



Egremont Vision 2035 Initiative: 2023 Comprehensive Plan Update August 2023

Endorsed by the Planning Board on August 30, 2023

Acknowledgments

SELECT BOARD

George McGurn
Lucinda Fenn-Vermeulen
Mary Brazie

PLANNING BOARD

Matthew Bersani
Donna Bersch, Associate Member
Jared Kelly
Stephen Lyle
Mary McGurn
Edward Regendahl

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE COMMITTEE

Jared Kelly
Stephen Lyle
Jon Caplan
Jeff Lazarus
Roz Liston
Peg McDonough
Rich Montone
Bill Tynan
Julia Rasch
James Warwick
Eileen Vining

**Thank you to all
members of the
Egremont community
who participated in this
process.**

**The Egremont Vision
2035 Initiative
includes this 2023
Comprehensive
Plan Update and the
companion 2023 Open
Space and Recreation
Plan Update.**

Cover Photo: David Seligman

Prepared by Innes Associates and Tighe & Bond on behalf of the Town of Egremont.

Emily Keys Innes, AICP, LEED AP ND, President, Innes Associates
Tracy Adamski, AICP, Vice President, Tighe & Bond

Table of Contents

How to Use the Plan Document 7

1. Executive Summary 8

2. Introduction.....16

Why Plan?..... 16

Role of the Town in Plan Implementation.....17

Planning Process..... 19

Review and Adoption Process23

3. Achieving Outcomes24

Notes on Data25

Outcome 1: Providing and Encouraging Affordable and Workforce Housing .. 26

Outcome 1 in 203326

Baseline Facts, Figures, and Maps.....26

Related Goals and Actions32

Zoning-Related Recommendations.....34

Outcome 2: Supporting Economic Vibrancy and Opportunity..... 36

Outcome 2: in 203336

Baseline Facts, Figures, and Maps.....36

Related Goals and Actions38

Zoning-Related Recommendations.....42

Outcome 3: Preserving Historic Assets and Expanding Cultural Resources..... 48

Outcome 3 in 203348

Baseline Facts, Figures, and Maps.....48

Related Goals and Actions50

Zoning-Related Recommendations.....52

Outcome 4: Protecting Open Spaces and Promoting Recreation	54
Outcome 4 in 2033	54
Baseline Facts, Figures, and Maps.....	54
Related Goals and Actions	56
Outcome 5: Improving Environmental Sustainability and Resilience	58
Outcome 5 in 2033	58
Baseline Facts, Figures, and Maps.....	58
Related Goals and Actions	60
Zoning-Related Recommendations.....	63
4. Implementation Plan	64
About Implementation	64
Early Priorities for Implementation.....	65
Table of Goals and Actions	67
Measuring Progress.....	73
5. Resources	74
Glossary	75
Funding Sources.....	81
Websites	88
Picture Credits.....	91



Table of Figures and Tables

Table 1: 2022 Income Limits	27
Table 2: Affordable Rents.....	27
Table 3: Income	27
Figure 1: Current Housing Types	28
Figure 2: Current Housing Styles.....	29
Figure 3: Total Square Footage of Dwelling Units	30
Figure 4: Current Total Assessed Value of Parcels	31
Figure 5: Selected Land Uses	37
Figure 6: Current Zoning Map	41
Figure 7: Possible Boundary for a Potential North Egremont Village Zoning District	44
Figure 8: Key Assets in North Egremont.....	45
Figure 9: Possible Boundary for a Potential South Egremont Village Zoning District	46
Figure 10: Key Assets in South Egremont.....	47
Figure 11: Historic Assets and Year Built.....	49
Figure 12: Ownership of Protected and Unprotected Open Space	55
Figure 13: Agriculture and Natural Resources.....	59
Table 4. Grant Activity (as of June 2023)	82



HOW TO USE THE PLAN DOCUMENT

This plan is divided into six chapters and a set of appendices.

1. **Executive Summary.** A stand-alone summary of the planning process, the community vision and goals, and the overall plan document.
2. **Introduction.** A more in-depth explanation of the planning process and the importance of community engagement.
3. **Achieving Outcomes.** Summary of the trends and context that underlies the overall planning process and discussion of the recommendations for each outcome, organized by the Section 81D planning elements. This section will include, where appropriate, case studies or other resources.
4. **Implementation Plan.** Provides two recommendations for early action, the full list of recommended actions, and a section on how to measure progress in implementing those actions.
6. **Resources.** Provides a glossary of acronyms and terms, funding resources, and general planning resources.

The results of the two public workshops and the two community questionnaires are provided as separate PDFs and are available on the Town's website. Public comments on the draft document are included as an Appendix.



1. Executive Summary

Egremont's Select Board, Planning Board, and Conservation Commission sponsored the Egremont Vision 2035 Initiative, a collaborative planning process to produce a new Comprehensive Plan and Open Space and Recreation Plan for the Town. The Comprehensive Plan defines the vision, goals, actions, and policies for the next ten to fifteen years. The Open Space and Recreation Plan focuses on goals and steps to preserve and enhance Egremont's natural resources and open spaces and meet the Town's recreational needs for the next seven years, as defined by state requirements. Two grants from the Commonwealth's Community Compact Best Practices program funded the planning process and production of both plans.

This Comprehensive Plan is an update to the 2003 Master Plan. It is accompanied by the *2023 Open Space and Recreation Plan*. Together, both documents are a result of a planning process that began in 2022 and brought together members of the Egremont community in both public meetings and through questionnaires that were both online and available in physical form.

The Comprehensive Plan references and incorporates the goals and actions of the *2023 Open Space and Recreation Plan*; the two documents together form a comprehensive understanding of Egremont's priorities over the lifetime of each document.

ABOUT EGREMONT'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Under Massachusetts law, the Planning Board is responsible for the production and adoption of a Comprehensive Plan. Successful implementation of such plans requires the coordinated efforts of all Town elected officials and staff, the local business and nonprofit community, and residents. See [CHAPTER 2. INTRODUCTION](#) for more information about comprehensive planning.

GOALS FOR THE PLANNING PROCESS

Egremont's Planning Board requested a streamlined comprehensive plan to accompany the Open Space and Recreation Plan. This streamlined process and format allowed the Planning Board to define specific topics of concern for the consultant team to consider. These topics included the Town's zoning, changes to the Town's demographics, economy, and infrastructure, and the current and projected impacts of climate change.

In particular, the Planning Board wanted a plan that incorporated community aspirations in a set of achievable goals, policies, and actions. This directive guided the planning for the first community questionnaire and both public workshops. The content of this plan and the recommended actions are focused on what the Town, with partners, can reasonably achieve within the next ten years to address community concerns and, within the limits of its resources and community desires. See [CHAPTER 2. INTRODUCTION](#) for the Town's role in implementing a comprehensive plan.

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING, LAND USE, AND ZONING

As discussed in [CHAPTER 2. INTRODUCTION](#), today's comprehensive plans grew out of planning for the use of land, and the goals for the planning process above reflect this focus. The Town of Egremont can control the use of land through its zoning bylaws, and therefore recommended zoning changes are an important part of the implementation of this plan. [CHAPTER 3. ACHIEVING OUTCOMES](#) includes a discussion of all recommendations, including options for zoning changes. Implementing any zoning change will require the support of the Planning and Select Boards, and a favorable vote from Town Meeting.

[CHAPTER 4. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN](#) includes partners for implementation.

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This planning process included three main sources of community engagement:

- **The Comprehensive Plan Update Advisory Committee and the Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee.** These two committees met separately and jointly throughout the process and provided valuable input and feedback to the consultant team.
- **Public Workshops.** The Select Board, Planning Board, and Conservation Commission sponsored two public workshops (one on January 14, 2023, and one on March 11, 2023).
- **Public Questionnaires.** The Select Board, Planning Board, and Conservation Commission also sponsored three questionnaires during the process. The first sought volunteers for the two committees, and other two were community questionnaires that requested direct input from the public.

More information about the public process is provided in **CHAPTER 2: INTRODUCTION**.

COMMUNITY VISION

The vision for Egremont was developed from public input through this process. Most of the ideas within the vision were extracted from the second public meeting, which delved into vision, goals, and actions. The responses to the visioning exercise informed the statement below. The Comprehensive Plan Updated Advisory Committee (CPUAC) met frequently in June and July 2023 and to further develop the original draft Vision Statement and the draft Table of Goals and Actions (in **CHAPTER 4. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**). Their work deeply informs these sections.

The vision expresses what Egremont will be like in 2033, ten years from now. The statement anticipates that the goals of this comprehensive plan have been accomplished or have made significant progress.

1. Executive Summary

VISION STATEMENT

In 2033, Egremont is a **historic and vibrant rural New England town** with community members who **value five core principles** of equal importance and urgency:

- Providing and Encouraging Affordable and Workforce Housing
- Supporting Economic Vibrancy and Opportunity
- Preserving Historic Assets and Expanding Cultural Resources
- Protecting Open Spaces and Promoting Recreation
- Improving Environmental Sustainability and Resilience

Guided by these principles, the town has created a balance of dynamic commercial enterprises, residential neighborhoods of varying density and character, farms, open spaces, vistas, recreational opportunities, and environmentally protected habitats.

Specifically, the town has achieved the following outcomes:

- **Providing and Encouraging Affordable and Workforce Housing.** New housing options, both public and private, have improved affordability and economic diversity in the community. Zoning and development standards require that new housing preserve open space and historic buildings, new buildings and additions have a scale and design that is relevant to the development context (i.e., mixed-use villages or the rural character of the surrounding area), and construction and renovation incorporates environmental best practices.
- **Supporting Economic Vibrancy and Opportunity.** The Town hosts and encourages a broad range of business opportunities, while still maintaining the town's rural character. The Egremont community supports the farming community and encourages sustainable and regenerative farming practices.
- **Preserving Historic Assets and Expanding Cultural Resources.** The Town supported efforts to preserve the mixed-use nature and development patterns (residential and commercial) of the two villages and the rural character of the surrounding area. These efforts protect open lands, view corridors, and historic assets as well as the town's environmental and cultural resources.
- **Protecting Open Spaces and Promoting Recreation.** The Town has enhanced public access to waterways, mountains, and woodlands; promoted safe pedestrian and cycling use along its roadways and within its two mixed-use villages; and created a community space where citizens can interact and hold events.
- **Environmental Resiliency and Sustainability.** The Town created standards to protect the environment, including during the development process. Recognizing the present and future effects of climate change, the Town has worked to mitigate those effects through preservation of environmental assets and the promotion of sustainable practices throughout the community.

COMMUNITY GOALS

The vision statement is supported by community goals. These are high-level principles that will guide the recommended actions and policies in the implementation plan. The source of these goals is the following: both community workshops, the first community questionnaire, conversations with the two committees, and best practices around some of the topics that were generated from community engagement.

The following is a list of the goals that underlie the vision statement and organize the recommended actions. Public input during the planning process drove most goals. More information about each is provided in [CHAPTER 3: ACHIEVING OUTCOMES](#). All goals and supporting actions and policies are listed in [CHAPTER 4. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN](#).

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GOALS

Housing

1. Support a variety of affordable and workforce housing types across a range of household sizes, suitability for different ages, and income levels.

Economic Development

1. Expand options for creative economic development, such as agritourism, ecotourism, recreation, arts and culture, with an emphasis on locally owned businesses.
2. Support farming operations of all types and scales, and encourage sustainable and regenerative farming practices.
3. Reinforce the roles of North and South Egremont Villages as community hubs for a wide range of activities and coordinate municipal investments, including expanded parking, and regulations to support the villages.

Mobility and Social Connectivity

1. Improve pedestrian and bicycle safety along all Egremont's roads, especially those that connect to the village centers.
2. Preserve historic assets that reflect Egremont's culture and history.
3. Create a community center for events, performances, and as a gathering place for the community.

1. Executive Summary

Environmental Resiliency and Sustainability

1. Continue to address issues of climate change by addressing environmental issues at a local level. Environmental Resiliency and Sustainability informs decision making in all areas of life in Egremont.

Zoning

1. Revise Egremont's zoning bylaw to allow more as-of-right uses in specific areas with appropriate development controls.
2. Permit (through zoning) housing types that support people of different ages, income levels, and household sizes.
3. Develop design guidelines that are appropriate for the different areas of Egremont that also address historic context and environmental issues at a local level.
4. Ensure villages maintain a balance of commercial and residential uses.
5. Modify town's zoning map to delineate village districts (and/or village sub-districts) and the surrounding areas.

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION GOALS

The following goals are from the companion *2023 Open Space and Recreation Plan*. These goals and the supporting actions are incorporated into this plan by reference.

1. Preserve and improve the ecological integrity of sensitive natural environments and natural resources.
2. Protect and preserve Egremont's scenic and historic character (Egremont's scenic rural roads, historic structures).
3. Target open space acquisition for connectivity, resiliency and ecological value.
4. Preserve and support local farms.
5. Provide recreational opportunities for all ages and abilities.
6. Provide for safe bicycle and pedestrian transportation options.

Section 8 of the *2023 Open Space and Recreation Plan* provides additional detail about these goals and the supporting objectives.

COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

The final community questionnaire asked for community priorities for a selection of goals related to both plans and to potential zoning changes. The top four priorities for **housing, economic development, and mobility** (the Comprehensive Plan), based on 99 people of 100 responding, were as follows:

1. Support farming operations of all types and scales (conventional and organic, large and small).
2. Support a variety of affordable and workforce housing types across a range of income levels; AND Improve pedestrian and bicycle safety along Egremont's roads, especially those that connect to the village centers. (Tied for second.)
3. Expand options for creative economic development.

The top three goals for the **2023 Open Space and Recreation Plan**, with 98 out of 100 respondents) were as follows:

1. Preserve and support local farms.
2. Protect and preserve Egremont's scenic and historic character (Egremont's scenic rural roads, historic structures).
3. Preserve and improve the ecological integrity of sensitive natural environments and natural resources.

The questionnaire also asked about priorities for **zoning changes**. Again, the top three priorities, based on the same number of respondents, were as follows:

1. Develop incentives for the preservation and adaptive reuse of historic structures.
2. Incorporate design guidelines for businesses that require that new construction and significant rehabilitation are sympathetic to the existing historic and rural context.
3. Allow mixed-use in the two villages. This could include multiple uses in one building (ex. retail below and residential above) or multiple uses on a lot (ex. retail at the street and housing behind).

CHAPTER 2. INTRODUCTION includes a complete explanation of the public engagement process and **CHAPTER 3. ACHIEVING OUTCOMES** explains the rationale behind the refined goals and recommended actions.





2. Introduction

This chapter provides more detail about the planning process for this Comprehensive Plan Update and an explanation of how public input informed the recommendations of this plan.

WHY PLAN?

A town has limited capacity in terms of both people (staff, elected officials, and volunteer) and money (operating and capital funds). Town government also has important responsibilities that have a significant impact on the health, safety, and quality of life of the people who live and work within the town borders. Balancing competing interests and priorities within the confines of the limited capacity is difficult.

The plan is a document that provides guidance to a municipality for its policies, actions, and investments over a defined period, often ten years. In Massachusetts, comprehensive plans are enabled by Section 81D of Chapter 41 of the Massachusetts General Laws (MGL).

<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleVII/Chapter41/Section81D>

2. Introduction

Section 81D requires nine planning elements. Of these, the Goals and Policies Statement (or Vision and Goals) and the Implementation Plan are the most critical components in terms of defining the future policies, actions, and investments of the Town. These elements provide the why (Goals and Policies) and the what, who, where, when, and how (Implementation Plan) of the comprehensive plan.

Comprehensive planning grew out of land use planning, and the other seven elements reflect this. Those elements are as follows:

- Land use plan (which brings together the land use recommendations of the plan)
- Housing
- Economic development
- Natural and cultural resources (which include historic resources)
- Open space and recreation
- Services and facilities (which refer to Town services and facilities and can include water, wastewater, and stormwater management)
- Circulation (which originally referred to the roadways in a town and now includes transportation, transit, and mobility)

ROLE OF THE TOWN IN PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The Town of Egremont, which includes Town officials (elected and appointed) and staff, have specific roles when it comes to achieving the goals of a comprehensive plan:

- **Regulate.** A town's bylaws, including its zoning bylaws, control the use of land. This plan recommends certain changes that will create incentives for adaptive reuse and new development that meet community goals.
- **Invest.** A town can invest in recommended actions in the following ways:
 - **Establish policies that direct staff and volunteer time to address specific goals.** Egremont is a small town with few professional staff and a small pool of volunteers. Staff input is critical in understanding how the recommended actions in this plan can best be implemented.
 - **Target resources in the operating and capital budgets for implementation.** Most of a Town's operating budget is dedicated to meeting day-to-day operational needs, but

2. Introduction

where appropriate, tying departmental budget requests for operating and capital needs to the recommendations of this plan will support implementation over time.

- **Apply for state, federal, and institutional grants.** CHAPTER 5. RESOURCES identifies relevant grants to help implement this comprehensive plan. The plan itself was funded by a grant.
- **Use municipal land for community projects.** In this plan, some of the potential actions identified by participants in the workshops and questionnaires include those that could take place on municipal land. This includes the pilot projects described under Educate and larger projects, including using municipal land to meet community goals such as affordable housing and a community center.
- **Educate.** A town has a unique platform to provide education about areas of community interest. Such education can draw on a variety of opportunities, including continuing to sponsor planning processes, partnering with community members to create demonstration projects on town land (for example pollinator gardens and invasive species management) or providing information about climate change mitigation practices, and sustainable and regenerative farming practices.
- **Facilitate.** A town also has the ability to bring people together. This includes the following opportunities:
 - **Identifying partners for actions that a Town cannot take on its own.**
 - **Creating regular cross-committee meetings to encourage coordinated actions among boards and committees.** This could be as simple as an annual retreat or as frequent as a quarterly check-in.
 - **Sponsoring community conversations about specific topics of concern.** These could include continued formal planning processes or more general check-ins.
 - **Facilitating the creation of a business group to continue discussions about economic development.** In Egremont, such a group could work on beautification of the two villages, joint marketing of all Egremont businesses, or other missions that would further strengthen local businesses. The Town's role would be limited to establishing the conditions for the formation of the group; grant funding might provide support for such an initiative.

PLANNING PROCESS

Egremont's planning process needed to be focused on the planning goals established by the Planning Board at the beginning of the process. However, understanding how the Town should establish rules for land use required developing a broader series of questions to ask community members during the public workshops and via the two community questionnaires. This section describes the goals for the planning process and how the consultant team gathered critical input and feedback from the participants in the planning process.

GOALS FOR THE PLANNING PROCESS

Egremont's Planning Board asked the consultant team for a streamlined comprehensive plan that would accompany the state-defined format of the Open Space and Recreation Plan. This streamlined process and format allowed the Planning Board to define specific topics of concern for the consultant team to consider. These original initial topics included the Town's zoning, changes to the Town's demographics, economy, and infrastructure, and the current and projected impacts of climate change. Potential early areas of action included the following:

- Promoting economic growth in the two villages, North and South Egremont, with a focus on the impact of broadband and pedestrian access and the change in demand for housing and business types from new residents attracted by both.
- Creating new permitting processes, districts, and regulations to make it easier to start or relocate businesses in Egremont.
- Developing tools to promote affordable and workforce housing to address existing needs and potential displacement by new residents or businesses.
- Marketing Egremont's open space and recreational opportunities and capitalizing on the increasing recognition of those assets.
- Identifying tools to adapt to or mitigate the impacts of climate change on the people and habitat of the town.

