad.”

Not a problem in the Valley (n=3)

“No.”

“Not much at stake.”

“But does not appear to be a current problem.”

What is “at risk” housing? (N=2)

“Not sure what this means.”

“Not sure I know what this means.”

“Identify what this is and articulate a plan for retention. Are they affordable [because] they are substandard?”

Action has been taken, what now? (N=2)

“Mad River Meadows and Trailer Park Issues have been resolved? Look into condo and other at-risk units.”

“Mobile home park in Waitsfield was recovered by the VHSA.”

Appendix A.

Other Comments (N=5)

“New Village zoning tries to limit conversion from residential to commercial in Waitsfield Village.”

“I’m uncertain how many units are at risk anymore, or at what level of risk.”

“Maintaining existing affordable properties should always be a priority.”

“Where does the funding for this come [from]?”

“Where towns have a critical stake in a certain building like Warren has in Ruby Blair House – retain units or produce equivalent elsewhere.”

Strategy #10. Development of subsidized elderly housing project in Irasville (53.1%)

General support for Evergreen Place (N=4)

“Try to make Evergreen Place work – it’s a great location.”

“Evergreen Place is in place. Let’s support its future success.”

“Project well organized and executed to date – will be fully subscribed eventually.”

“A project is underway so it seems less critical at the moment than in the past. It is important to the health of Irasville.”

Doubt about viability of Evergreen Place (N=14)

“I thought they were having a hard time filling the spots at Evergreen Place. Is it indeed ‘subsidized’? If so, don’t need more, if not, still need to pursue this.”

“Already got one don’t you? If you fill it?”

“Evergreen Place exists with a dozen unfilled rooms. Section 8 money will help. Most Vermonters don’t want to leave their homes except on a stretcher.”

“Reorganize Irasville elderly project.”

“We currently cannot fill existing project – need more assessment of need – motivators – what do elderly need?”

“Current lack of tenants and economic infeasibility of current project cast doubt on entire report.”

“Existing not fully utilized.”

“Existing project lacks interested persons.”

“The existing project has not been able to attract enough residents to be successful.”

Appendix A.

“Existing housing not working as planned.”

“I’m uncertain of the need given that Evergreen Place couldn’t find tenants. I don’t know if [it] was due to lack of need or lack of appropriate marketing.”

“Too much draw of money.”

"The Evergreen Place may help meet some needs, but I don't know if it is subsidized. The vacancy rate is troubling – is this because it is too expensive, no demand, or perhaps because it is a shared facility."

"Not sure Irasville is optimum location."

Strategy #11 - Impact Fees, if adopted, consider waiver for perpetually affordable housing for low- and moderate-income households (37.5%)

Do towns even have impact fees? (N=4)

“Not a bad idea but I don’t think towns have impact fees.”

“Can only follow decision on impact fees and their structure.”

“No impact fee established in Waitsfield.”

“Are impact fees even on the radar in any of the Valley towns?”

“This needs to happen in the overall debate about what impact fees should be. Define impact first.”

Impact fees are the wrong strategy (N=3)

“We won’t see impact fee generate enough \$ to warrant discussion.”

“Don’t like impact fees – find incentives for affordable rather than disincentives for other initiatives.”

“Warren considered impact fees and found them too cumbersome for a small town.”

Impact fees should be pursued (N=1)

“Yes – write it into bylaws, send formal letter to towns asking them to put it in.”

Appendix A.

Other Comments and Concerns

“In review of the 1991 study, I found the absence of any solution[s] for employee housing – yet mention of its impact and the ski area’s responsibility, MOU. It should be a joint effort – quid pro.”

“Who are the proponents and opponents of affordable housing? Why? What is ‘affordable’ versus ‘low-income’ or other governmental categories? A copy of 24 VSA Chapter 17 section 4302 needs to be attached.”

“Even if \$\$ is available, neighbors and perceptions of ‘affordable’ housing will block the road. The more proactive the Valley towns and businesses can be the better. How about re-invigorating the Valley Housing Coalition working with existing organizations (i.e. CVCLT, CVRPC, MRVPD, VHCB, etc.)”