In particular, the Planning Board wanted a plan that incorporated community aspirations in a set of achievable goals, policies, and actions. This directive guided the planning for the first community questionnaire and both public workshops.

COMMUNITY INPUT

The planning phase of the community engagement process included four major components:

- The Comprehensive Plan Update Advisory Committee,
- Public Questionnaires,
- Public Workshops, and
- Plan Website.

Comprehensive Plan Update Advisory Committee (CPUAC)

The role of the CPUAC was to provide information to the consultant team about Egremont, promote public participation in the community engagement process, and provide feedback on planning materials and documents. The committee members were as follows:

- Jared Kelly
- Stephen Lyle
- Jon Caplan
- Jeff Lazarus
- Roz Liston
- Peg McDonough
- Rich Montone
- Bill Tynan
- Julia Rasch
- James Warwick
- Eileen Vining

The CPUAC met on the following dates:

- **August 8, 2022: Joint meeting (virtual).** Kick-off meeting for the CPUAC and the OSRPC. Members discussed the planning process for both plans and the roles of the two committees.
- **September 22, 2022: CPUAC only (hybrid).** Members discussed the Goals and Objectives from the *2003 Master Plan* and various maps of the community, including land use and zoning.
- **November 7, 2022: Joint meeting (virtual).** Members of both committees discussed the format of and content and outreach for the first public workshop.
- **February 15, 2023: Joint meeting (virtual).** Members of both committees discussed the format of and content and

2. Introduction

outreach for the second public workshop.

- **June 1, 2023: CPUAC only (hybrid).** Members discussed the first draft of the comprehensive plan.
- **June 7, 14, and 22, 2023: CPUAC only.** Members spent three meetings discussing the draft vision, goals, and the implementation table. Prior to the discussion, the members had a partial draft of the plan, the meeting summaries from both public meetings, and the results of the two public questionnaires. All this information is also available on the Town's website and the project website. The results of the discussions are incorporated into this plan.
- **July 17 and 24, 2023: CPUAC only.** The CPUAC met on July 17 to discuss revisions to the draft goals and implementation. Some members also contributed individual comments directly to the consultant team. On July 24, members of the CPUAC and the consultant met to discuss the final edits to the draft plan to be submitted to the Planning Board.

Questionnaires and Workshops

The consultant team designed two community questionnaires and two public workshops to gather data for both this comprehensive plan update and the OSRP. The two committees met jointly before each public meeting to discuss the desired input and format. Members also provided input on the content of the two questionnaires. The results of each questionnaire and a summary of the results from the public workshops are provided on the Planning Board's webpage (<https://www.egremont-ma.gov/191/Planning-Board>).

- **Questionnaire #1.** The first questionnaire, which closed in July 2022, sought volunteers for the two committees (the CPUAC and the OSRPC). The first questionnaire for public input was opened prior to the January 2023 public meeting and closed on February 5, 2023. The goal of that questionnaire was to gather input about how people see Egremont today and initial thoughts about future direction. A total of 267 people responded both online and in paper format. The responses provided direction to the two committees and the consultant team in developing the second workshop as a supplement to the information received at the first workshop..
- **Public Workshop #1.** The first public workshop had several goals: introduce the Egremont community to the planning process for both plans, provide some data about existing conditions in the community and receive feedback from

2. Introduction

participants, and test past goals from the 2003 Master Plan and the 2001 Open Space and Recreation Plan. The workshop was set up as an open house over three hours and 101 people signed in; more may have attended.

- **Public Workshop #2.** The focus of the second public workshop was on developing a draft vision, goals, and actions based on community input. At the request of a committee member and after further discussion, this workshop was set up as an in-depth conversation; participants could choose three of five subjects to discuss. A total of 63 people signed in; more may have attended.
- **Questionnaire #2.** The second questionnaire, which closed in May 2023, followed the second public workshop. The questions were designed to understand preferences and priorities for some of the goals and actions that were identified by participants in that workshop. Those priorities, in conjunction with the Planning Board and the two committees, informed the development of this plan document. A total of 100 people responded online.

Because this process was funded by a grant with a specific deadline, the community participation, including committee meetings, was condensed. However, the robust input during this period provided a significant amount of data about community hopes and concerns. Community input and feedback had a direct impact on the wording of the Vision Statement and the Community Goals and most of the recommended actions.

Plan Website

The Planning Board's webpage, <https://www.egremont-ma.gov/191/Planning-Board>, includes a record of all the plan documents.

This information was also available on a project website (www.egremontvision2035.com). The function of this website was to provide a resource for people who were curious about the planning process. The website also provided links to the questionnaires and information about the date, time, and location of the public workshops. These documents will continue to be available on the Town's website; now that the planning process is over, the project website will no longer be maintained.

REVIEW AND ADOPTION PROCESS

The Planning Board held meetings on August 2 and 9, 2023 to discuss the draft plan and the process for engaging the public on its contents. The final draft of the plan was released to the public for comment from August 11-25, 2023 with the option to provide comments online.

These comments were provided to the Planning Board, as written, and without any personal identifying information. The comments will be publicly available as an appendix to this plan as the Town begins implementation of the actions in this plan and can be used by all the partners involved in the next steps of the process.

The Select Board held a meeting on August 8, 2023 to endorse the draft plan.

The Planning Board met on August 30, 2023 to review the comments and endorsed this plan.



3. Achieving Outcomes

Based on their understanding of the community input and discussions throughout the process, the members of the Comprehensive Plan Update Advisory Committee (CPUAC) identified specific outcomes for the Town to achieve by 2035 (see CHAPTER 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY for the Vision Statement and desired outcomes).

This chapter provides the baseline data for desired outcome that the Town can use to develop benchmarks for making progress towards achieving those outcomes (see CHAPTER 4. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN for an overall discussion of benchmarking). This chapter also discusses the recommended actions to achieve the outcomes in more detail. For some of the outcomes these actions may require zoning changes; those recommended changes are included with the relevant outcome. CHAPTER 4. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN contains the full Table of Goals and Actions, organized by the relevant Section 81D planning element (See CHAPTER 2. INTRODUCTION).

3. Achieving Outcomes

These are the categories of desired outcomes (page 11) and how they address the seven planning elements required by MGL Ch. 41A Section 81D (page 17):

- **Providing and Encouraging Affordable and Workforce Housing** addresses the Housing, Economic Development, and Land Use elements.
- **Supporting Economic Vibrancy and Opportunity** addresses the Economic Development, Housing, and Land Use elements.
- **Preserving Historic Assets and Expanding Cultural Resources** addresses the Natural and Cultural Resources, Housing, Economic Development, and Land Use elements.
- **Protecting Open Spaces and Promoting Recreation** addresses the Open Space and Recreation, Services and Facilities, Circulation, and Land Use elements.
- **Improving Environmental Sustainability and Resiliency** addresses all elements.

The discussion of each outcome contains baseline data, additional information about specific terms or topics, and explanations for recommended actions that may be of use to the Town of Egremont as it moves forward with implementation of this comprehensive plan update.

NOTES ON DATA

The **2023 Open Space and Recreation Plan**, developed in a parallel process with this Comprehensive Plan, contains a significant amount of data, much of it required by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for the production of this plan type. In addition, the Town has recently completed other plans with data relevant to the content of this chapter. Rather than repeating the data word-for-word, this discussion of each outcome draws on the specific data needed to explain the need and recommended actions for each of the desired outcomes.

1

OUTCOME 1: PROVIDING AND ENCOURAGING AFFORDABLE AND WORKFORCE HOUSING

OUTCOME 1 IN 2033

New housing options have improved affordability and economic diversity in the community.

Zoning and development standards require that new housing preserve open space and historic buildings and that scale and design of new buildings and additions are relevant to the context (village or rural).

LOCAL RESOURCES

Town of Egremont

- Housing Committee
- Municipal Housing Trust Fund
- Green Committee
- Council on Aging

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

OTHER PLANS

2021 Town of Egremont: Housing Needs Assessment

A Housing Vision for the Berkshires: Berkshire County Regional Housing Strategy

BASELINE FACTS, FIGURES, AND MAPS



1,372

Population

2020 Decennial Census



939

Housing Units

2021 American Community Survey (ACS)



591

Households

2021 ACS



386

Families

2021 ACS



18.8%

Living Alone

2021 ACS



9.5%

Seniors Living Alone

2021 ACS



87.6%

Single Dwelling Units

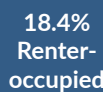
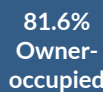
2021 ACS



12.4%

Two+ Dwelling Units

2021 ACS



Median Sales Price May 2023 (Redfin)

South Egremont (01258)	\$740,000
Great Barrington (01230)	\$532,000
Berkshire County	\$310,000
Massachusetts	\$614,700

3. Achieving Outcomes

Table 1: 2022 Income Limits
Area Median Income (AMI): \$92,100

↓ This is a key metric
for developers of
affordable housing.

Household Size	Extremely Low Income (30% AMI)	Very Low Income (50% AMI)	Tax Credit Eligible (60% AMI)	Low Income (80% AMI)
1 person	\$19,800	\$32,950	\$39,450	\$52,750
2 persons	\$22,600	\$37,650	\$45,180	\$60,250
3 persons	\$25,450	\$42,350	\$50,820	\$67,800
4 persons	\$28,250	\$47,050	\$56,460	\$75,300
5 persons	\$30,550	\$50,850	\$61,020	\$81,350

Source: Mass Housing: Affordable Housing Program) Berkshire County, MA (part) HMFA.

Table 2: Affordable Rents
Based on 30% of Income

Household Size	Extremely Low Income (30% AMI)	Very Low Income (50% AMI)	Tax Credit Eligible (60% AMI)	Low Income (80% AMI)
Studio (1 person)	\$495	\$823	\$988	\$1,318
1 Bedroom (1-2 persons)	\$530	\$882	\$1,059	\$1,412
2-bedroom (max. 3 persons)	\$636	\$1,058	\$1,270	\$1,695
3-bedroom (4-5 persons)	\$735	\$1,223	\$1,468	\$1,958

Source: Mass Housing: Affordable Housing Program) Berkshire County, MA (part) HMFA.

Table 3: Income
Median Income: \$79,946

Household Income Past 12 months	% of Households	Margin of Error
Under \$20,000	2.7%	±2.4
\$20,000-\$24,999	1.9%	±2.1
\$25,000-\$34,999	14.0%	±6.1
\$35,000-\$49,999	8.8%	±5.5
\$50,000 - \$74,999	18.1%	±5.8
\$75,000-\$99,999	14.6%	±5.9
\$100,000-\$149,000	8.0%	±4.6
\$150,000 or more	32%	±9.8

18.6% of households have an income of below \$35,000, qualifying the average household size at Extremely Low to Very Low Income.

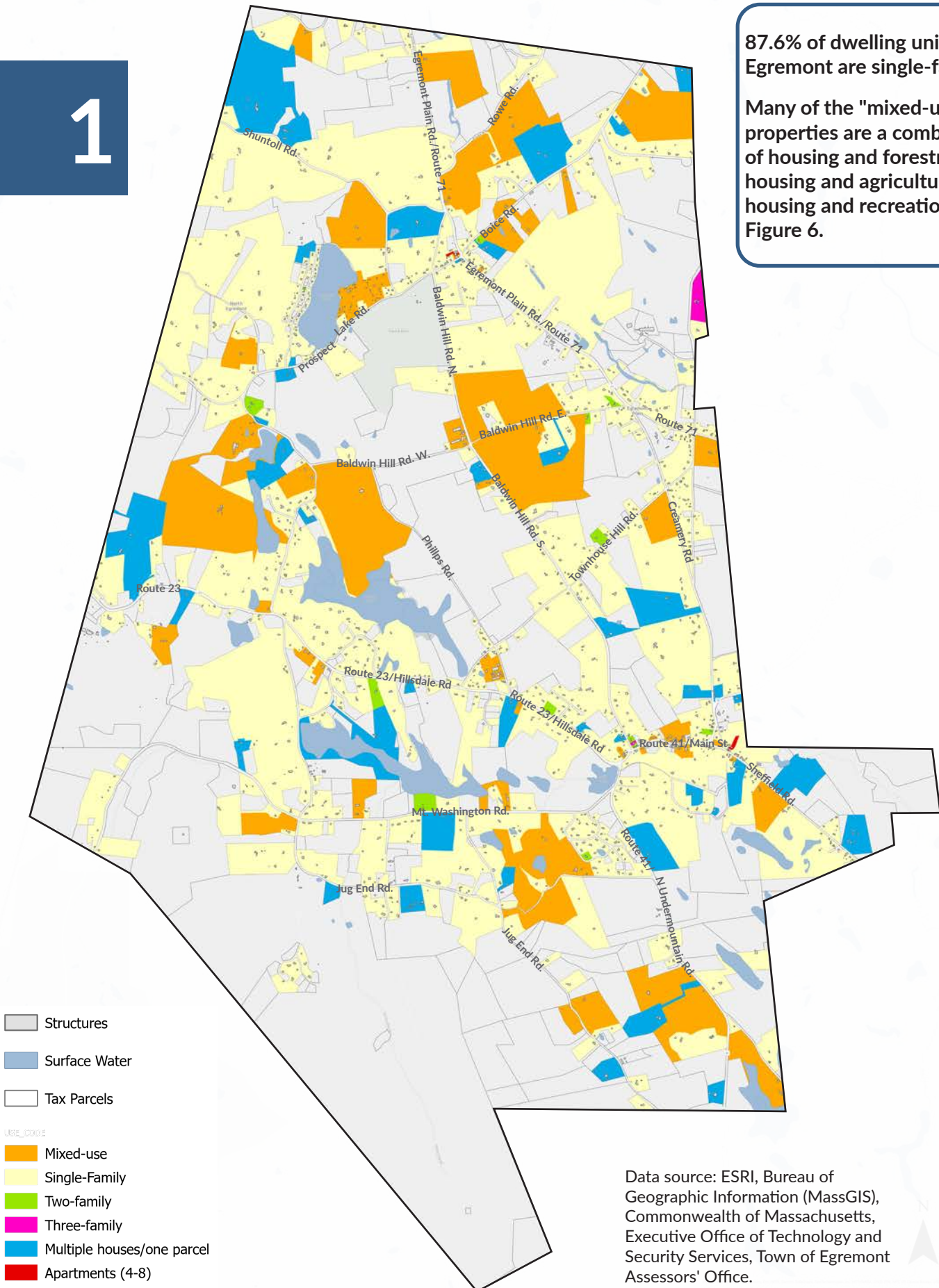
A further 26.9% of households are in the \$35,000-\$74,999 range, which would quality the average household size as Very Low to Low Income.

Source: 2021 ACS S2503.

Figure 1: Current Housing Types

87.6% of dwelling units in Egremont are single-family.

Many of the "mixed-use" properties are a combination of housing and forestry, housing and agriculture, or housing and recreation. See Figure 6.

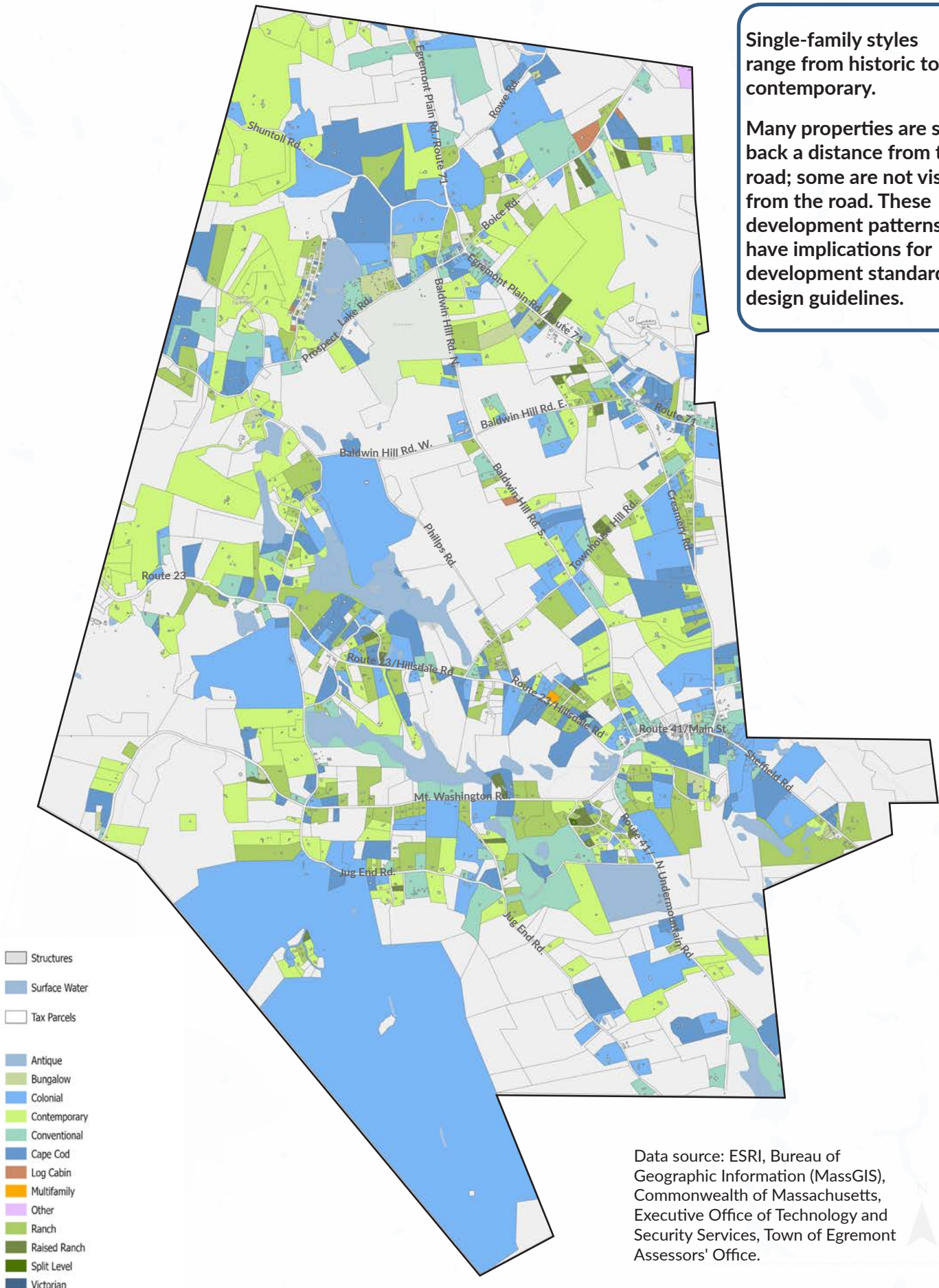


Data source: ESRI, Bureau of Geographic Information (MassGIS), Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Executive Office of Technology and Security Services, Town of Egremont Assessors' Office.

Figure 2: Current Housing Styles

Single-family styles range from historic to contemporary.

Many properties are set back a distance from the road; some are not visible from the road. These development patterns have implications for development standards and design guidelines.