“Act 250 provides an active disincentive for economic growth and affordable residential growth – but this can and should be used to advantage in applying for state (and Federal) affordable housing grant aid. Since the last study, the concept of incorporating a mix of housing types and affordabilities has emerged and we should heed it.”

“It’s tough to rank these strategies since all of them can fit into a comprehensive plan. The development of municipal sewer and water in Waitsfield and Warren should provide opportunities for multi-units, elderly housing, etc., so the towns should support this.”

Appendix B.

INTERIM HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT: DATA AND ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

As described in the introduction to this report, the affordable housing needs assessment update is presented here in incomplete form pending the release of additional Census data in Summer 2002. Despite the fact that the data needed to develop specific housing needs is not yet available, the data presented in this report, in conjunction with the strategies assessment, provide a picture of the demographic and economic state of the Valley.

The lack of specific numbers of needed housing should not dissuade towns or organizations from going forward with further assessment or planning of housing opportunities. It is clear that a need still exists, and the trends and survey results should be used to inform the planning process.

METHODS

As in the original study, U.S. Census data was used whenever possible. In instances where Census data was not available, past projections and state-level data were used. In some cases, no data was available and the implications of this will be discussed further in the report. The most recent demographic, housing, and economic data were collected and used to update the original needs assessment.

We are fortunate in the fall of 2001 to have available the 1990 and much of the 2000 U.S. Census data available. As with the original housing study, some estimates have been used in place of unreleased Census data. Both historic trends and current figures will be presented in order to develop a clear picture of the people of the valley, the housing stock, and the economy.

The interim assessment has been divided into three main sections – Demographics, Housing and Land Profile, and Economic Indicators and Employment Trends. Each section is summarized in a conclusions section and recommendations for future action are provided.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population and Household Characteristics

As DJK & Associates noted in 1991, the population counts from the Census Bureau are for year-round residents only. These figures therefore omit the seasonal influx of skiers that are so intimately related to the Valley life. Table 1 shows historic population trends from 1960 to 2000 in the Study Area and in Washington County as a whole.

Appendix B.

Table 1. Historic Population Trends: Study Area, Washington County (1960–2000)

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	INCREASE 1960-'00	% INCREASE 1960-'00
Fayston	158	292	657	846	1,141	983	622%
Moretown	788	904	1,221	1,415	1,653	865	110%
Waitsfield	658	837	1,300	1,422	1,659	1,001	152%
Warren	469	588	956	1,172	1,681	1,212	258%
Study Area	2,073	2,621	4,134	4,855	6,134	4,061	196%
Washington County	42,860	47,659	52,393	54,928	58,039	15,179	35%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, DJK & Associates

Of the four towns, Warren experienced the largest absolute population growth, while Fayston's percentage increase in population was much higher than that of the surrounding towns. The four towns have accounted for nearly 27% of Washington County's population growth since 1960. Washington County's population growth has been reasonable compared to the increases in the study area towns, and was actually lower than Vermont's 56% increase over the same period.

Table 2 below shows recent population trends for the study area and for Washington County.

Table 2. Recent Population Trends: Study Area,
Washington County (1990 – 2000)

	1990	2000	INCREASE 1990-'00	% INCREASE 1990-'00
Fayston	846	1,141	295	35%
Moretown	1,415	1,653	238	17%
Waitsfield	1,422	1,659	237	17%
Warren	1,172	1,681	509	43%
STUDY AREA	4,855	6,134	1,279	26%
Washington County	54,928	58,039	3,111	6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

In the past decade, Warren has led the Valley towns in terms of both absolute and percentage increase in the Valley. Overall, the Census data indicates that the population of the study area has increased by 1,279 year-round residents. The percentage increase for the Valley was 26% as opposed to only 6% for all of Washington County in the period 1990-2000.

Appendix B.

Table 3. Population Projections, Study Area (2000-2015)

	2000	2005	2010	2015
Fayston	1,141	1,382	1,558	1,715
Moretown	1,653	1,693	1,766	1,819
Waitsfield	1,659	1,728	1,799	1,849
Warren	1,681	1,765	1,956	2,158
Study Area	6,134	6,568	7,079	7,541
Washington County	58,039	60,119	60,967	61,772

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, VT Population Projections 1990-2015.

The population projections that are available at present are based upon 1990 Census figures. These projections used 1970, '80, and '90 population data to develop high, medium, and low estimates out to 2015. Given the fact that the 2000 Census data contradicted some of the 2000 estimates, we chose to use the projections for each town that most closely predicted the 2000 Census numbers. The projections for Moretown and Waitsfield were closest to the medium projections. Warren and Washington County were most closely related to the high projections, and Fayston was closest to the low projections. It is not believed that the combination of different projection levels will have a significant impact on the accuracy of the figures; however, these estimates have not taken into consideration the dramatic increases of the 1990's and therefore should be used as a reference only.

Table 4. Projected 10-year Increase, Study Area, Washington Co. (2000-2010)

	2000	2010	INCREASE (2000-2010)	% INCREASE (2000-2010)
Fayston	1,141	1,558	417	36.5%
Moretown	1,653	1,766	113	6.8%
Waitsfield	1,659	1,799	140	8.4%
Warren	1,681	1,956	275	16.4%
Study Area	6,134	7,079	945	15.4%
Washington County	58,039	60,967	2,928	5.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, VT Population Projections 1990-2015.

The Census data further support treating the four towns as a single market. Table 5 shows that similar demographic characteristics and makeup exist among the four towns. As in past years, there is a small minority population in the Valley. That population is growing, however, but at a slow pace.

Appendix B.

Table 5. Population Characteristics, Study Area Towns (2000)

	FAYSTON	MORETOWN	WAITSFIELD	WARREN	STUDY AREA
% White	98.2%	98.2%	97.2%	97.9%	97.9%
% Black	0.5%	0.0%	0.9%	0.2%	0.4%
% Other	1.3%	1.8%	1.8%	1.9%	1.7%
% Female	49.3%	50.1%	50.9%	48.5%	49.7%
% Male	50.7%	49.9%	49.1%	51.5%	50.3%
Average HH Size	2.36	2.54	2.26	2.27	2.36

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

As was the case in 1991, the population of the Valley is continuing to age. The trend was clear over the period 1980–1995 and remains so today. In the period 1990–2000, the percentage of the population in the 25–34 age bracket declined from 20% to 13%, while the age bracket 45–54 increased from 11% to 18%. Table 6 provides more detail in this area.

Table 6. Population Age Breakdown: Study Area (1990 – 2000)

	FAYSTON	MORETOWN	WAITSFIELD	WARREN	STUDY AREA
Age Bracket					
1990					
0 – 17	25%	25%	23%	22%	24%
18 – 24	9%	6%	6%	7%	7%
25 – 34	23%	18%	20%	19%	20%
35 – 44	20%	23%	21%	23%	22%
45 – 54	8%	9%	12%	14%	11%
55 – 64	8%	8%	7%	8%	7%
65+	8%	11%	11%	8%	10%
2000					
0 – 17	23%	27%	21%	23%	23%
18 – 24	6%	5%	7%	5%	6%
25 – 34	12%	13%	13%	13%	13%
35 – 44	22%	19%	19%	17%	19%
45 – 54	17%	19%	17%	18%	18%
55 – 64	11%	8%	10%	13%	11%
65+	10%	9%	12%	9%	10%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Table 7 below shows the continuing downward trend in household size in the study area. The total number of households in the study area has increased by 657 in the last decade, with Warren seeing the largest total increase.

Appendix B.