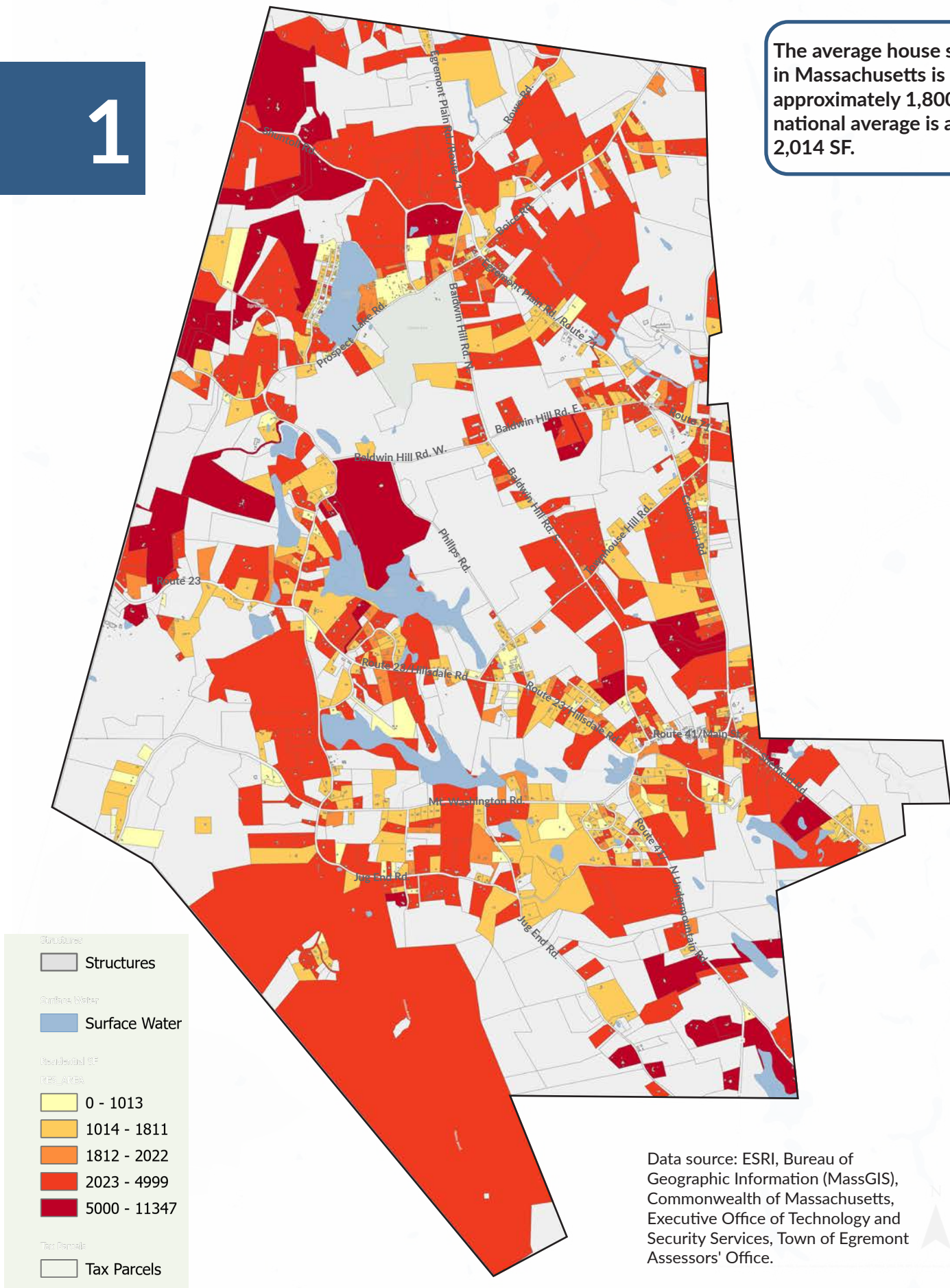


Data source: ESRI, Bureau of Geographic Information (MassGIS), Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Executive Office of Technology and Security Services, Town of Egremont Assessors' Office.

Figure 3: Total Square Footage of Dwelling Units

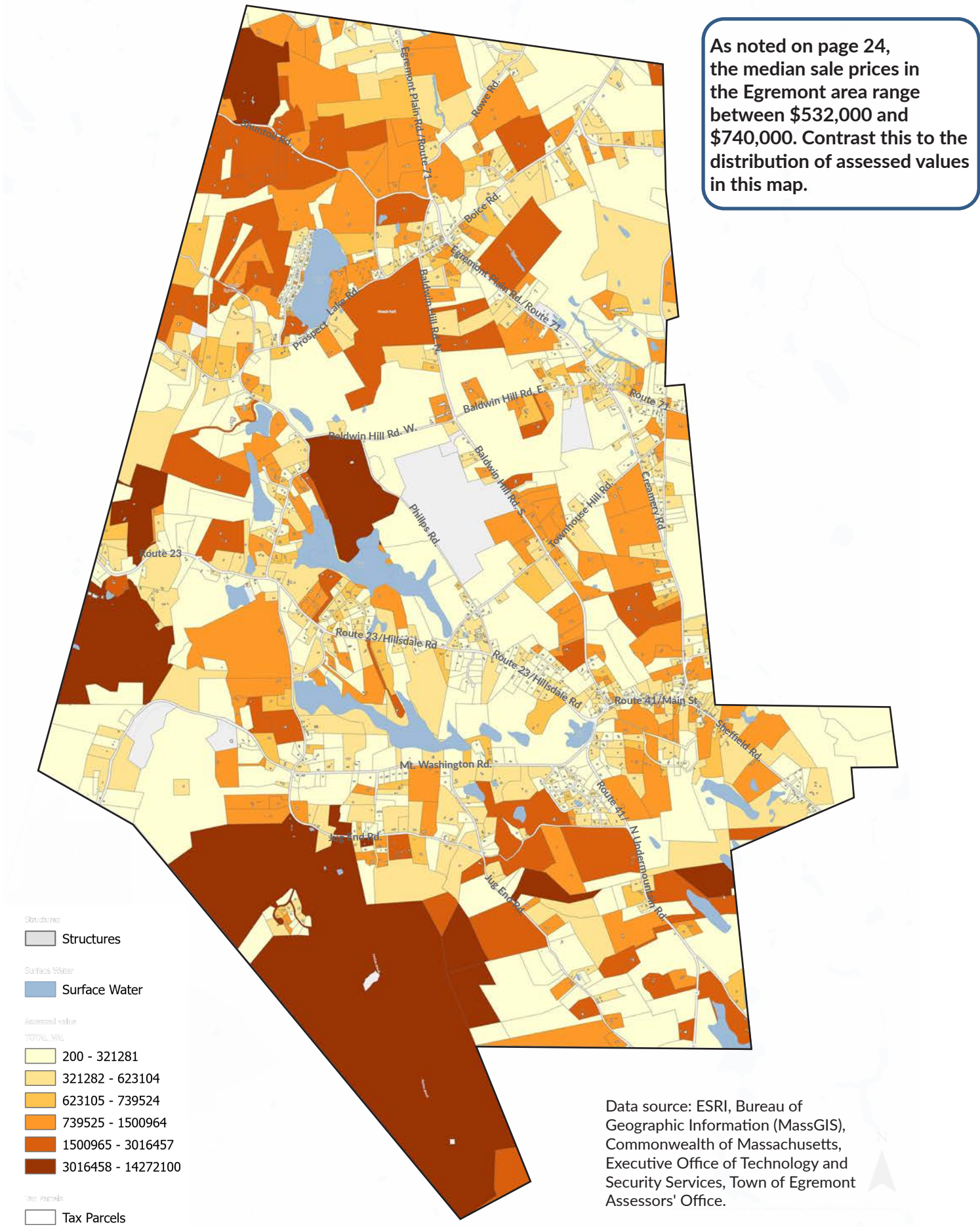
1

The average house size in Massachusetts is approximately 1,800 SF. The national average is about 2,014 SF.



Data source: ESRI, Bureau of Geographic Information (MassGIS), Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Executive Office of Technology and Security Services, Town of Egremont Assessors' Office.

Figure 4: Current Total Assessed Value of Parcels



3. Achieving Outcomes

OUTCOME 1: PROVIDING AND ENCOURAGING AFFORDABLE AND WORKFORCE HOUSING

1

CRITICAL NEXT STEP

Develop a Housing Production Plan for the new Housing Trust (established at the 2023 Annual Town Meeting).

CRITICAL NEXT STEP

Develop standards for Town-sponsored affordable and workforce housing that encourage new buildings and renovation to existing buildings to meet the following standards:

- Achieve energy efficiencies above the requirements of the stretch building code (already adopted by the Town)
- Offer resistance to extreme weather
- Provide healthy indoor environments
- Be constructed or renovated with eco-friendly building materials

RELATED GOALS AND ACTIONS

For Outcome 1, which has one goal, Housing is the most relevant Section 81D planning element.

H-1 Support a variety of affordable and workforce housing types across a range of household sizes, suitability for different ages, and income levels.

The statistics at the beginning of this section indicate a clear need to address affordable and workforce housing in Egremont. This is further supported by the [2021 Town of Egremont: Housing Needs Assessment](#), completed by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC).

H-1.1 Undertake a Housing Production Plan with a focus on community needs for workforce housing, aging in place, and starter homes.

A Housing Production Plan (HPP) identifies the need for affordable and workforce housing and helps the community identify specific strategies for how such housing should be built. Those strategies include both public and private action; in other words, the Town is not solely responsible for meeting the entire identified need.

Undertaking a Housing Production Plan would allow the Town to update the data and BRPC's findings from the [2021 Town of Egremont: Housing Needs Assessment](#). Other actions listed in this comprehensive plan update can help implement the recommendations of the HPP.

H-1.2 Encourage the adaptive reuse of existing buildings for multi-unit housing, including workforce housing.

Adaptive reuse of buildings can address many of the desired outcomes raised by the community during the planning process. Some larger buildings may be easily adapted into two or more units without significant changes to the exterior form. Allowing adaptation of existing buildings from a single dwelling to multiple units is one way of meeting the need for additional housing while preserving the historic context and development patterns that the Egremont community values.

H-1.3 Educate property owners about state grant programs to support the renovation of homes to allow aging in place.

The Town has a role in either applying for state grants directly or educating property owners about their options for state grants.

3. Achieving Outcomes

OUTCOME 1: PROVIDING AND ENCOURAGING AFFORDABLE AND WORKFORCE HOUSING

DID YOU KNOW?

Egremont participates in the Community Development Block Grant Program Housing Rehab Grant.

These grant funds "allow qualifying homeowners (owner-occupied single/ multi-family and investor-owned units) in Egremont to secure a 0% interest, deferred, forgivable loan to make critical home repairs."*

These repairs include:

- electrical, heating, and plumbing work
- minor structural repairs
- roof and siding repairs
- insulation and window replacements
- lead paint and asbestos removal
- handicap accessibility

* Source: <https://www.egremont-ma.gov/203/Housing-Committee>

H-1.4 Conduct a regular evaluation of properties for purchase or adaptive re-use.

The Town of Egremont may purchase land and buildings to promote affordable housing, through the new Egremont Municipal Housing Trust Fund, and work with non-municipal organizations and state agencies for those purchases.

H-1.5 Facilitate the creation of a fund to assist with actions to support affordable housing and aging in place, including conversion, repairs, ADUs, down payments, and deed restriction plans.

The Town created the Egremont Municipal Housing Trust Fund at the May 2023 Annual Town Meeting. This fund can be used for the preservation and creation of workforce and affordable housing. A parallel fund, drawing on the expressed support from the community during this process, could either assist with smaller projects, or act as a fund-raising group for the Trust Fund, which can accept gifts.

H-1.6 Develop zoning incentives to encourage lasting (or in perpetuity) affordable/workplace housing development.

An Inclusionary Housing Bylaw would help develop and preserve affordable and workforce housing by requiring that proposed residential development over a specific threshold set aside a percentage of units for lower-income households.

H-1.7 Investigate the effect of short-term rentals on the community and affordable housing, and develop an appropriate plan for regulation.

During the public process, community members expressed concerns about how short-term rentals may either inflate the cost of housing or reduce the number of dwelling units available for purchase or rent. The Town should research the ownership, number and format of existing short-term rentals: are they income-producing units for an owner-occupier or are they rented out by a non-resident landlord? With that data, the Town can understand how best to regulate short-term rental properties.

H-1.8 Develop mechanisms to assure that affordable and workforce housing remains so for subsequent owners and renters.

A deed restriction, either permanent or temporary, is one option.

3. Achieving Outcomes

OUTCOME 1: PROVIDING AND ENCOURAGING AFFORDABLE AND WORKFORCE HOUSING

1

CRITICAL NEXT STEP

Address these zoning recommendations as part of the zoning review process beginning in Fall 2023.

ZONING-RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS

Housing is allowed throughout the town. In the General District, the following residential uses are allowed as-of-right (with a building permit):

- One family dwelling (minimum one acre lot).
- Conversion of an existing one family dwelling to a two-family dwelling.
- Two-family dwelling (minimum two-acre lot).
- Accessory Dwelling Unit of 800 SF or less and on the same lot as a one- or two-family dwelling.

These additional uses are allowed with the approval of a special permit by the Planning Board:

- Multi-family dwelling, up to six units (minimum 2.5-acre lot)
- Accessory Dwelling Unit between 800 SF and 1,200 SF.
- Accessory Dwelling Unit on the same lot as a retail or consumer service use (minimum 1-2-acre lot).

In the **Jug End Residential District**, a single-family home (based on lot size and contours) is allowed as-of-right. A special permit is required for a single-family home and multi-family up to four units based on contours.

The purposes of the following goals and recommendations for changes to the town's zoning bylaws are (a) to address community concerns about the lack of affordable housing and workforce housing; and (b) to preserve and protect open space and natural resources through appropriate standards for development.

Z-1 Revise Egremont's zoning bylaw to allow more as-of-right uses in specific areas with appropriate development controls.

Allowing uses as-of-right means that applicants wishing to build or convert housing need only a building permit. Community concerns about protecting resources can be addressed by the use of an administrative review process for quantifiable development standards.

Z-1.1 Expand permitted housing types by right or special permit in the Town. This could include multi-family uses or condominiums.

As noted earlier, Egremont does not have much variation in its housing stock. Goal Z-2 below speaks to the need for different

3. Achieving Outcomes

OUTCOME 1: PROVIDING AND ENCOURAGING AFFORDABLE AND WORKFORCE HOUSING

housing types. This action helps define which of those types can be allowed with only a building permit and which might require additional review by the Planning Board through the site plan review or special permit process. (Note: The Town of Egremont only has site plan review in its Large-scale Ground-Mounted Solar Photovoltaic Installation Overlay District.)

A by-right or site plan review process is more time- and cost-effective for applicants. Assigning this level of permitting to a specific use is a signal that the use is desirable to the community.

The special permit process, which can be more difficult, should be used for projects that require a higher level of control or community oversight.

Z-2 Permit (through zoning) housing types that support people of different ages, income levels, and household sizes.

Housing does not have to be on the Subsidized Housing Inventory to be affordable. Housing can be affordable by design (smaller buildings on smaller lots). Housing appropriate for seniors wanting to age in place does not have to be age-restricted. Housing that is designed for senior living may also be appropriate for many of all ages who need or appreciate universal design standards.

Defining specific housing types within the zoning bylaw is one method of encouraging those housing types.

Z-2.1 Allow cluster housing that will (a) help preserve open space and wildlife corridors and (b) be consistent with the rural and historic aesthetic of the town.

Clustering housing (placing the buildings closer together than the minimum lot size would normally allow) in a development opens up the possibility of creating continuous stretches of open space and preserving wildlife corridors. Cluster housing often requires an incentive to work. For example, four units may be allowed under a typical subdivision but allowing five or six units creates the incentive to put those buildings on smaller lots and closer together, thus reducing infrastructure costs and minimizing the amount of land that is disturbed. The current minimum lot size requirements work against the concept of cluster housing.

Z-2.2 Create standards for Town and/or private development of affordable and workforce housing.

See [Outcome 2: Supporting Economic Development and Vibrancy](#) for a discussion of development and design standards.

2

OUTCOME 2: SUPPORTING ECONOMIC VIBRANCY AND OPPORTUNITY

OUTCOME 2: IN 2033

New tools allow for a broader range of economic activities and housing while still maintaining the Town's rural quality.

The villages have an expanded mix of business and residential uses.

The Town supports the farming community and encourages sustainable farming practices.

RESOURCES

Egremont Agricultural Commission

Egremont Land Trust

Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources

Note: Egremont does not have a committee with a specific charge for economic development.

BASELINE FACTS, FIGURES, AND MAPS

61 Businesses on the Town's list of businesses.
(Not all businesses are required to register with the Town.)



12

Food-related



10

Retail-related,
Including production



12

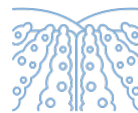
Services-related,
Professional, personal,
and business



Egremont is a "Right-to-Farm Community" which provides certain protections to active farming operations. See the Town's "Right-to-Farm" Bylaw for more information.

1 Egremont farm listed on the Massachusetts MassGrown Map

Farms in Berkshire County
Mass. Dept. of Agriculture



475 FARMS
58,647 ACRES



\$23,491,000

Agriculture Sales
in Berkshire County
Mass. Dept. of Agriculture

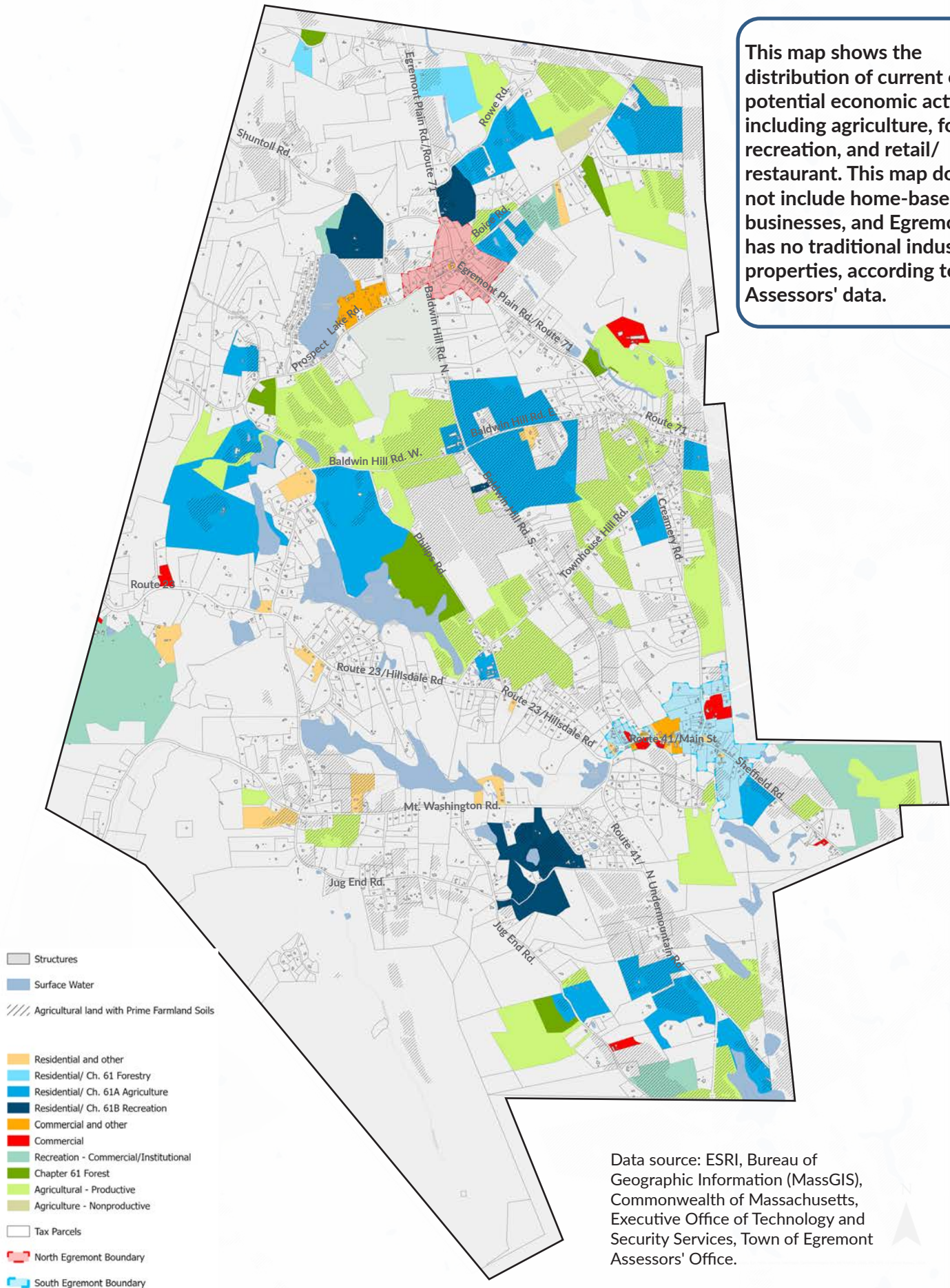
Farms in Egremont
Egremont Agricultural Commission



7 FARMS
2,355 ACRES

BELAIR FARM
APRIL HILL/GREENAGERS
INDIAN LINE FARM
TURNER FARMS DAIRY & MAPLE SYRUP
THE LLAMA FARM
GREEN RIVER ARABIANS AND PINTOS
MAYFLOWER FARM
1,205 acres are protected through Agricultural Restrictions (2023 OSRP).

Figure 5: Selected Land Uses



3. Achieving Outcomes

OUTCOME 2: SUPPORTING ECONOMIC VIBRANCY AND OPPORTUNITY

2

RELATED GOALS AND ACTIONS

For Outcome 2, which has three goals, Economic Development is the most relevant Section 81D planning element.

Economic Development (ED)

ED-1 Expand options for creative economic development, such as agritourism, ecotourism, recreation, arts and culture, with an emphasis on locally owned businesses.

The Town can equally act as a facilitator for all businesses. This may include creating a local business group and assisting them with resources until they can operate on their own and providing information and support for grants to assist either individual businesses or the larger business community with resources.

Finally, the Town should review its non-zoning permits to ensure that the permitting process is welcoming and easy to understand for new businesses. Some municipalities are creating permitting guides that act as checklists for businesses who are starting out, expanding, or relocating.

ED-1.1 Streamline permitting processes for businesses.

The Town should review its permitting processes regularly to identify any blocks that might discourage new businesses from locating in Egremont. Where possible, departmental reviews and pre-application meetings should reduce the number of times an applicant must appear before Town boards or commissions.

ED-1.2 Facilitate a business group(s) that can market existing businesses, and attract other suitable businesses to Egremont.

The Town can kick-start a local business group by facilitating the first year of meetings. Often it is hard for small business owners to take time from managing their businesses to attend meetings, even those that could increase their profits. The Town can take the lead at creating a business group for shared discussion and marketing. After a short period of support members of the business community should be able to manage the group themselves.

ED-1.3 Seek grants that can assist business owners with specific strategies, such as storefront improvement, store window design, point-of-sale upgrades, and entrepreneurship.

The Town's Grant Administrator can look to the Massachusetts Downtown Initiative and other relevant grant programs to support the local business community.

3. Achieving Outcomes

OUTCOME 2: SUPPORTING ECONOMIC VIBRANCY AND OPPORTUNITY

ED-1.4 Explore incentives and/or rebates for switching from chemical fertilizers to alternatives that are better for water and land quality.

The Town's Grant Administrator can research incentive programs, perhaps starting with the USDA or the Center for Agriculture, Food, and the Environment at UMass-Amherst for resources. Having these resources available will support discussions with landowners about fertilizer use.

ED-2 Support farming operations of all types and scales, and encourage sustainable and regenerative farming practices..

The Egremont community values its rural heritage and lifestyle, and working farms are an important contributor to the rural nature of the Town. The three actions below assume that the Town acts as a facilitator for conversations between the farming community and the rest of the Egremont community.

The Town may also have a role in coordinating information about useful grant programs to the farming community and sharing information about resources for best farming practices.

ED-2.1 Encourage the agricultural community to incorporate climate adaption practices by outreach and making resources available.

Harvard, MA was one of the first communities to sponsor a planning initiative to look at how a town can support farming operations as the impact of climate change has an impact on the ability to farm. This resource, in two volumes, is available here:

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/municipal-vulnerability-preparedness-mvp-program-planning-reports#h->

ED-2.2 Encourage regenerative and environmentally sustainable farming practices.

The same resource, particularly the second volume, is an early look at sustainable farming practices, which include the importance of soil health. Since that report, significant research and pilot projects around the world have looked at ways to conduct commercial and home-based agricultural practices in an environmentally sustainable manner. The Agricultural Committee is a perfect partner to connect people on this important topic; additional resources are provided in **CHAPTER 5. RESOURCES.**

HOW TO

Many communities add development standards to their zoning and often create design guidelines as a separate document. The difference is that development standards are quantifiable and required, while design guidelines are advisory and focused on aesthetic qualities. Both provide a way for a community to ensure that new development is responsive to community values about the quality of the physical character of the buildings and sites in town.

The historic development pattern of Egremont's two villages suggest that this combination of controls could be appropriate to capture what people value about the experience of being in North and South Egremont.

ED-2.3 Work with the Egremont Land Trust to preserve land for working farms.

The Egremont Land Trust has already purchased property for conservation in Egremont. The Town could facilitate conversations between the Egremont Land Trust and farmers to preserve existing farmland and to provide land with suitable agricultural soils to beginning farmers to support pilot projects for sustainable agriculture.

ED-3 Reinforce the roles of North and South Egremont Villages as community hubs for a wide range of activities and coordinate municipal investments, including expanded parking, and regulations to support the villages.

The Town can use both zoning changes and strategic investments in infrastructure to reinforce the villages in their roles as historic centers of economic activity. South Egremont, the larger of the two villages, has more options for continued commercial activity, but is somewhat limited by topography and the Hubbard Brook. The deep parcels, however, offer opportunities for multi-building and multi-use strategies while still preserving the historic appearance from the road.

North Egremont is likely to play a smaller role, but valuable to both the adjacent residential areas and because of its proximity to French Park and Prospect Lake.

Both areas are limited by two factors: the need for leach fields for septic systems and a lack of parking.

ED-3.1 Develop a parking, pedestrian, circulation, safety, and accessibility plan for the two villages.

The Town should develop a parking management plan that would evaluate options for centralized parking, incentives for shared private parking, and methods of improving safety for all users of the roadway. This study would include an evaluation of the existing conditions and likely changes based on the proposed update to the Town's zoning. This would supplement the current work to reconstruct Main Street/Route 23 in South Egremont.

The Town did apply for a grant for this purpose in the 2023 Community One Stop for Growth application round (see [CHAPTER 5. RESOURCES](#)). This is a competitive grants process and some project may require more than one round to be funded. This comprehensive plan update can serve as additional support for another application.

Figure 6: Current Zoning Map



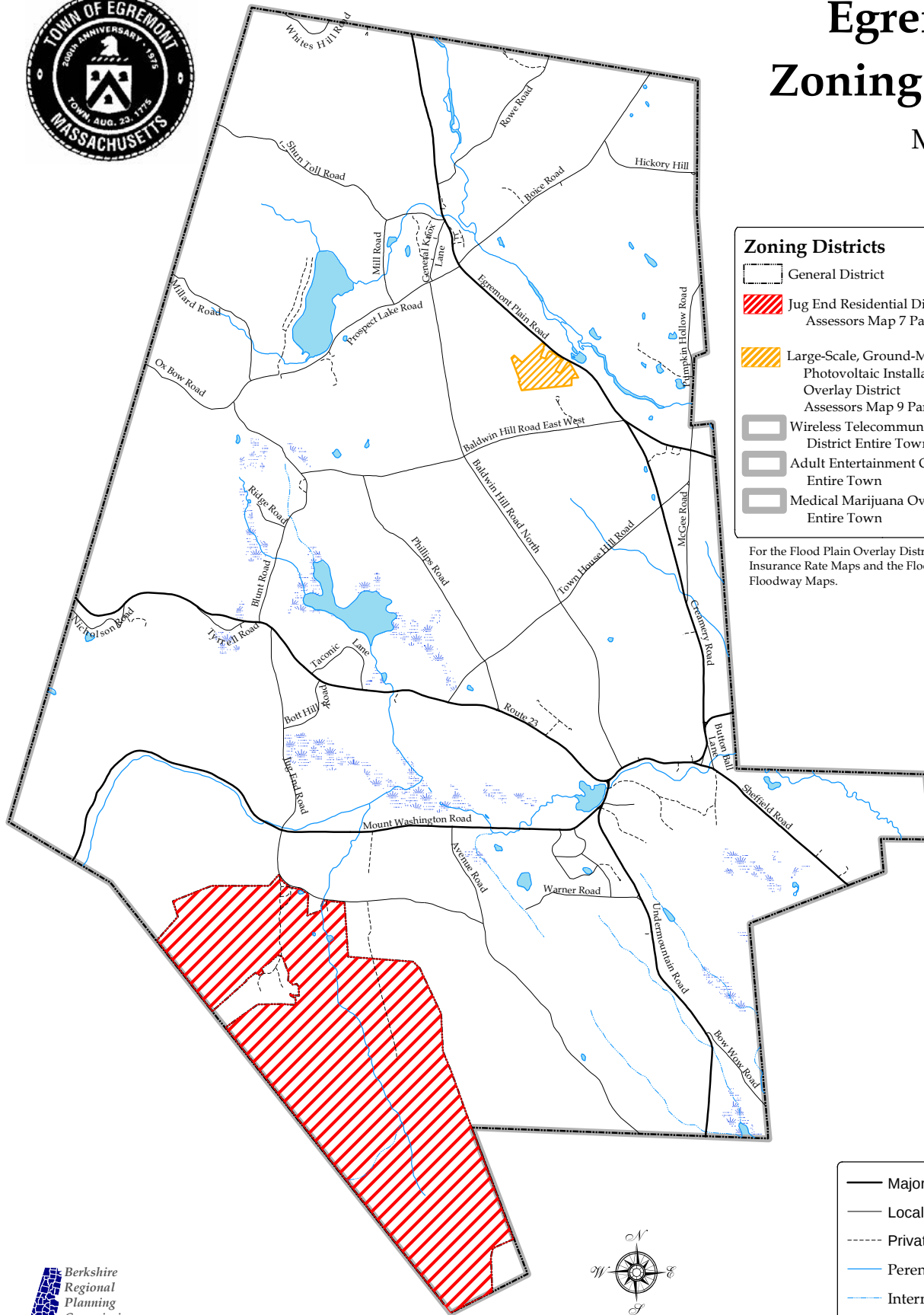
Egremont Zoning Map

May 2015

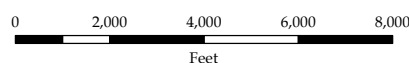
Zoning Districts

-  General District
-  Jug End Residential District
Assessors Map 7 Parcel 278
-  Large-Scale, Ground-Mounted, Solar
Photovoltaic Installation (LGSP)
Overlay District
Assessors Map 9 Parcel 0004
-  Wireless Telecommunications Overlay
District Entire Town
-  Adult Entertainment Overlay District
Entire Town
-  Medical Marijuana Overlay District
Entire Town

For the Flood Plain Overlay District see the Flood Insurance Rate Maps and the Flood Boundary and Floodway Maps.



Prepared by the Berkshire Regional
Planning Commission, May 2015
for the Egremont Planning Board



-  Major Road
-  Local Road
-  Private Road
-  Perennial Stream
-  Intermittent Stream
-  Lake / Pond
-  Marsh / Wetland

3. Achieving Outcomes

OUTCOME 2: SUPPORTING ECONOMIC VIBRANCY AND OPPORTUNITY

2

DID YOU KNOW?

MGL Chapter 41A, Section 3 exempts commercial agriculture and related uses* from certain zoning restrictions. However, the use may be reasonably regulated. Land or structures may not be exempt from floodplains or wetlands regulations established by the General Laws.

Agricultural use includes the sale of produce, wine, and dairy products. The sale must meet certain restrictions for when the products are sold and how much is produced on site or within Massachusetts. The land exempted must be on a parcel of 5 acres or more. However, if the parcel generates a certain level of income, it can be two acres or more.

*Aquaculture, silviculture, horticulture, floriculture or viticulture. Agriculture is defined in MGL Chapter 128, Section 1A.

ZONING-RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS

Non-residential principal uses have a minimum lot size of one acre. Within the General District, commercial buildings have a side and rear setback of fifty feet. This requirement presents a problem for the smaller lots in the villages, particularly in South Egremont.

Another restriction on non-residential development is that many uses require a Special Permit from the Planning Board. This includes retail and consumer services.

Agriculture and related uses are allowed under state law for parcels that meet certain size restrictions. While the sale of products produced on site, such as produce, wine, and dairy, is allowed Food processing, such as making jams or jellies from fruit grown on the site, is not specifically allowed in Section 3 (see sidebar). Food processing is also not allowed in the Town's Zoning Bylaw.

Z-1 Revise Egremont's zoning bylaw to allow more as-of-right uses in specific areas with appropriate development controls.

Desired uses should be allowed by right in order to create an incentive for those uses within Egremont. Development controls can be evaluated either administratively or through a site plan review process, which the Town is also missing.

Z-1.2 Create a table of uses, with additional permitted business types by right or special permit in the two villages and in the surrounding areas.

The definitions and lists of uses by district are missing some uses that would be appropriate for a rural economy. Restaurant or food service are not listed separately as permitted uses, and none of these uses are defined in Section 2. Definitions.

Z-1.3 Define home-based business types allowed by right in the town that do not negatively impact residential neighborhoods.

Home Occupation is defined in Section 2. Definitions in the zoning bylaw but is not allowed by that specific term in the list of permitted uses for Section 4.1 General District. However, the use of a room(s) within a dwelling for the practice of an occupation or craft is allowed in the General District, without the same restrictions found in the definition of Home Occupation. The definition of Home Occupation and its integration into the use regulations for the districts should be aligned. Standards to define an allowable range of home occupations are missing.

3. Achieving Outcomes

OUTCOME 2: SUPPORTING ECONOMIC VIBRANCY AND OPPORTUNITY

DID YOU KNOW?

Massachusetts' Title 5 regulations govern septic systems. While such systems are traditionally the only option for wastewater management in rural areas, poorly managed septic systems can have a negative impact on environmental and public health. In addition, the leach field uses a significant amount of land, reducing building options on small parcels and often forcing new development into sprawl-like patterns.

Title 5 supports using innovative/alternative technologies, which include pilot and provisional use options. The Town could investigate these as tools to support growth in the villages, particularly South Egremont.

<https://www.mass.gov/guides/approved-title-5-innovativealternative-technologies#-general-use--alternative-sas,-patented-sand-filters-and-chambers->

Z-4 Ensure villages maintain a balance of commercial and residential uses.

Develop one or more zoning districts for the two villages that allow a mix of uses to support housing and economic development. Consider how new buildings and additions can be designed to fit the existing built context. Permit building and use types that are self-sustaining, in other words, facilitate the addition of housing, where appropriate, to support local businesses. Consider the impact of development on the existing wastewater management systems, primarily private septic, and evaluate alternative technologies for wastewater management that have been approved as pilot projects under Title 5.

Z-5 Modify town's zoning map to delineate village districts (and/or village sub-districts) and the surrounding areas.

The existing mixed-use environment is reflective of the history of the villages. However, the General District may be too broad to allow for the desired preservation of the rural area and the mixed-use nature of the village districts. Figures 7 and 9 provide options for the boundaries of the potential Village Districts.

Figure 7: Possible Boundary for a Potential North Egremont Village Zoning District