Table 7. Historic and Current Household Totals and Average Sizes (1980 – 2000)

	1980	1990	2000	INCREASE 1990 – '00
<i>FAYSTON</i>				
Households	252	327	484	157
Average Size	2.61	2.59	2.36	-.23
<i>MORETOWN</i>				
Households	458	540	650	110
Average Size	2.67	2.62	2.54	-.08
<i>WAITSFIELD</i>				
Households	521	574	734	160
Average Size	2.5	2.48	2.26	-.22
<i>WARREN</i>				
Households	374	512	742	230
Average Size	3.23	2.29	2.27	-.02
Study Area				
Households	1605	1953	2610	657
Average Size	2.75	2.49	2.35	-.14

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, DJK & Associates

Conclusions – Demographic Profile

- The year-round population of the Valley has increased dramatically in the past two decades and will continue, but at a slower rate, into the next decade.
- The population of the Valley continues to age.
- The number of households continues to increase while the household size continues to decrease.

HOUSING AND LAND PROFILE

Housing profile data has been drawn extensively from Census data, but has been augmented by the collection of up-to-date market information. General trends have been developed using Census data while more specific information such as average rental rates and median home sale price has been derived from the Valley Reporter and local realtor information.

Housing Stock

The housing stock in the Valley is unique in that it is a combination of seasonal and year-round homes. Fluctuations in the ski industry have had major impacts on both the development and the use of seasonal housing in the Valley. Table 8 shows historic housing trends in the study area.

Appendix B.

Table 8. Historic Housing Trends (Total Housing Units): Study Area,
Washington County (1980 – 2000)

	1980	1990	2000	ABSOLUTE INCREASE 1980-‘00	% INCREASE 1980-‘00
Fayston	701	787	900	199	28%
Moretown	544	639	727	183	34%
Waitsfield	680	831	908	228	34%
Warren	1,337	1,949	2,078	741	55%
Study Area	3,262	4,206	4,613	1,351	41%
Washington County	21,979	25,328	27,644	5,665	26%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, DJK & Associates

Table 8 indicates that the 20-year period 1980- 2000 saw the highest absolute and percentage increase in the town of Warren. The Valley as a whole saw increases on the order of 41% while Washington County registered only a 26% increase. Trends in the past decade, however, are less dramatic.

Table 9 shows the changes in the study area and in Washington County over the past decade.

Table 9. Recent Increases in Total Housing Stock (1990 – 2000)

	1990	2000	ABSOLUTE CHANGE 1990-‘00	% CHANGE 1990-‘00
Fayston	787	900	113	14%
Moretown	639	727	88	14%
Waitsfield	831	908	77	9%
Warren	1,949	2,078	129	7%
Study Area	4,206	4,613	407	10%
Washington County	25,328	27,644	2316	9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Again, Warren holds the edge in absolute increase, but Fayston and Moretown experienced the highest percentage increase in the ten-year period. Interestingly, the percentage increase of the study area and County housing stock was nearly equal in the 1990s.

Appendix B.

Table 10. Year Round and Seasonal Housing Stock:
Study Area (1990–2000)

	1990	2000	ABSOLUTE CHANGE 1990–‘00	% CHANGE 1990–‘00
Fayston				
<i>Year-round</i>	355	499	144	41%
<i>Seasonal</i>	432	401	-31	-7%
Moretown				
<i>Year-round</i>	592	664	72	12%
<i>Seasonal</i>	47	63	16	34%
Waitsfield				
<i>Year-round</i>	641	749	108	17%
<i>Seasonal</i>	190	159	-31	-16%
Warren				
<i>Year-round</i>	616	791	175	28%
<i>Seasonal</i>	1,333	1,287	-46	-4%
Study Area				
<i>Year-round</i>	2,204	2,703	499	23%
<i>Seasonal</i>	2,002	1,910	-92	-5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

While the total number of housing units increased, the number of seasonal units in the study area decreased roughly 5 percent from 1990 (Table 10). This change could be the result of a downturn in the ski industry, but could also be explained by a greater use of seasonal units as year-round residences. Evidence from local realtors indicates that increasing numbers of homebuyers are considering condominiums in response to the inability to locate affordable units in the Valley.

Table 11. Housing Tenure, Study Area (1990, 2000).