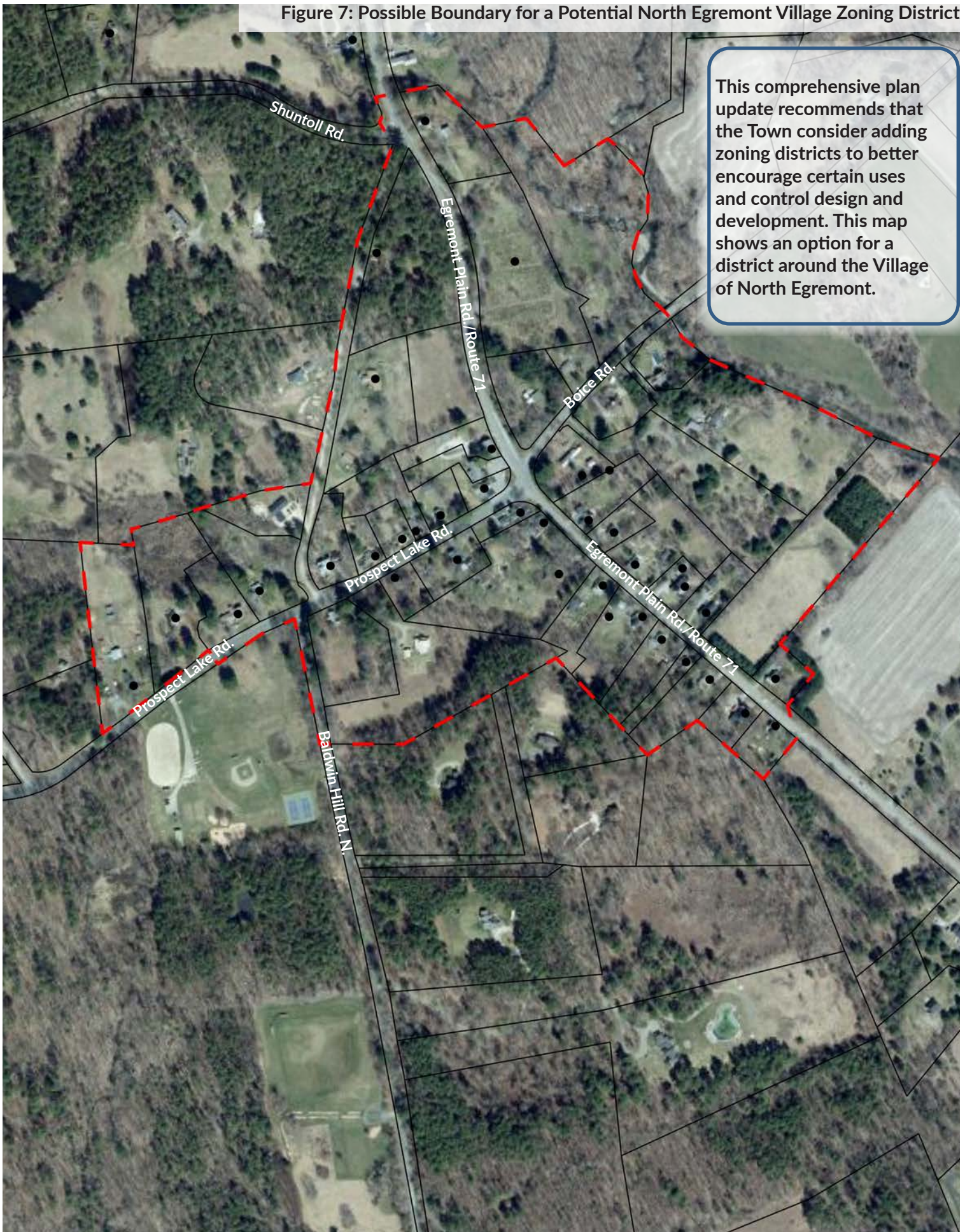
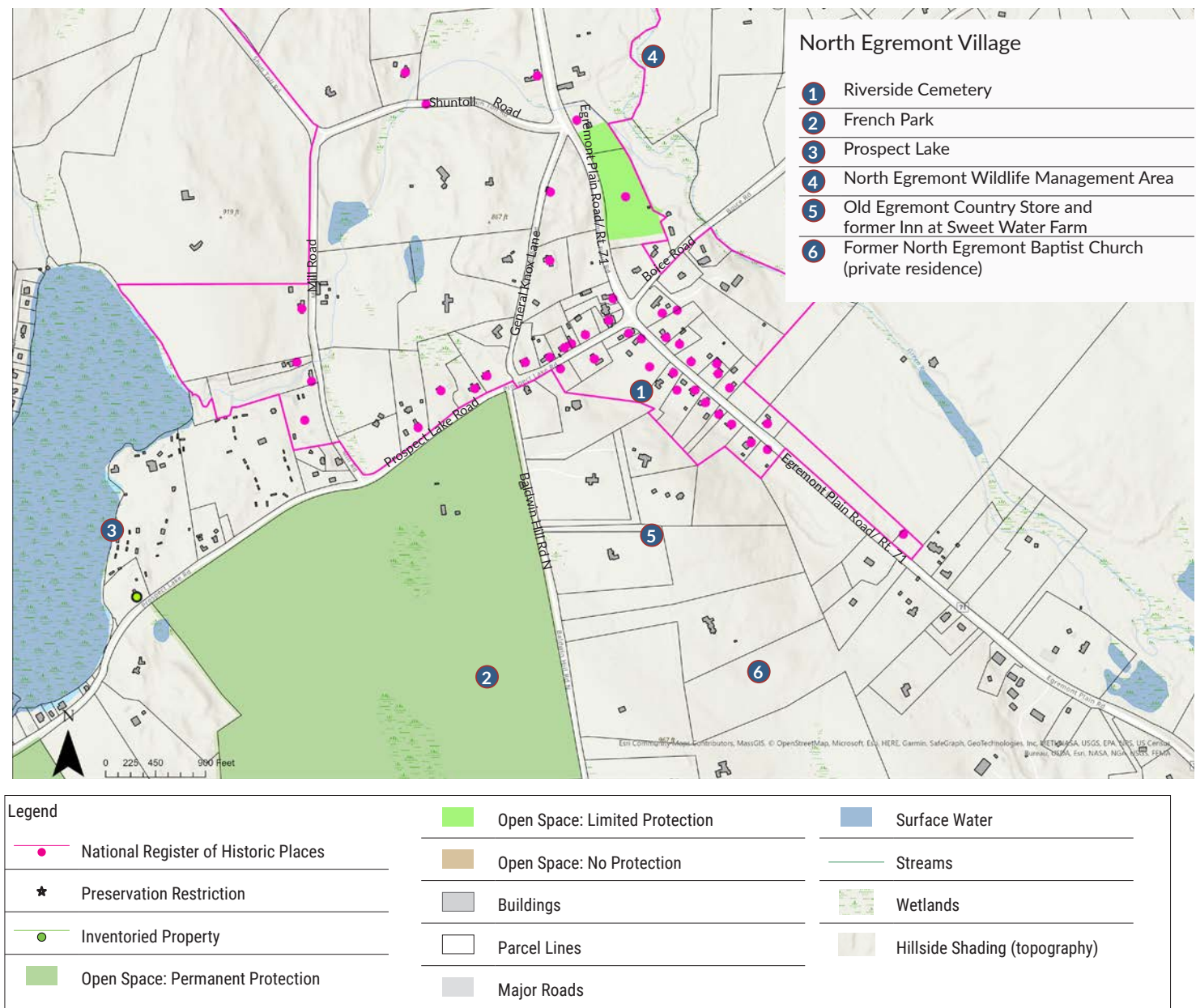


Figure 8: Key Assets in North Egremont



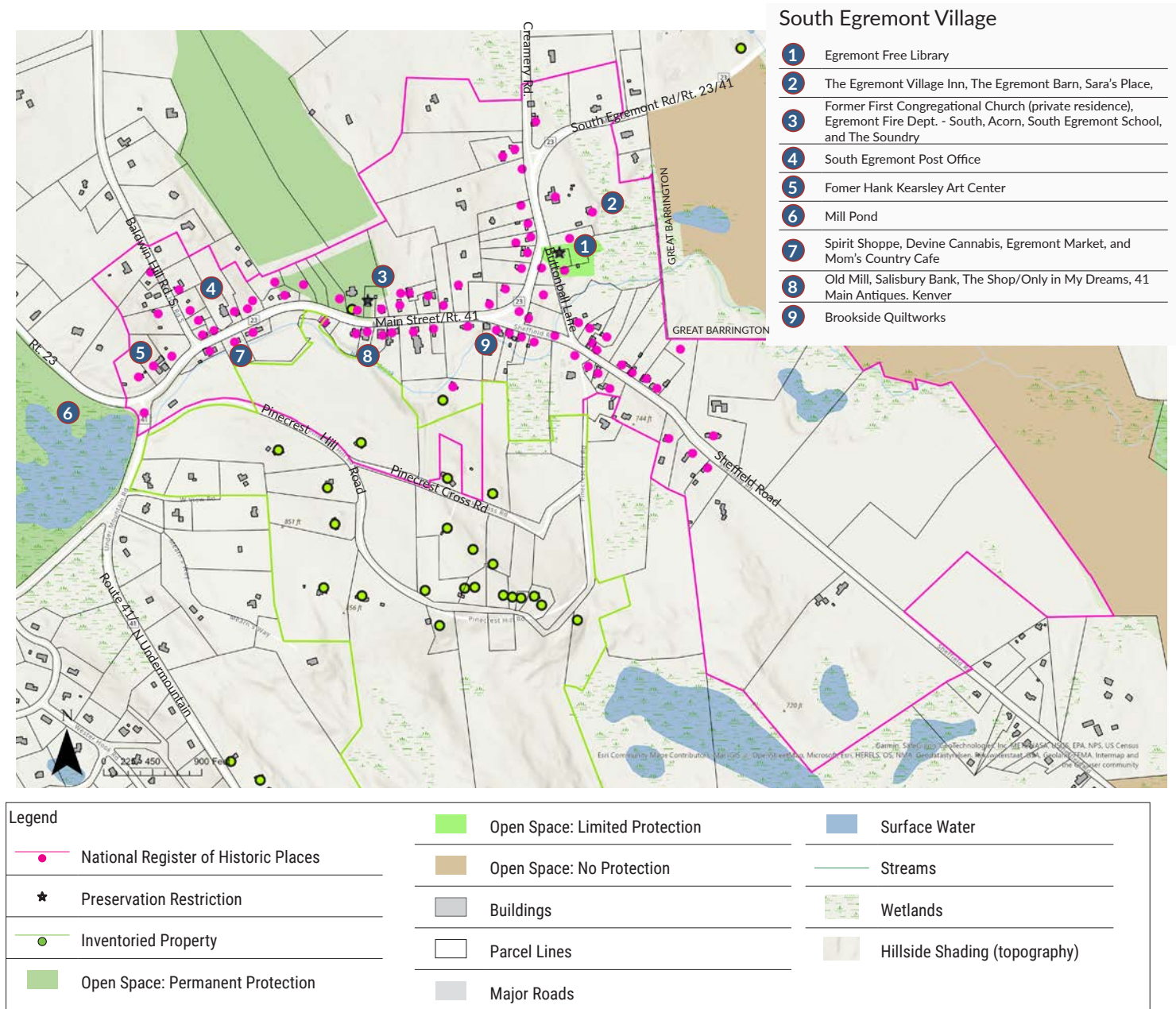
Historic assets and natural features define the development pattern of North Egremont, which is mostly a crossroads consisting of Egremont Plain Road/Route 71, Boise Road, and Prospect Lake Road. Route 71 connects North Egremont to the municipal complex at Town Hall.

Commercial activity is centered on the Old Egremont Country Store while French Park and Prospect Lake provide recreational opportunities.

Figure 9: Possible Boundary for a Potential South Egremont Village Zoning District



Figure 10: Key Assets in South Egremont



South Egremont is the primary area for non-agricultural commercial activity. Also a center of historic assets, the village includes the South Egremont School and the Egremont Library. Routes 41 and 23 form an east-west corridor, with most of the commercial activity along Main Street/Route 41.

Smaller, shallow parcels on the south side of Main Street make increased commercial and residential activity more difficult, indicating a need for creative land use management.

3

OUTCOME 3: PRESERVING HISTORIC ASSETS AND EXPANDING CULTURAL RESOURCES

OUTCOME 3 IN 2033

The Town supported efforts to preserve the mixed-use nature and development patterns of the two villages (residential and commercial) and the rural character of the surrounding area.

These efforts protected open lands, significant views, and historic buildings as well as the town's environmental and cultural resources.

LOCAL RESOURCES

Alford/Egremont
Cultural Council

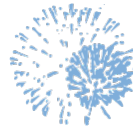
Egremont Historical
Commission

Greenagers

Egremont Land Trust

Berkshire Regional
Planning Commission

BASELINE FACTS, FIGURES, AND MAPS



1775

Town incorporated

Jug End Resort
Jug End Resort Barn Complex
Jug End Agricultural Area
Westover - Bacon - Potts Farm
Guilder Farm Complex
Pinecrest Hill

6

Inventoried Areas
MACRIS



1736

Earliest Listed Building
MACRIS



The Egremont Historical
Commission also preserves
documents and artifacts and
sponsors events related to
Egremont History.



April Hill, which is under a
combination of a permanent
Historic Preservation Restriction,
conservation restrictions, and
an Agricultural Preservation
Restriction, is also where
Greenagers hosts their agricultural
and ecological programs: an
innovative way to adaptively reuse
historic buildings and sites.

North Egremont Village District
South Egremont Village District

2

National Register Districts
MACRIS



260

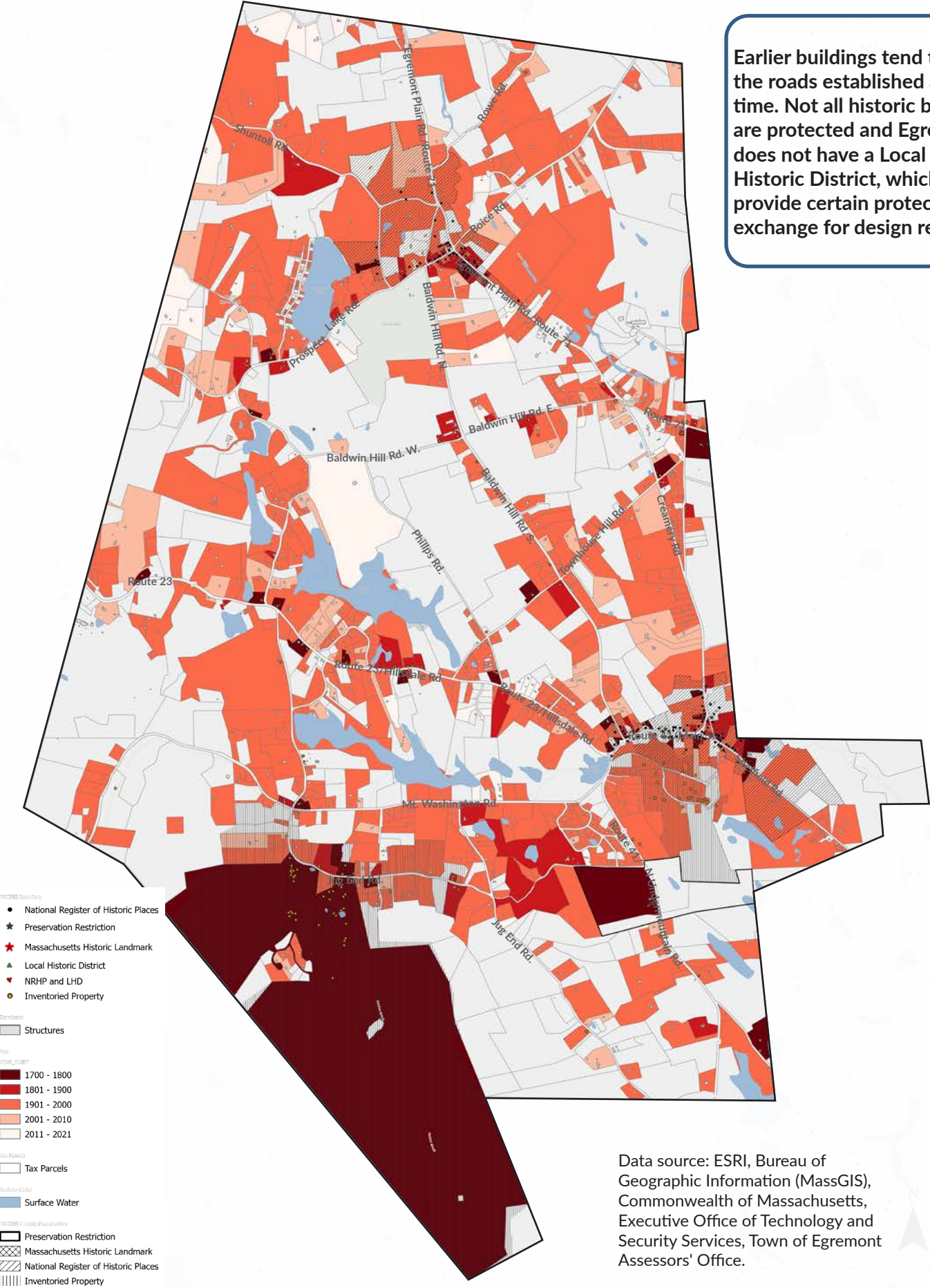
Historic Buildings/Structures
MACRIS



1960

Latest Listed Building
MACRIS

Figure 11: Historic Assets and Year Built



Earlier buildings tend to follow the roads established at the time. Not all historic buildings are protected and Egremont does not have a Local Historic District, which would provide certain protections in exchange for design review.

Data source: ESRI, Bureau of Geographic Information (MassGIS), Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Executive Office of Technology and Security Services, Town of Egremont Assessors' Office.

3. Achieving Outcomes

OUTCOME 3: PRESERVING HISTORIC ASSETS AND EXPANDING CULTURAL RESOURCES

3

RELATED GOALS AND ACTIONS

For Outcome 3, Historic and Cultural Resources is the most relevant Section 81D planning element. In this comprehensive plan update, that element is a component of Mobility and Social Connectivity (MSC). One of the goals in that theme is relevant here:

Mobility and Social Connectivity (MSC)

MSC-2 Preserve historic buildings and resources that reflect Egremont's culture and history.

MSC-2.1 Continue preparing an inventory of historic assets and cultural resources, seeking input from citizens and town boards to map and document locations of valued assets to be preserved.

The Egremont Historical Commission is currently creating an inventory of historic buildings. This plan supports the completion of that task. Once complete, the inventory can be paired with the preservation actions described in MSC-2.2 and MSC-2.3.*

MSC-2.2 Establish incentives for the adaptive reuse of historic buildings for residential or commercial purposes.

This recommendation is specific to the adaptive use of historic buildings in contrast to all buildings, discussed under Affordable and Workforce Housing, above.

The adaptive reuse of historic buildings comes with an assumption that those buildings will be preserved, preferably in their original form and location. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (see [CHAPTER 5. RESOURCES](#), below) provides guidance for how to rehabilitate an historic building, including how to sensitively address additions. This can be expensive, and the Town can assist property owners with information about grants and a streamlined permitting process.

Historic Tax Credits, which are one option for funding improvements, have specific requirements. The Town can assist by helping a property owner whose building is not certified as a historic structure to go through that process.

This level of rehabilitation in the [Secretary of the Interior's Standards](#) may not be appropriate for all situations, but the document provides good guidance for how to think about the relationship of historic buildings to new development, including additions to the original structure.

* See the letter from the Egremont Historic Commission in the Appendix (separate document). This letter has more information about the work of EHC and provides information about additional resources for historic preservation.

3. Achieving Outcomes

OUTCOME 3: PRESERVING HISTORIC ASSETS AND EXPANDING CULTURAL RESOURCES

MSC-2.3 Preserve historic and cultural resources such as roadside stone walls, gravel roads, roadside trees, and scenic vistas and landscapes.

The Town can adopt several strategies to preserve these resources. The first is to map and document the location of each item (see MSC-2.1). The documentation should be specific about the elements to be preserved.

The development standards proposed as zoning changes, mentioned elsewhere in this chapter, can refer to this inventory.

Other options include adopting a scenic roads bylaw, which would help protect historic stone walls and trees under Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40, Section 15C.

See [Outcome 2: Supporting Economic Development and Vibrancy](#) for a discussion of development and design standards.

3. Achieving Outcomes

OUTCOME 3: PRESERVING HISTORIC ASSETS AND EXPANDING CULTURAL RESOURCES

3

CRITICAL NEXT STEP

Address these zoning recommendations as part of the zoning review process beginning in Fall 2023.

ZONING-RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS

The Town of Egremont's Zoning Bylaws require the Applicant to consider the historic context of the area in their application for special permit from the Planning Board under these sections of the bylaw: the Jug End Residential District, the Wireless Telecommunications Overlay District, the Personal Wireless Services Facilities and Towers bylaw, and the Large-scale Ground-mounted Solar Photovoltaic Installation (LGSP) Overlay District.

Z-3 Develop design guidelines that are appropriate for the different areas of Egremont that also address historic context and environmental issues at a local level.

Z-3.1 Allow mixed-uses in the town. This could include multiple uses in one building (ex. retail below and residential above) or multiple uses on a lot (ex. retail at the street and housing behind).

The deep lots in some areas of town offer opportunities for multi-building strategies that preserve the historic development patterns at the road. These could be combined with strategies to preserve wildlife corridors and other natural resources by allowing some incentives for small to medium scale cluster development.

Z-3.2 Develop incentives for the preservation and adaptive re-use of historic structures.