	OWNER- OCCUPIED	RENTER- OCCUPIED	TOTALS
1990			
Number of Units	1,398	555	1,953
% of Total	72%	28%	100%
2000			
Number of Units	1,962	648	2,610
% of Total	75%	25%	100%
Increase 1990 – ‘00			
Number of Units	564	93	657
% of Total	86%	14%	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Over the period 1990-2000, the percentage of owner-occupied units increased by 3%. The vast majority of new units built in the 1990's were owner-occupied (Table 11).

Appendix B.

Tables 12 and 13 present total unit sales and median prices (adjusted and unadjusted) in the Study Area.

Table 12. Total Unit Sales and Median Prices (unadjusted)

	TOTAL SALES 1987-1990	MEDIAN PRICE 1987-1990	TOTAL SALES 2000-2001	MEDIAN PRICE 2000-2001
Fayston	46	\$85,000	28	\$99,250
Moretown	N/A	N/A	8	\$174,375
Waitsfield	83	\$98,000	22	\$200,500
Warren	101	\$90,000	104	\$110,000
Study Area	230	\$89,250	162	\$119,000

Source: Graves Realty, MLS data, DJK & Associates.

In the time since the original housing study, the median price of units in the valley has increased. When adjusted for inflation, using 1982-'84 as the base year, the 1987-1990 study area median price was \$68,286 and the 2000-2001 price was \$69,106. Housing in the valley has therefore experienced a real increase of 1.2% in the last decade. While this moderate increase is promising, the fact that over half of the units sold in the past year were condominiums is an important detail. Significant percentages of the total sales in Fayston and Warren were condominiums, significantly depressing their overall median sale price. Median sale prices for single family homes in the Valley are on the order of \$175,000 - \$230,000 (See table 13 below).

This discrepancy in prices is a significant detail that should be examined further. The shift towards condominiums by homebuyers could be an indication of a preference shift or, as was suggested by local realtors, it can be a reflection of the inability to find affordable single-family units in the Valley.

Table 13. Total Sales and Median Sale Prices (2000-20001)

	SINGLE FAMILY		CONDOMINIUM	
	# of Sales	Median Sale Price	# of Sales	Median Sale Price
Fayston	14	\$177,500	14	\$76,500
Moretown	8	\$174,375	0*	N/A
Waitsfield	15	\$230,000	7	\$52,650
Warren	35	\$185,000	69	\$94,000

Source: Graves Realty, MLS Data. * MLS data includes around 90-95% of all sales; therefore Moretown may have had condominium sales in 2000-2001.

Appendix B.

Table 14. Trends in R1 Listed Property Values, Study Area Towns (1990-2001)

		1990	2001	% CHANGE 1990-2001
Fayston	Mkt. Value	\$93,643	\$122,300	30.6%
	Adjusted	\$71,647	\$71,022	-0.9%
Moretown	Mkt. Value	N/A	\$100,300	N/A
	Adjusted	N/A	\$58,246	N/A
Waitsfield	Mkt. Value	\$111,937	\$129,900	16.1%
	Adjusted	\$85,644	\$75,436	-11.9%
Warren	Mkt. Value	\$88,650	\$134,550	51.7%
	Adjusted	\$67,827	\$78,135	15.2%

Source: DJK & Associates, 2001 Grand Lists.

Table 14 illustrates trends in R1 listed property values over the last decade. R1 properties include all residential properties on less than six acres, excluding mobile homes, condominiums, and commercial apartment buildings (DJK & Associates 1991). Adjusted values have been corrected for inflation. There is no clear picture of what is happening to property values in the Valley. Warren R1 values appear to have increased, while Fayston and Waitsfield values have decreased. At the time of this report, no retrospective data were available to show a trend in Moretown.

Land Profile

As DJK & Associates noted in 1991, the limitation inherent in using real estate sales data on land transfers to characterize the market values of housing lots is that there is no way to know exactly what the lot is going to be used for. While in many cases the land has been purchased to build a home, it may not be true in all cases.