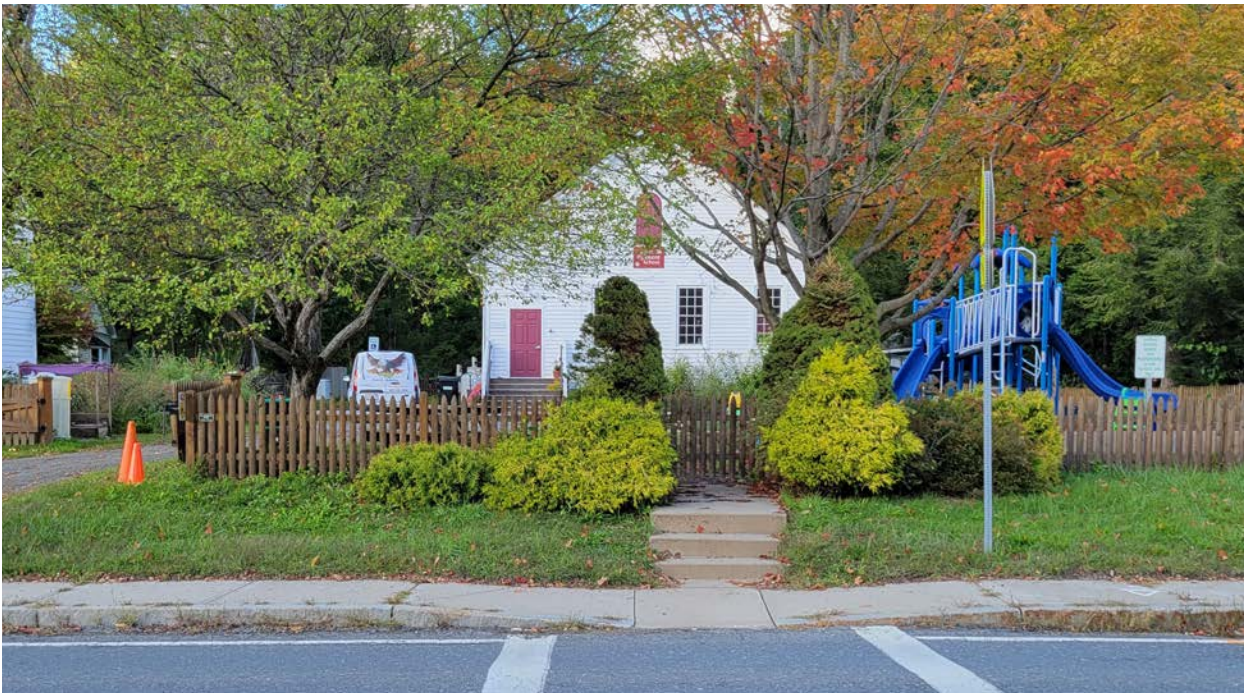
The zoning provides some relief for nonconforming structures and uses. Conversion of a one-family dwelling to a two-family dwelling and Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) are allowed. ADUs are also allowed on the same site as a permitted retail business or consumer service establishment. Other techniques, such as condominium conversion or conversion of a larger single-family home into three or more units, can provide an incentive for appropriate restoration and re-use.

Z-3.3 Incorporate development standards and guidelines for all uses that require that new construction and significant rehabilitation be sympathetic to the existing historic and rural context.

Development standards (required) and design guidelines (advisory) can address community concerns about the preservation of historic assets, including buildings and landscape, while still providing predictability to the Applicant about the process.

3. Achieving Outcomes

OUTCOME 3: PRESERVING HISTORIC ASSETS AND EXPANDING CULTURAL RESOURCES



The town-owned South Egremont School is part of the Southern Berkshire Regional School District and hosts a Pre-Kindergarten program in this original two-room schoolhouse. The building dates to 1881. MACRIS notes that the school was closed only once in its history: from 2016 to 2018. (MACRIS, EGR.44)



Clip of picture from 1984 Form B. (MACRIS, EGR.44)

4

OUTCOME 4: PROTECTING OPEN SPACES AND PROMOTING RECREATION

OUTCOME 4 IN 2033

The Town has:

- Enhanced access to waterways, hills, and woodlands for the public, including people with disabilities
- Promoted safe pedestrian and cycling use along its roadways and within its two mixed-use villages
- Created a community space where citizens can interact and hold events.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

2023 Open Space and Recreation Plan

2022 Road Stream Crossing Management Plan (HVA)

2022 Forest Management Plans (French Park)

2016 Complete Streets Policy

BASELINE FACTS, FIGURES, AND MAPS

12,135

Total Acres in Egremont
2023 Open Space and Recreation
Plan (OSRP)



4,000

Acres of Permanently
Protected Land
2023 OSRP

64

Miles of Road

0.7X2

Miles of Sidewalk
and Bike Lane
South Egremont
Route 23
Reconstruction

Limited Protection:

Chapter 61, 61A and 61B
Town has right of first refusal.

Forest
188
acres

Agri.
2,360
acres

Open/
Recreation
319 acres

Recreation Acres

Public

United States
337 acres
Appalachian Trail

Commonwealth of MA

1,715 acres
Jug End Fen
Jug End State Reservation
Mount Everett Reservation

Town of Egremont

205.8 acres
French Park
Cemeteries
Mt. Washington Road
School Department
Other

Private

Catamount Ski Resort

2023 Open Space and Recreation
Plan (OSRP)

Recreation Activities

Public

United States
Hiking

Commonwealth of MA

Hiking, hunting, fishing,
trapping, picnicking, cross-
country skiing, snowshoeing,
nature study

Town of Egremont

French Park:

Summer: community garden,
dog park, an outdoor theater,
baseball diamonds, playground
equipment, volleyball, tennis
courts, a basketball court, and
picnic facilities

Winter: ice skating, cross-
country skiing, sledding and
snowshoeing in the winter

All: nature study, hiking, and
hunting

Private

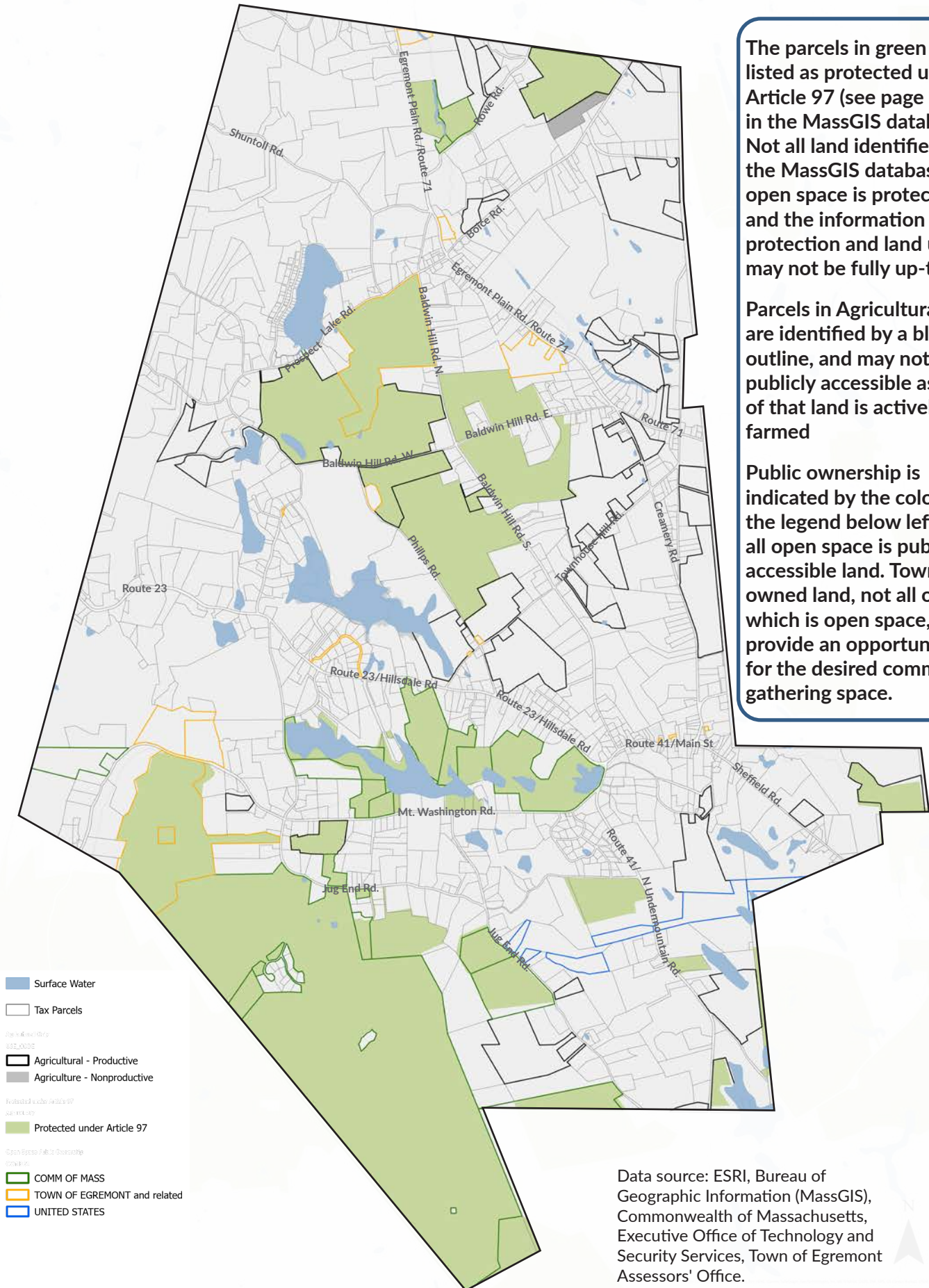
Ski, Zip line, Aerial adventure

Figure 12: Ownership of Protected and Unprotected Open Space

The parcels in green are listed as protected under Article 97 (see page 56) in the MassGIS database. Not all land identified in the MassGIS database as open space is protected and the information about protection and land uses may not be fully up-to-date.

Parcels in Agricultural use are identified by a black outline, and may not be publicly accessible as some of that land is actively farmed

Public ownership is indicated by the colors in the legend below left. Not all open space is publicly accessible land. Town-owned land, not all of which is open space, may provide an opportunity for the desired community gathering space.



Data source: ESRI, Bureau of Geographic Information (MassGIS), Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Executive Office of Technology and Security Services, Town of Egremont Assessors' Office.

3. Achieving Outcomes

OUTCOME 4: PROTECTING OPEN SPACES AND PROMOTING RECREATION

4

DID YOU KNOW

Article 97 Protection

- Full name: Article 97 of the Amendments to the Massachusetts Constitution
- Establishes the right to a clean environment, including " its natural, scenic, historical, and aesthetic qualities"
- Declares conservation of natural resources a public purpose
- Land or easements subject to Article 97 shall not be used or disposed of without a two-thirds vote of the Legislature

People with an interest in protecting open space should also research the *Act to Preserve Open Space in the Commonwealth*. More information is available at this link:

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/article-97-the-public-lands-preservation-act>

RELATED GOALS AND ACTIONS

For Outcome 4, Services and Facilities is the most relevant Section 81D planning element. In this comprehensive plan update, that element is a component of Mobility and Social Connectivity (MSC). Two of the goals in that theme are relevant here:

Mobility and Social Connectivity (MSC)

MSC-1 Improve pedestrian and bicycle safety along all Egremont's roads, especially those that connect to the village centers.

A common method of addressing the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists is to add facilities that are separate from vehicles. These include sidewalks (which may be adjacent to the roadway), bike lanes (which may be within or adjacent to the roadway), separated bike paths, or multi-use paths which may be set back from the roadway. The challenge for Egremont is the narrow roads, which many value as part of the rural feel of the town. Full bicycle and pedestrian connectivity may be available only in certain areas of the town, mostly likely the two villages.

MassDOT is proceeding with a Complete Street project along 0.7 miles of Route 23/41 from Creamery Road to North Undermountain Road in South Egremont. The design includes bicycle accommodation and one continuous sidewalk, with improved pedestrian crossing opportunities.

The Town could evaluate existing rights-of-way, town-owned land, and the possibility of acquiring critical easements to create either a combination of sidewalks and bike lanes or a shared off-road multiuser path.

Other methods of improving safety include posting and enforcing reduced traffic speeds and improving visibility at corners. This would include repositioning fences or trimming trees and other vegetation that block the line of sight for all users of the road. Such maintenance is the responsibility of the property owner; the Town could provide education to private property owners.

Finally, providing amenities in strategic locations, such as benches (to support pedestrians with reduced mobility) and bicycle racks can encourage more people to reduce their use of their personal vehicle.

The *2023 Open Space and Recreation Plan* includes other actions relevant to this outcome that are incorporated into this plan by reference.

3. Achieving Outcomes

OUTCOME 4: PROTECTING OPEN SPACES AND PROMOTING RECREATION

MSC-3 Create a community center for events, performances, and as a gathering place for the community.

The public workshops for this planning process did not take place within the town because no meeting space is large enough. Town Hall also has few meeting rooms which requires juggling the meetings of boards and committees.

Responses to the community questionnaires and discussion at the two workshops indicated a strong desire for a community gathering space of a large enough size to allow for multiple activities.

MSC-3.1 Undertake a planning process to understand the program for the center and possible locations.

A feasibility study could examine whether existing Town-owned land would be suitable for rehabilitating an existing building or building a new one for a community center. Such a center could be multi-generational, with additional meeting space for Town boards and committees, and gathering space that could be used for public meetings or rented for private celebrations. A companion outdoor space such as a pavilion, amphitheater, or stage, would provide greater flexibility for gathering spaces throughout the seasons.

The feasibility study should include significant public participation to help determine the program and build interest in the "Friends of" group in MSC-3.2.

MSC-3.2 Identify funding sources and establish a "Friends of" or another committee to begin fundraising for the center, based on the program and options developed in MSC-3.1.

Once the feasibility study has identified locations and options, the Town will need to apply for appropriate grant funding. In the meantime, a "Friends of" group can begin a campaign to build support among community members and raise funds for the construction and fitting out of the facility. Such campaigns often rely on matching larger donations from individuals or institutions with smaller donations from fundraising events.

MSC-4 Foster the transition to electric vehicles.

This effort should include public transportation, all municipal uses, and all forms of e-mobility. The Town should install public infrastructure for electric vehicles.

5

OUTCOME 5: IMPROVING ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE

OUTCOME 5 IN 2033

The Town created standards to protect environmental resiliency and sustainability, including during the development process.

Recognizing the present and future effects of climate change, the Town has worked to mitigate those effects through preservation of environmental assets and the promotion of sustainable practices throughout the community.

BASELINE FACTS, FIGURES, AND MAPS

Resources

Surface Water
Karner Brook
Fenton Brook
The Green River
Goodale Brook
Hubbard Brook
Prospect Lake
Smiley's Pond
Marsh Pond
Harmon Marsh Pond

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)

Karner Brook Watershed
Jug End Fen
Townhouse Hill Fen

Other Areas

Farmland and Baldwin Hill

~60%
of land is
forested

41
Endangered
Species

Karner Brook
Watershed ACEC
5,700 ACRES
700 ACRES OF
WETLANDS
28 RARE SPECIES
4 ENDANGERED
SPECIES
3 NATURAL
COMMUNITIES

2023 Open Space and
Recreation Plan (OSRP)

Recently
Preserved:

54 ACRES at
BOW WOW
WOODS

LOCAL RESOURCES

Egremont Conservation
Commission

Egremont Green
Committee

Egremont Land Trust

Egremont Emergency
Management Team

The Nature Conservancy

Appalachian Trail
Conservancy

MUNICIPAL VULNERABILITY PREPAREDNESS PROGRAM

The Town of Egremont is a Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness community, allowing it to apply for MVP Action Grants to support resiliency measures that address the impacts of climate change.

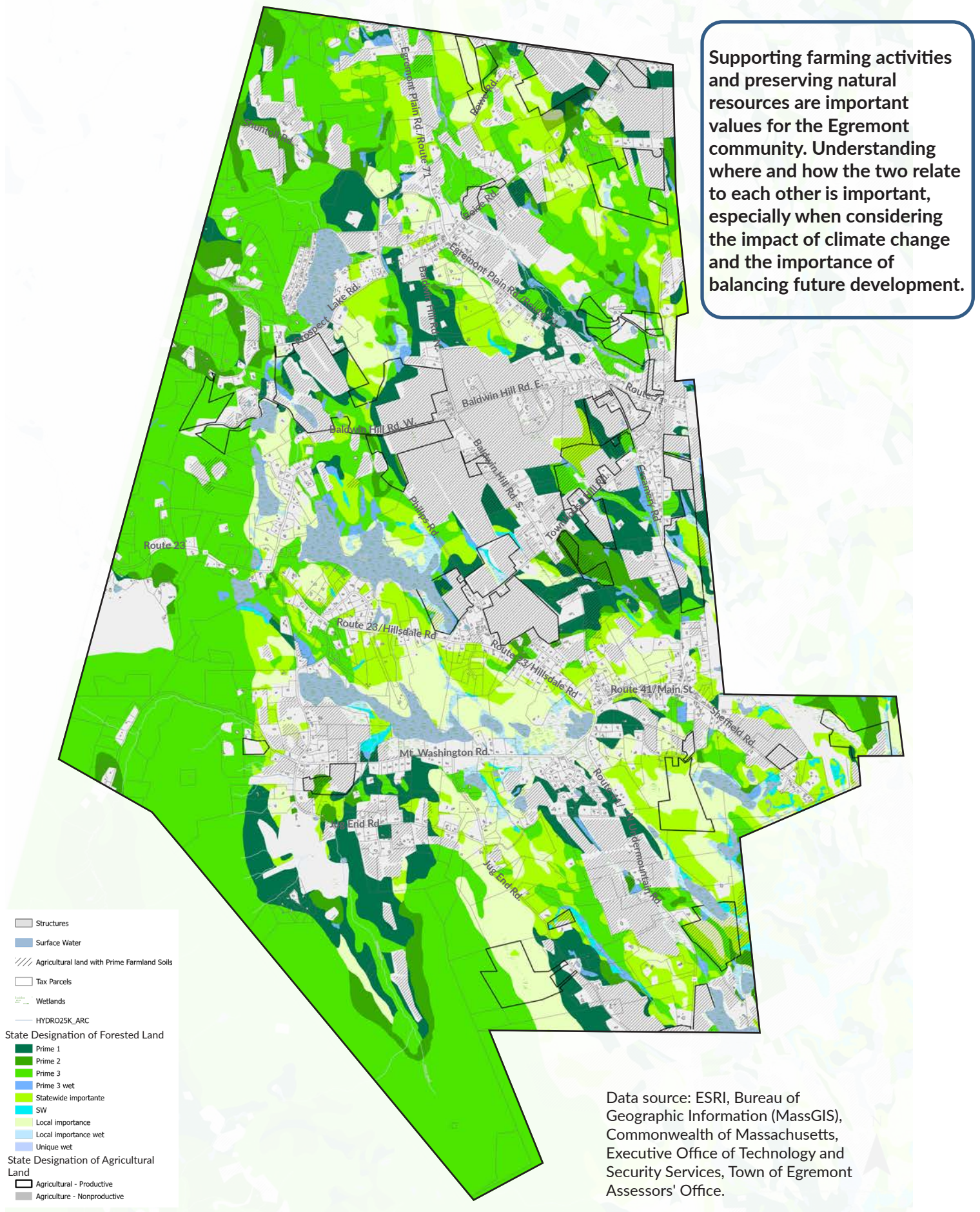
Top Hazards for Egremont

1. Flooding
2. Drought
3. Extreme Temperatures
4. Winter Storm

Other
Dam Failure - Wind Related
Geological - Fire

2022 Municipal Vulnerability
Preparedness - Hazard
Mitigation Plan (MVP-HMP)

Figure 13: Agriculture and Natural Resources



3. Achieving Outcomes

OUTCOME 5: IMPROVING ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE

5

DID YOU KNOW?

Egremont is subject to impacts from climate change, including a shift in the intensity of precipitation and a variability in temperatures. This combination leads to shifting patterns of flooding and drought which may no longer be timed to traditional seasons.

The *2022 Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness - Hazard Mitigation Plan (MVP-HMP)* identified critical Egremont facilities in the FEMA flood zone, including businesses and public water supplies. 762 acres are in the Egremont 100-year flood zone which represents 6.5% of all parcels in Egremont. According to the plan, stormwater flooding is a high frequency event.

Two dams, Smiley's Pond Dam and Prospect Lake Dam are considered significant hazards. In other words, if the dam fails, the failure could cause loss of life or damage to physical facilities. Dam failure is considered a low frequency hazard.

High heat can cause many problems. Brushfires from heat and drought are considered a medium frequency event. Extreme cold weather events and extreme heat days will increase, causing harm to people, animals, and vegetation.

Weston & Sampson, 2022 *Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness - Hazard Mitigation Plan (MVP-HMP)*, p. 4-9, 4-12, 4-33, 4-36, and 4-38.

RELATED GOALS AND ACTIONS

For Outcome 5, which has one goal, Natural Resources is the most relevant Section 81D planning element. Although Climate Change is not specified in Section 81D, this goal is assigned to Climate Change in the Table of Goals and Actions as this topic is increasingly critical to community planning.

Climate Change (CC)

CC-1 Continue to address issues of climate change by addressing environmental issues at a local level. Environmental Resiliency and Sustainability informs decision making in all areas of life in Egremont.

Climate change has a significant impact on natural resources. Extended periods of drought reduce the amount of water available and may also reduce the quality of that water. In addition, drought and a projected shift in precipitation cycles will affect farming cycles and Egremont's significant amount of forested land. Forests are becoming more vulnerable to disease because of stress from drought and extreme temperatures. Such stress increases the chance of brushfires.

The changing conditions have significant impacts on public health and on agriculture. Excess heat harms people, livestock, and plants. Heavier storms can cause flooding that damages buildings, infrastructure such as roads and culverts, and crops and contributes to poor surface water quality from excessive runoff of pollutants and fertilizers.

While the Town of Egremont cannot prevent climate change, it can provide resources to residents and manage its own properties, where feasible, to reduce the impacts of climate change.

The *2022 Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness - Hazard Mitigation Plan (MVP-HMP)* has actions specific to identified vulnerabilities. These actions are incorporated into this plan by reference.

Additional actions include the following:

CC-1.1 Support the work of the Town's Sustainability Officer and the Green Committee to save resources, lessen environmental degradation, and implement climate-friendly alternatives.

The Green Committee sponsors events and provides information about energy efficiency and resiliency, including information for homeowners. The Board of Health Director is also the Town's Sustainability Officer. Public health and impacts from climate change are inextricably linked. Coordinated action with the Town's Grant

3. Achieving Outcomes

OUTCOME 5: IMPROVING ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE

HOW-TO:

Community Education

Good places to start gathering information for community education programs include the following:

Soil Health

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/conservation-basics/natural-resource-concerns/soils/soil-health>

Pollinator Gardens

<https://www.nativeplanttrust.org/>

Invasive Species

<https://www.mass.gov/massachusetts-prohibited-plant-list>

Forest Fire Prevention

<https://www.forestsandrangelands.gov/strategy/thestrategy.shtml>

Administrator can help identify and apply for additional grants to support ongoing and new initiatives. These could include technical advice, access to providers, compliance, information on grants and rebates, and other educational activities to support recommendations in this plan.

CC-1.2 Preserve roadside trees and tree cover wherever possible to provide shade and offset heat from asphalt road surfaces.

Planting trees is critical for climate adaptation. Among other attributes, trees help cool the surrounding area through both shade and transpiration. Tree species must be appropriate for the specific location, the overall area, and the purpose. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts maintains a list of invasive species; this should be checked prior to planting trees. Areas where people are likely to be walking or resting should be the first priority for new trees installed by the Town. A second priority could be removing and replacing dead trees.

CC-1.3 Propose town policies regarding the use of chemicals commonly applied to landscapes, such as glyphosate or other chemicals of concern.

In its role as educator, the Town can provide information on specific policies and practices to help native species recover. This includes information about the proper application of landscape chemicals in the short-term and strategies for reducing the need for such chemicals in the long-term through sustainable landscape management. The Town also has a leadership role in how it manages its own land, which includes replacing certain chemicals, improving soil health, and promoting techniques to support wildlife, including demonstration pollinator gardens and bioswales. Such demonstration projects are a natural fit for partnerships with local volunteer groups and could also be part of the community volunteer day envisioned in CC-1.4 below.

CC-1.4 Educate the public in managing invasive plants.

The Town can sponsor volunteer days to learn about invasive plants and remove them from publicly owned and accessible properties. A good place to start would be French Park. Education materials can encourage participants to use what they have learned at the volunteer day to manage their own properties. Prizes for most invasive plants removed properly (i.e. without leaving the roots), most correct answers on a plant identification quiz and other fun and educational activities could create a family-friendly activity.

HOW TO

A couple in Connecticut holds firefly-watching parties in June and July to teach neighbors about the impact of lawn pesticides.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/07/29/nyregion/connecticut-firefly-sanctuary.html>

CC-1.5 Educate the public in forest fire prevention and protect forested areas by assuring good forestry practices are in place, especially by managing tinder along recreational trail sides.

Removing tinder within a specific distance of public trails will reduce the possibility that an errant spark will start a fire. Regular maintenance could be a volunteer effort; Greenagers are already working on the Appalachian Trail and would be a good resource for understanding how to start a volunteer program. The Town could provide guidance in best practices. The Fire Department, Parks, Buildings & Grounds, and Highway would have relevant experience to share.

CC-1.6 Reduce town-wide carbon footprint.

Because the Town has control over its own land and buildings, the Select Board has the opportunity to show leadership in implementation for climate resiliency. In addition to the educational role described above, the Select Board, working with Town staff and the members of other boards and committees, can set policy directives to set and achieve goals for a reduced carbon footprint. Options for policy direction include the following:

- Incorporate sustainability, resilience and greenhouse gas mitigation in all appropriate decisions, bylaws, and planning processes.
- Source 100% renewable community electricity for Town needs.
- Incorporate relevant recommendations from the *Massachusetts Clean Energy and Climate Plan for 2050*.
- Continue to investigate alternative sources of energy such as solar, heat pumps, insulation, geothermal, battery storage, etc.

The Town can share the information it gathers with property owners to encourage widespread adoption of carbon-reduction strategies.

3. Achieving Outcomes

OUTCOME 5: IMPROVING ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE

CRITICAL NEXT STEP

Address these zoning recommendations as part of the zoning review process beginning in Fall 2023.

ZONING-RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS

Egremont is one of the many Massachusetts communities that adopted the Stretch Energy Code, which includes requirements for more energy-efficient buildings. Adopting the Stretch Energy Code is a required step in becoming a designated Green Community, which Egremont is.

Egremont may also wish to consider adopting the Specialized Code that is part of the 2023 Stretch Energy Code Update. The stretch Code was automatically updated, and the Town does not need to take action. The new regulations are 225 CMR 22.00 (Residential Low-rise Construction) and 225 CMR 23.00 (Commercial (and all other) Construction). The Specialized Code is an appendix to each of these regulations.

Z-3 Develop design guidelines that are appropriate for the different areas of Egremont that also address historic context and environmental sustainability and resiliency.

Development standards and design guidelines are a component of most of the outcomes because of the concern about balancing community values around the rural development patterns with a clear desire to also address the need for affordable and workforce housing and economic development.

For this outcome, design guidelines will focus on energy efficiency, (beyond the requirements of the Stretch Energy Code) and site regulations that promote on-site stormwater management using the principles of low-impact design.

Low-impact design strategies should include a prohibition on the use of plants that are on the Massachusetts Prohibited Plant List (invasive species) and on plants known to harbor invasive pests (for example, the emerald ash borer).

Z-3.4 Incorporate design guidelines for energy efficiency low carbon footprints and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions, Electric Vehicle (EV) infrastructure, resilience to extreme weather, and healthy indoor environments for new construction and significant rehabilitation.

Proposed design guidelines should be compared to the Specialized Code to evaluate whether the Town should opt-in to the Specialized Code and add design guidelines or whether one of these strategies is sufficient. For example, healthy indoor environments, which often refers to the rate of exchange between indoor and outdoor air, may be fully address by the building code; it is not usually a zoning requirement.



4. Implementation Plan

ABOUT IMPLEMENTATION

This Implementation Plan is an action plan – it includes the steps required to address the goals that support the community's vision. The Implementation Plan is presented as a table organized by the goals described earlier in this plan and the relevant actions that support each goal.

The Planning Board is responsible for adopting this Comprehensive Plan Update; however, implementation is by Town Boards, Committees, and Departments, and through engaging with non-municipal partners.

EARLY PRIORITIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Two implementation actions should happen early in the process:

DEVELOP A PROCESS FOR ASSESSING PROGRESS.

In Egremont's *2003 Master Plan*, the Select Board was assigned to monitor implementation through an oversight committee and the Master Plan Steering Committee and the Planning Board were assigned the role of creating a formalized system to report to the Select Board on progress in implementation. CPUAC members agreed that a formal Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee (CPIC) was unlikely as existing volunteer committees were already understaffed. Options to track and measure progress suggested by committee members include the following:

- Integrate an annual review of the actions in this Implementation Plan into the existing annual Boards/Committee summit.
- Designate a member of each existing Board or Committee identified in the plan to coordinate implementation actions within their committee.
- Create an Annual Priority Goals/Actions Checklist based on this Implementation Plan and recommendations in other current plans to be managed by one or more existing employees. For example, the Town's Grant Administrator (or another employee or one or more volunteers) could monitor those actions which might require one or more grants to fund. The same employee, another employee, or volunteer(s) could monitor other actions and work with the Select Board and Planning Board to produce an annual prioritization, based on projects completed, and an assessment of remaining community needs.

The Town could also designate a small working group to research best practices for the implementation of a comprehensive plan, create a mechanism (or position/procedure/etc.) to ensure implementation of the plan, and encourage accountability among the town's boards, committees, employees, and community members.

Any discussion of implementation should also define who tracks the progress made and who advocates for implementation.

4. Implementation Plan

DEVELOP DRAFT ZONING LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THIS PLAN.

The Town has already received a grant of \$54,000 from the Massachusetts Department of Housing & Community Development's Community Planning Grant program for this process. Changing the zoning to match the recommendations of this plan will help support plan goals for housing, economic development, preservation and adaptive reuse of historic structures, and development that responds to climate change.

The process of modifying the zoning should include a community-based engagement process that is focused on options for zoning change. Such a process can clarify the implications of different choices, leading to informed input by community members, considered decisions by Town officials, and the ability to build support for changes among Town Meeting members.

Zoning changes should also, where appropriate and feasible, add language that supports environmental resiliency, including flexibility in zoning requirements for pilot projects or initiatives to address energy efficiency, stormwater management, indoor air quality, increased heat and precipitation, and other anticipated impacts of climate change.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET

Where feasible, the budget process for boards, committees, and departments should integrate the strategies and actions related to their ongoing operations and capital requests into their annual budgets to help the Town prioritize investments in staff and other resources with the vision and goals identified in this plan.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND OTHER FUNDING SOURCES

Having a comprehensive plan is important for applying for grants as it demonstrates the community need required for certain programs. Grants are also critical to the implementation of the plan, especially for small towns who may not otherwise have the necessary resources. [CHAPTER 5. RESOURCES](#) lists some funding sources that will be relevant for some of the recommended actions below.

TABLE OF GOALS AND ACTIONS

The following table includes the goals, actions, and priorities discussed earlier in this comprehensive plan.

As noted in Chapter 1. Executive Summary, the Comprehensive Plan Updated Advisory Committee (CPUAC) met three times in June and twice in July 2023 to further develop the draft Vision Statement and the Table of Goals and Actions. Their work deeply informs this sections, with some minor adjustments/additions for clarity.

Users new to reading a Table of Goals and Actions should note the following conventions:

- The structure is the topic first (H), the goal (H-1), then the related action(s) (H-1.1). Each action (left-hand column) has one or more partners (right-hand column) with responsibilities for implementation.
- The board, committee, department or other entity with primary responsibility for implementing the action is listed first in the right-hand column. Other partners for that action, if any, are listed in the same box and below the lead.

4. Implementation Plan

#	Goals and Actions	Partners
H	Housing	
H-1	Support a variety of affordable and workforce housing types across a range of household sizes, suitability for different ages, and income levels.	
H-1.1	Undertake a Housing Production Plan with a focus on community needs for workforce housing, aging in place, and starter homes.	Housing Trust/ Housing Committee Council on Aging Berkshire Regional Planning Commission
H-1.2	Encourage the adaptive reuse of existing buildings for multi-unit housing, including workforce housing.	Housing Trust/ Housing Committee Planning Board
H-1.3	Educate property owners about state grant programs to support the renovation of homes to allow aging in place.	Housing Trust/ Housing Committee Select Board Grant Administrator Planning Board Council on Aging
H-1.4	Conduct a regular evaluation of properties for purchase or adaptive re-use.	Housing Trust/ Housing Committee
H-1.5	Facilitate the creation of a fund to assist with actions to support affordable housing and aging in place, including conversion, repairs, ADUs, down payments, and deed restriction plans.	Housing Trust/ Housing Committee Select Board
H-1.6	Develop zoning incentives to encourage lasting (or in perpetuity) affordable/ workplace housing development	Planning Board
H-1.7	Investigate the effect of short-term rentals on the community and affordable housing, and develop an appropriate plan for regulation.	Planning Board Council of Aging
H-1.8	Develop mechanisms to assure that affordable and workforce housing remains so for subsequent owners and renters.	Planning Board

4. Implementation Plan

#	Goals and Actions	Partners
ED	Economic Development	
ED-1	Expand options for creative economic development, such as agritourism, ecotourism, recreation, arts and culture, with an emphasis on locally owned businesses.	
ED-1.1	Streamline permitting processes for businesses.	Planning Board Building Inspector Select Board Board of Health
ED-1.2	Facilitate a business group(s) that can market existing businesses, and attract other suitable businesses to Egremont	Business Community Select Board
ED-1.3	Seek grants that can assist business owners with specific strategies, such as storefront improvement, store window design, point-of-sale upgrades, and entrepreneurship.	Select Board Grant Administrator Berkshire Regional Planning Commission State agencies with relevant grant programs (See CHAPTER 5. RESOURCES.)
ED-1.4	Explore incentives and/or rebates for switching from chemical fertilizers to alternatives that are better for water and land quality.	Grant Administrator Agricultural Committee Green Committee Berkshire Regional Planning Commission
ED-2	Support farming operations of all types and scales, and encourage sustainable and regenerative farming practices..	
ED-2.1	Encourage the agricultural community to incorporate climate adaption practices by outreach and making resources available.	Agricultural Committee MVP Committee
ED-2.2	Encourage regenerative and environmentally sustainable farming practices.	Agricultural Committee MVP Committee
ED-2.3	Work with the Egremont Land Trust to preserve land for working farms.	Agricultural Committee Assessors Berkshire Natural Resources Council Community Land Trust in the Southern Berkshires

4. Implementation Plan

#	Goals and Actions	Partners
ED-3	Reinforce the roles of North and South Egremont Villages as community hubs for a wide range of activities and coordinate municipal investments, including expanded parking, and regulations to support the villages.	
ED-3.1	Develop a parking, pedestrian, circulation, safety, and accessibility plan for the two villages.	Select Board Grant Administrator Police Highway Department Egremont Historical Commission Conservation Commission MassDOT

#	Goals and Actions	Partners
MSC	Mobility and Social Connectivity	
MSC-1	Improve pedestrian and bicycle safety along Egremont's roads, especially those that connect to the village centers (see 2023 Open Space & Recreation Plan.)	
MSC-2	Preserve historic buildings and resources that reflect Egremont's culture and history.	
MSC-2.1	Continue preparing an inventory of historic assets and cultural resources, seeking input from citizens and town boards to map and document locations of valued assets to be preserved.	Planning Board Housing Trust/ Housing Committee Egremont Historical Commission
MSC-2.2	Establish incentives for the adaptive reuse of historic buildings for residential or commercial purposes.	Planning Board Housing Trust/ Housing Committee Egremont Historical Commission
MSC-2.3	Preserve historic and cultural resources such as roadside stone walls, gravel roads, roadside trees, and scenic vistas and landscapes.	Egremont Historical Commission Highway Department Egremont Land Trust Massachusetts Historical Commission Conservation Commission Mass Cultural Council
MSC-3	Create a community center for events, performances, and as a gathering place for the community.	
MSC-3.1	Undertake a planning process to understand the program for the center and possible locations.	Council on Aging Alford/Egremont Cultural Council
MSC-3.2	Identify funding sources and establish a "Friends of" or another committee to begin fundraising for the center, based on the program and options developed in MSC-3.1.	Select Board Grant Administrator
MSC-4	Foster the transition to electric vehicles.	Select Board Grant Administrator Highway Department

4. Implementation Plan

#	Goals and Actions	Partners
CC	Climate Change	
CC-1	Continue to address issues of climate change by addressing environmental issues at a local level. Environmental Resiliency and Sustainability informs decision making in all areas of life in Egremont.	
CC-1.1	Support the work of the Town's Sustainability Officer and the Green Committee to save resources, lessen environmental degradation, and implement climate-friendly alternatives.	Sustainability Officer Green Committee Select Board Board of Health Citizens of Egremont
CC-1.2	Preserve roadside trees and tree cover wherever possible to provide shade and offset heat from asphalt road surfaces.	Highway Department Tree Warden
CC-1.3	Propose town policies regarding the use of chemicals commonly applied to landscapes, such as glyphosate or other chemicals of concern.	Green Committee Agricultural Commission Buildings & Grounds Highway Department Parks Cemetery Commission
CC-1.4	Educate the public in managing invasive plants.	Conservation Commission Green Committee Greenagers Buildings & Grounds
CC-1.5	Educate the public in forest fire prevention and protect forested areas by assuring good forestry practices are in place, especially by managing tinder along recreational trail sides.	Fire Department Tree Warden Greenagers Appalachian Trail Conservancy Massachusetts Division of Wildlife & Fisheries The Nature Conservancy Berkshire Natural Resources Council Egremont Land Trust
CC-1.6	Reduce town-wide carbon footprint.	Select Board Grant Administrator Sustainability Officer Green Committee

#	Goals and Actions	Partners
Z	Zoning	
Z-1	Revise Egremont's zoning bylaw to allow more as-of-right uses in specific areas with appropriate development controls.	
Z-1.1	Expand permitted housing types by right or special permit in the Town. This could include multi-family uses or condominiums.	Planning Board Housing Trust/ Housing Committee

4. Implementation Plan

#	Goals and Actions	Partners
Z-1.2	Create a table of uses, with additional permitted business types by right or special permit in the two villages and in the surrounding areas.	Planning Board
Z-1.3	Define home-based business types allowed by right in the town and that do not negatively impact residential neighborhoods.	Planning Board
Z-2	Permit (through zoning) housing types that support people of different ages, income levels, and household sizes.	
Z-2.1	Allow cluster housing that will (a) help preserve open space and wildlife corridors and (b) be consistent with the rural and historic aesthetic of the town.	Planning Board Housing Trust/ Housing Committee Egremont Historical Commission Conservation Commission
Z-2.2	Create standards for Town and/or private development of affordable and workforce housing.	Planning Board Housing Trust/ Housing Committee Historic Commission Building Inspector Green Committee
Z-3	Develop design guidelines that are appropriate for the different areas of Egremont that also address historic context and environmental issues at a local level.	
Z-3.1	Allow mixed-uses in the town. This could include multiple uses in one building (ex. retail below and residential above) or multiple uses on a lot (ex. retail at the street and housing behind).	Planning Board
Z-3.2	Develop incentives for the preservation and adaptive reuse of historic structures.	Planning Board Housing Trust/ Housing Committee Egremont Historical Commission
Z-3.3	Incorporate development standards/ design guidelines for all uses. Standards/guidelines shall require that new construction and significant rehabilitation be sympathetic to the existing historic and rural context.	Planning Board Egremont Historical Commission
Z-3.4	Incorporate design guidelines for energy efficiency low carbon footprints and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions, Electric Vehicle (EV) infrastructure, resilience to extreme weather, and healthy indoor environments for new construction and significant rehabilitation.	Planning Board Green Committee
Z-4	Ensure villages maintain a balance of commercial and residential uses.	
Z-5	Modify town's zoning map to delineate village districts (and/or village sub-districts) and the surrounding areas.	