In the past year, 12 land parcels in the 2-5-acre size were sold through the Multiple Listing Service. This parcel size is the most likely size for the construction of a single-family dwelling and has averaged between \$24,000 and \$41,000 over the last year. Table 15 shows average sale prices for all parcel size categories over the past year.

Table 15. Average Sale Prices by Parcel Size,
Study Area (2000-2001)

ACREAGE	NUMBER OF SALES	AVERAGE SALE PRICE
0.5 - 1.0	3	\$26,633
1.0 - 2.0	2	\$24,500
2.0 - 5.0	10	\$40,990
5.0 - 10.0	8	\$98,188
10.0 - 15.0	13	\$66,607
20.0 +	11	\$118,255

Source: Graves Realty, MLS data.

Appendix B.

Rental Housing

Advertised rental rates were derived from one year of classified advertisements in the Valley Reporter. Whenever possible, seasonal rentals were excluded. Table 16 below shows the advertised rental rates in the study area, broken down by rental type and number of bedrooms.

Table 16. Average Advertised Rental Rates, Study Area (8/00 – 8/01)

		1 BR	2 BR	3 BR	4 BR
Property Types	Room	\$400 (3)			
	Studio	\$486 (4)			
	Apartment	\$528 (29)	\$733 (9)	\$835 (5)	\$930 (1)
	Condominium	\$520 (3)	\$729 (6)	\$917 (3)	N/A (0)
	Single Family	\$550 (2)	\$1070 (3)	\$957 (9)	\$1100 (2)

Source: The Valley Reporter

The Valley all-rental average in 1990 was \$514. In 2001, the all-rental average is \$750. In real terms, the all-rental average monthly cost has risen 10.7% in the last decade.

Table 17. All Advertised Rentals, 2 Bedroom Rentals, Study Area (8/00 – 8/01).

Study Area	ALL RENTALS		2 BR RENTALS	
	#	AVERAGE RENT	#	AVERAGE RENT
	79	\$750	9	\$733

Source: Valley Reporter.

As DJK & Associates indicated in 1991, two bedroom units constitute the largest portion of demand in most markets. Only 9 units were advertised in the period 8/00 – 8/01. In contrast, 29 one-bedroom apartments were advertised in the same period.

Conclusions – Housing and Land Profile

- Total housing stock continues to increase but the rate of increase in the last decade is much slower than it was in the 1980s.
- Seasonal housing stock has decreased Valley-wide in the last decade.
- The majority of new units built in the 1990s are owner-occupied.
- Valley-wide, median sale prices of housing units have increased 1.2% in the last decade, median sale prices of single-family homes continue to escalate.
- Land prices for 2 to 5-acre lots have increased by around 4% in real terms.
- All-rental monthly average cost has risen nearly 11% in the last decade and there appears to be a shortage of 2-bedroom units available.

Appendix B.

ECONOMIC INDICATORS AND EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

Table 18 shows the average annual wage trends in the study area over the period 1995-2000. Average annual wage is “the average wage paid by all firms covered under Vermont’s unemployment compensation law...and is computed by dividing the total wages paid during the year by the average employment (Vermont DET 2001).” With the exception of Moretown, the study area towns have experienced an increase in average annual wage in the six-year period. Moretown’s average wage has rebounded since 1998 and has continued to increase through 2000. Average annual wage is a good indicator of economic activity but is not a substitute for median household income data. As will be discussed in the conclusion, the lack of household median income data must be further addressed.

Table 18. Average Annual Wage (1995 – 2000)

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	% INCREASE 1995-'00
Fayston	\$18,083	\$18,290	\$21,180	\$21,890	\$20,473	\$20,135	11%
Moretown	\$32,349	\$29,773	\$27,981	\$25,414	\$27,019	\$29,366	-9%
Waitsfield	\$19,604	\$20,247	\$21,445	\$22,196	\$23,935	\$26,030	33%
Warren	\$16,698	\$16,736	\$16,973	\$16,985	\$19,228	\$18,294	10%

Source: Vermont Department of Employment and Training 2000. (Unadjusted)

In the last decade, Washington County employment has been dominated by service, retail, and government jobs. In fact, over 70% of all County jobs fell into these broad categories in 1999. Table 19 presents a more detailed depiction of employment by industry in 1990 and 1999 in Washington County.

Table 19. Employment by Industry, Washington County

INDUSTRY	1990		1999	
	EMPLOYMENT	% TOTAL	EMPLOYMENT	% TOTAL
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	100	0.4%	186	0.6%
Mining and Quarrying	177	0.7%	138	0.4%
Contract Construction	1,282	4.7%	1,158	3.7%
Manufacturing	3,279	12.1%	3,705	11.9%
Transportation & Utilities	707	2.6%	1,024	3.3%
Wholesale and Retail Trade	5,868	21.6%	6,890	22.1%
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	2,623	9.6%	2,469	7.9%
Services	6,608	24.3%	8,321	26.7%
Government	6,558	24.1%	7,280	23.4%
Washington County Totals	27,202	100%	31,171	100%

Source: VT Department of Employment Labor Market Information.

Following the national economic boom of the late 1990’s, the Valley towns had an increase in employment from 1997-99 of over eight-and-a-half percent. Moretown’s increase was particularly sharp at nearly 40%. Table 20 below illustrates this increase.

Appendix B.

Table 20. Average Employment Trends

	1997	1998	1999	% INCREASE 1997-'99
Fayston	137	147	157	14.6%
Moretown	193	260	267	38.3%
Waitsfield	1158	1198	1224	5.7%
Warren	800	850	836	4.5%
Study Area	2288	2455	2484	8.6%

Source: Vermont Department of Employment and Training.

Sales and use and meals and rooms tax receipts in the Valley are presented below. Tax receipts are a rough economic indicator that can be used to generate general trends. The 1990-2000/2001 change is presented in Table 21.

Table 21. Sales/Use and Meals/Rooms Tax Collections (Unadjusted)

	TAX COLLECTIONS IN \$1,000'S		
	1990	2000/2001	% CHANGE
Fayston			
-Sales/Use	\$26.3	\$87.2	69.8%
-Meals/Rooms	\$79.9	\$239.4	199.6%
Moretown			
-Sales/Use	N/A	\$49.7	N/A
-Meals/Rooms	N/A	\$150.8	N/A
Waitsfield			
-Sales/Use	\$718.5	\$1,125.9	56.7%
-Meals/Rooms	\$362.2	\$660.1	82.2%
Warren			
-Sales/Use	\$480.9	\$748.9	55.7%
-Meals/Rooms	\$584.6	\$1,085.5	85.7%

Source: Vermont Department of Taxes

Appendix B.

One of the problems associated with using tax revenue data is the fact that the tax rate has changed over the years. In the past decade, the sales/use tax changed from 4% to 5%, and the meals/rooms tax changed from 7% to 9%. Furthermore, the effects of inflation must be taken into account. To correct for these errors, Table 22 below contains adjusted taxable revenue for 1990 and 2000/2001, along with the percentage change.

Table 22. Sales/Use and Meals/Rooms Taxable Revenue
(Adjusted for Tax Rate Change and Inflation)

	TAX COLLECTIONS IN \$1,000'S		
	1990	2000/2001	% CHANGE
Fayston			
-Sales/Use	\$503.1	\$1,012.8	101.3%
-Meals/Rooms	\$873.1	\$1,544.7	76.9%
Moretown			
-Sales/Use	N/A	\$577.2	N/A
-Meals/Rooms	N/A	\$973.1	N/A
Waitsfield			
-Sales/Use	\$13,743.3	\$13,076.7	-4.8%
-Meals/Rooms	\$3,958.9	\$4,259.2	7.5%
Warren			
-Sales/Use	\$9,198.5	\$8,698.0	-5.4%
-Meals/Rooms	\$6,389.7	\$7,004.1	9.6%

Source: Vermont Department of Taxes, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, DJK & Associates

Fayston experienced a dramatic increase in taxable revenue in the last decade while Waitsfield and Warren experienced mixed results. Overall, the taxable revenue in the Valley slightly increased.

Conclusions – Economic Indicators and Employment Trends

- Average annual wages have increased between 1995 and 2000, with Moretown showing increases since 1998.
- Service jobs have increased slightly in Washington County in the last decade.
- Average employment numbers have increased.
- Taxable revenue has been mixed, but the overall trend is positive.

Appendix C.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING SAMPLE

Mad River Valley Planning District
Affordable Housing Sample

	Evergreen Place	Fairground Apartments	Mad River Meadows	Verdmont Mobile Home Park	Sugarbush Resort	Mad River Glen
Town	Waitsfield	Moretown	Waitsfield	Waitsfield	Warren	Waitsfield
Units	18 (all elderly) - 3 at 30% median - 3 at 50% - 5 at 60% - 5 at 80% - 2 at market value	16 (all elderly) - all at 30% median	24 - 12 elderly - 12 family - all at 30% of their adjusted income	29 trailers	28 Beds in converted houses. 36 Condos rented for employees by resort.	3 units including 1 house, 1 condo, and 1 apartment
Residents	7	16	Approx. 16 elderly and 42 family	Approx. 3-5 per trailer	64+	16
Section 8?	Capacity for 6	On Rural Development 5-15 Program by USDA. Similar to Section 8.	All	No subsidies, very little debt	None	None
Vacancies	11 - at least 4 left at 50% and below	none	none	1 or 2 empty trailers, recent upgrades	None	None

Appendix D.

**MAD RIVER VALLEY
1991 AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLAN – 2001 UPDATE
STRATEGIES ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE**

The following questionnaire is being distributed to all Warren, Waitsfield, Fayston and Moretown Planning Commission and Selectboard members to help establish the perceived relevance of the affordable housing strategies, which were identified in the 1991 Affordable Housing Plan. A few of the strategies may have been satisfactorily achieved while others have not. Please rank the strategies in order of priority for the Mad River Valley community and make any specific comments in the place provided below each strategy.

RANKING SCALE: 1 = HIGHEST PRIORITY; 7 = LOWEST PRIORITY; NOT = NOT A PRIORITY

RANKING

- _____ 1) Development of Subsidized Elderly Housing Project in Irasville
Comments:

- _____ 2) Scattered Site Conversion of Existing Structures to Shared Elderly and Family Rental Apartments
Comments:

- _____ 3) Provision of Affordable Single Family Units
Comments:

- _____ 4) Employer Assisted Affordable Housing
Comments:

- _____ 5) Municipal Action through Plans and Bylaws
Comments:

- _____ 6) Retention of At Risk Housing
Comments:

- _____ 7) Support for Growth Centers and Infill and Infrastructure Improvements
Comments:

Appendix D.

RANKING SCALE: 1 = HIGHEST PRIORITY; 4 = LOWEST PRIORITY; NOT = NOT A PRIORITY

RANKING

- _____ 8) Other Strategies
· Impact fees, if adopted, consider waiver for perpetually affordable housing for low and moderate income households.
Comments:
- _____ · Municipal sewer and/or water supply systems, if developed, consider a set aside for perpetually affordable housing for low and moderate income households.
Comments:
- _____ · Promote economic development – recognizing that good wages will improve a household's ability to afford adequate housing.
Comments:
- _____ · Towns should continually monitor opportunities for developing affordable housing
Comments:

Please use the space provided below to include comments and/or concerns that were not addressed in the 1991 study which should be addressed in the update:

Your Name: _____

Appendix E.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Nancy Brooks – Assistant Professor of Economics, UVM

Sharon Kellermann – Graves Realty

Pam Knox – Sugarbush Resort

Charlene Lathrop – Systems Developer, VT Dept. of Taxes

Joanna Villone – Cathedral Square Corp.

Margo Wade – Warren DRB/Planning Commission Assistant

The Warren Planning Commission

Karen Winchell – Central Vermont Community Land Trust

Fred Schmidt – Co-Director, Center for Rural Studies

All survey respondents

...and we sincerely apologize to anyone we may have forgotten