4. Implementation Plan

NATURAL RESOURCES, OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

The goals and recommended actions of the *2023 Open Space and Recreation Plan* are incorporated into this table of actions by reference.

The goals and actions of *2022 Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) - Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP)* are incorporated into this table of actions by reference.

MEASURING PROGRESS

Communities are starting to define benchmarks to assess progress in achieving their goals over time. Benchmarks can include the completion of specific actions or changes in trends. For example, a specific action could be updating the Town's zoning bylaws within a specific period after adoption of this plan. Trends can include a change in the production of housing by units or by type; the number of new businesses created in town, or the number of acres of land preserved.

Benchmarks can be identified by the relevant board, committee, or department, with assistance from Town staff. A critical component of establishing benchmarks is ensuring that the data is easy to measure and collect as volunteers and staff rarely have time to do in-depth data collection. The ideal data sets would be either publicly available (from data sets such as the US Census, MHP's Data-town, the Massachusetts Division of Local Services, and others) or already collected by the relevant department (such as the number of building permits filed or seniors assisted with housing requests, for example).

Examples of benchmarks to consider include the change in the number of:

- New businesses in town, by location.
- Businesses retained.
- Housing units produced.
- Affordable units produced.
- Residents (this could be broken down by age, to track long-term trends and need for specific services)
- Linear miles installed for trails, bikes lanes, improved sidewalks.
- Acreage of conservation land placed under permanent protection.
- Acreage of agricultural land placed under permanent protection.

An early action would be to determine the appropriate benchmarks and data sources to create a baseline to measure progress against. The Baseline Data provided for each Outcome in **CHAPTER 3. ACHIEVING OUTCOMES** could help with this initial task.



5. Resources

This chapter contains resources to assist with implementation of this comprehensive plan update, including funding sources, a glossary of acronyms and terms, and general planning resources for those who may be interested in specific topics.

GLOSSARY

General Planning Terms

- **Adaptive Reuse.** The reuse of an existing building for a use that was not originally intended. For example, a school that has been converted to housing.
- **Comprehensive Planning.** A process of developing a vision for a community's future and the steps required to realize that future. In Massachusetts, master plan and comprehensive plan may be used interchangeably; that is not true in other states.
- **Diverse population.** One that is inclusive of (but not limited to) different ages, races, ethnicities and cultural backgrounds, physical ability, sexual orientation, gender identifications, and a wider range of incomes, including those who are economically disadvantaged.
- **Vision vs. Goals vs. Objectives vs. Actions.** A community's vision is a statement of desired future condition. Goals are the high-level paths to achieve that vision and are community wide. Objectives divide the goals into more specific paths that may affect a subset of boards, departments, and committees. Actions are the individual steps that must be taken to achieve the goals and implement the vision.
- **Comprehensive Plan vs. Comprehensive Plan Update.** A **comprehensive (master) plan**, in Massachusetts, is enabled by Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 41, Section 81D. The plan must include certain elements. The original goal of the master plan is to ensure that the use of land within the municipal boundaries is consistent with community goals. The planning process for a master plan expands beyond that to consider almost all aspects of municipal operations that have an impact on land use. A **comprehensive (master) plan update** is a planning process that reviews the previous master plan(s) and updates them based on current data and goals and expectations for the future of the community.
- **Mixed-Use Development.** A development in which more than one land use is present on a lot. Mixed use may be any combination of office, residential commercial, and industrial. Some communities do not allow residential in some mixed-use zoning districts.
- **Node.** A point of connection; in planning, refers to an area of activity, often at a crossroads or central point.

5. Resources

- **Nonconforming Lots.** Lots that do not conform with the zoning of the district in which they are located.
- **Placemaking.** The re-imagination and reinvention of public spaces in a community to create a unique sense of place responsive to the community's understanding of its identity.
- **Revitalization.** Creating incentives for economic growth in an area that has experienced a significant decline in terms of jobs and population. Often accompanied by regulatory changes; the provision of grants or tax incentives; and public infrastructure improvements and/or placemaking initiatives to attract private investment.
- **Road Classification System.** Defines the purpose of the road in terms of the volume of traffic, traveling speed, and relationship to the total road network. **Arterial Roads** collect traffic from other roads and move that traffic elsewhere. **Collector Roads** gather traffic from Local Roads and distribute that traffic to other collectors or Arterial Roads. **Local Roads** provide access to properties and buildings and move vehicles to Collector Roads. Local Roads have the lowest traffic speed and volume; Arterial Roads have the highest traffic speed and volume. In some road systems, Arterial Roads may distribute traffic to highways which can accommodate even higher speeds and volume.
- **Smart Growth.** Growth that takes advantage of existing development patterns, primarily infrastructure (roads, water, sewer) and access to public transit. The goal is to preserve undeveloped area by encouraging development or rehabilitation and reuse within existing developed areas. Often accompanied by an increase in the allowable square foot or units of land use, often housing, per acre.
- **U. S. Census.** A count of the population of the United States every ten years. The most recent census count happened during 2020; some of the data from this count was not available until 2023.

Circulation/Mobility

- **Complete Streets.** The design of streets to safely accommodate multiple users (pedestrians, bicyclists, drivers) simultaneously.
- **Multi-modal.** Infrastructure that provides access to more than one mode of transportation, for example, a road that marked access for private vehicles, public transit, bicyclists, and pedestrians. May also refer to multiple methods of providing public transit, such as bus or train.

5. Resources

- **Streetscape.** The design of a street, including the natural and built environment; the quality and components of that design.

Economic Development

- **Agritourism.** The practice of touring agricultural areas to see farms and often to participate in farm activities (Merriam-Webster)
- **Agriculture, regenerative.** Regenerative agriculture focuses on improving the health of soil, which has been degraded by the use of heavy machinery, fertilizers and pesticides in intensive farming. (World Economic Forum)
- **Agriculture, sustainable.** Sustainable agricultural practices are intended to protect the environment, expand the Earth's natural resource base, and maintain and improve soil fertility. Based on a multi-pronged goal, sustainable agriculture seeks to:
 - Increase profitable farm income
 - Promote environmental stewardship
 - Enhance quality of life for farm families and communities
 - Increase production for human food and fiber needs
 - (USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture)
- **Ecotourism.** Responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people, and involves interpretation and education. International Ecotourism Society
- **Maker space.** A collaborative workspace which provides tools and space for multiple uses. May require a membership and may be used as an incubator for small businesses.

Housing

- **Affirmative Action.** Policies or practices in which an individual's color, race, sex, religion, or national origin are considered to increase representation in groups and opportunities for (among other aspects of society education, jobs, and housing for an under-represented part of society.
- **Affordable/Workforce Housing.** Housing that is affordable to households earning 60 to 120 percent of the area median income. (Urban Land Institute)
- **Cost Burdened.** According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), cost-burdened families pay more than 30 percent of their income for housing.
- **Severely Cost Burdened.** According to the U.S. HUD,

5. Resources

severely cost-burdened families pay more than 50 percent of their income for housing.

- **Low-income households.** Defined by U.S. HUD as a four-person family at 1.6 times the very-low income limit and adjusted by family size.
- **Very-low income households.** Defined by U.S. HUD based on a four-person family at 50% of the area median income and then adjusted by specific formulas.

Municipal Finance

- **Municipal budget process.** The annual process by which the Town's operating and capital budgets are developed and approved by Town Meeting.
- **Tax Base.** The total assessed value of all property in the Town, including real estate, motor vehicle, and personal property.
- **Non-Tax Base revenue sources.** All non-tax sources or revenue, including grants, loans, bonds, and gifts. Also includes state funding, such as Chapter 90 (highway) and Chapter 70 (education).
- **Operating Funds vs. Capital Funds.** **Operating funds** are spent on the day-to-day operations of a municipality, such as staff salaries and supplies. **Capital funds** are investments in long-term physical projects or assets, such as roads, vehicles, and computer equipment.

Open Space and Recreation

- **Active/passive recreation.** **Active** recreation includes playgrounds, sports fields, and other areas that have special facilities or equipment. **Passive** recreation, by contrast, does not require such facilities and include such uses as walking, mountain biking, birding, snow shoeing, canoeing, hunting fishing, and riding,
- **Aquifer.** A body of permeable rock which can contain or transmit ground water. May be the source of a community's water supply.
- **Aquifer Protection/ Water Supply Protection District.** Aquifers which serve as the source of a water supply must be protected from contamination and from overuse. In Massachusetts, this is known as Source Water Protection.
- **Greenway Trail.** A trail within a linear corridor that links water and land to natural, cultural, and recreational resources.
- **Pocket Park.** Small outdoor space (less than 1/4 acre) which may be owned publicly or privately but is open to the public. Often found in urbanized areas to provide a public gathering

5. Resources

space and usually a mixture of impervious surfaces (hard-scape) and permeable landscaped areas.

- **Protected Open Space.** Open space that is protected from development by acquisition, donation, or a conservation or agricultural easement or restriction. Easements are authorized under M.G.L. Chapter 184, Sections 31-33 and protected under Article 97 of the Amendments to the Massachusetts Constitution. Chapter 61 programs allow landowners to reduce their property taxes through easements on their land for forestry (61), agriculture (61A), or open space and recreation (61B). A lien is placed on the land and transfers with the property. Tax penalties may apply if the land is sold or converted to a nonchapter use within a certain length of time. The Town has a right of first refusal to buy the property if the land is converted to a nonchapter use while enrolled in the program or within one year of withdrawal from the program. Certain exemptions to this threshold apply.
- **View corridor or Viewshed.** The geographic area visible from a specific location, including all elements within sight and excluding those that are blocked from view.

Regulations and Regulatory Tools

- **40B.** Refers to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40B which enables the Zoning Board of Appeals to approve a development providing affordable housing as long as certain standards are met. A community with 10% or more of its housing units on the Subsidized Housing Inventory are exempted from certain requirements of this provision.
- **40R Smart Growth District.** Refers to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40R which allows municipalities to create zoning districts for housing in areas that meet certain criteria and provides a financial benefit from the state to the municipality for permitting housing within those district. Also allows the community to enact design standards for development in the 40R district.
- **Section 81D.** Refers to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40, Section 81D which is the enabling legislation for master plans.
- **Design Standards.** As used in this document, the use of specific requirements to control the visual aspects of a building and site as part of the local approval process for a building or use. May also be used to refer to road or streetscape design.
- **Flood plain.** An area defined by the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) as susceptible to flooding

5. Resources

on a regular basis and at a given level of severity.

- **Massachusetts General Laws vs. Regulations vs. Bylaws.** **Massachusetts General Laws** provide the enabling legislation for many of the tools mentioned in this plan. **Regulations** are created by state and federal agencies to provide interpretation of legislation and to state how the legislation will be applied. **Bylaws** or ordinances are approved by the municipality and govern the functions and authority of the municipality and its departments.
- **Overlay districts.** A zoning district that does not replace the current underlying or base zoning but provides for different land uses or development standards within a specific area as long as the development meets certain conditions.
- **Zoning.** The control of land use by means of a local ordinance (in a city) or bylaw (in a town).

Sustainability/Resiliency

- **Brundtland Commission.** Created in 1983 by the United Nations and formerly known as the World Commission of Environment and Development (WCED) and replaced by the Center for Our Common Future. Developed the standard definition of sustainable development.
- **Renewable energy.** Energy production that does not rely on fossil fuels; for example, energy derived from wind turbines or solar panels.
- **Resiliency.** Community resilience is a measure of the sustained ability of a community to utilize available resources to respond to, withstand, and recover from adverse situations. (RAND).
- **Sustainability.** Defined as “development which meets the needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (WCED, 1987).

FUNDING SOURCES

A town has four major sources of funding for implementation:

- Operating funds (Town meeting approves)
- Capital funds (Town meeting approves)
- Grant programs (state and federal, sometimes private)
- Partnering with local groups who can raise funds

The following programs can assist the Town of Egremont with recommended actions. Many of these programs are competitive and may require more than one funding cycle to achieve the funding. Some may also require matching grants from the Town.

RECENT GRANT APPLICATIONS

Towns are not limited to their own funds (either capital or operating) when implementing the recommendations of this plan,. As noted earlier, this planning process was funded by a grant. . **RESOURCES** lists a selection of other grants that may be useful.

The Town has received three recent grants for projects that will help implement some of the recommendations of this plan. Through the Egremont Grants Administrator, the Town has either applied for or is in the process of applying for other grants. **Table 1. Grant Activity**, on page 82, lists activity through June 2023.

COMMUNITY ONE STOP FOR GROWTH

In 2021, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts rolled the application process for ten grant programs into a single process. Programs that may be relevant include the following:

- MassWorks
- Massachusetts Downtown Initiative
- Community Planning Grants
- Site Readiness
- Underutilized Properties

More information can be found here: <https://www.mass.gov/guides/community-one-stop-for-growth>

MassWorks Infrastructure Program

Administered by the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development (EOHED); this is a competitive grant program for

5. Resources

Table 4. Grant Activity (as of June 2023)

Grant Name and Source	Amount	Status
Community Forest Stewardship Grant for French Park MA Dept. of Conservation and Recreation	\$19,050	Grant received : work completed June 2023
Implement Yr.1 of the French Park Forest Management Plan		
Municipal Fiber Grant MA Community Compact Cabinet Program	\$12,493	Grant received: final work to be completed by September 2023
Installed fiberoptic cable and security equipment at the Water Department Plant (completed). Install 3 “mesh” hotspots to provide outdoor wifi access and allow telephone calling during power outages at one spot on Route 71 and two spots on Route 23.		
Community Planning Grant Program MA Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (formerly Dept. of Housing & Community Development)	\$54,000	Grant received: work to begin in the third quarter of 2023. Includes \$6,000 from ARPA funds
Retain a consultant to assist the Egremont Planning Board with revising the Egremont Zoning Bylaw.		
Dam & Seawall Repair Program MA Executive Office of Environmental Affairs	\$577,935	Application submitted February 2023
Repair Prospect Lake Dam on behalf of Lake Dam LLC. The Town receives public access to the lake and 10 designated parking spots on the campground property.		
Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Action Grant	\$81,500	Application submitted June 2023
Address Water Department capital needs. Review Town Bylaws and policies for climate resiliency and water resource protection.		
Rural & Small Town Dev. Fund MA One Stop for Growth	\$416,554	Application submitted May 2023
Remaining funds needed to construct a new Facilities & Transportation garage at municipal complex.		
State Revolving Fund Grant DEP Asset Mgt	up to \$150,000	To be submitted in August 2023. Requires 40% town match.
Retain Tighe & Bond Engineers to conduct Water Department Asset Management Planning.		
Efficiency & Regionalization Grant Community Compact Cabinet Grants (CCC)		To be submitted in October 2023
Regionalization planning for the Fire Department (with Mount Washington).		
IT Grant (CCC)		To be submitted in October 2023
Digitize Town Hall documents including large format drawings/maps. Develop database.		
Partnership with UMASS Collins Center (CCC)		To be submitted in October 2023
Town-wide Capital Improvement Plan		
MA EEA Div of Env. Restoration	\$300,000+	To be submitted in March 2024
Construct a stream crossing at Blunt Road		

5. Resources

public infrastructure projects and is part of the Community One Stop for Growth program. Priority is given to those projects that support multi-family housing in walkable mixed-use districts; immediate job creation; and/or economic development in weak or distressed areas. MassWorks grants may be used for streetscape improvements, bridge repairs, and other such improvements. Municipalities must demonstrate that the application is consistent with the Commonwealth's Sustainability Principles and meets the programs investment goals.

More information is available here: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/massworks-infrastructure-grants>

Massachusetts Downtown Initiative

The focus of this grant is downtown revitalization. The Technical Assistance program provides a consultant and funding for that consultant's work to communities who need help with specific problems. MDI also aids with the development of a Business improvement District, or BID. This grant is part of the Community One Stop for Growth program.

More information can be found here: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/massachusetts-downtown-initiative-mdi>

Community Planning Grants

This is a new program and provides funding for planning projects at a larger scale than the MDI program. Project Recommendation for which this grant would be appropriate might include zoning changes, particularly those that support density, studies for development within a 1/2-mile of a commuter rail station or a multi-town corridor that look at both density and multimodal connections, or other similar planning processes. This grant is part of the Community One Stop for Growth program.

More information can be found here: <https://www.mass.gov/how-to/community-planning-grant-program>

OTHER GRANT PROGRAMS

District Local Technical Assistance Grant (DLTA)

Funds for this program are allocated to the regional planning agencies. These funds may be used for planning projects. Each Regional Planning Agency (RPA) has a different focus on how these funds may be used to meet the state's funding goals. All municipalities are eligible to apply directly to their RPA. The RPA will work with the municipality on the program; a separate consultant is not usually required. MVPC is Newbury's Regional Planning Agency.

Mass Cultural Council

The Mass Cultural Council has one-year project grants for specific public programming. Mass Cultural Council defines public programming as activities that engage with the public. The municipality's own Local Cultural Council may have additional grants to support local arts and culture

<https://massculturalcouncil.org/organizations/cultural-investment-portfolio/projects/>

MA DEP s319 and 604(b) Grant Programs

These address water quality, including nonpoint source pollution, management planning, and stormwater management. More information can be found here: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/grants-financial-assistance-watersheds-water-quality>

MassDevelopment Commonwealth Places

This program supports placemaking projects with the support of the crowd-funding mechanism Patronicity. MassDevelopment matches up to \$50,000 if the community can meet its goal within 60 days. More information can be found here: <https://www.mass-development.com/what-we-offer/real-estate-services/commonwealth-places/>

MassDOT/Chapter 90

Chapter 90 refers to the highway funds in the annual state funding packages provided to municipalities throughout Massachusetts.

Mass EEA: Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities (PARC) Grant Program

This grant can be used by municipalities to acquire parkland, build a new park, or to renovate an existing park. More information can be found here: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/parkland-acquisitions-and-renovations-for-communities-parc-grant-program>.

5. Resources

EEA MVP Program Action Grant

These grants help communities implement infrastructure improvements to address the impacts of climate change. The program prefers those strategies that are nature-based. More information about the criteria to apply can be found here: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/mvp-action-grant-eligibility-criteria>

Massachusetts Historical Commission, Survey and Planning Grant Program

This grant is a 50/50 matching program that supports planning activities that help preserve significant historic resources. For communities whose target area contains significant resources, this source may help fund design guidelines that include specific requirements for the preservation of significant historic resources. Interested communities are encouraged to reach out to the Massachusetts Historic Commission directly about this grant; it may be tied to the creation of a local historic district.

<https://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/mhchpp/surveyandplanning.htm>

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program

The Commonwealth provides funding for hazard mitigation plans. More information can be found here: <https://www.mass.gov/hazard-mitigation-assistance-grant-programs>

Information on this page also includes the Flood Mitigation Assistance Grant; and the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant.

Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries Marine Recreational Fisheries Development Fund

The fund can support improvements to recreational fishing. More information can be found here: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/the-marine-recreational-fisheries-development-fund>

Massachusetts Department of Transportation, Complete Streets Funding Program

This program provides funds to municipalities who have adopted a Complete Streets Policy and created a Prioritization Plan. Any street infrastructure recommended in this report should be added to the Prioritization Plan. This grant program can help address recommended improvements for pedestrian and bicyclist mobility, safety, and comfort.

This grant can also assist with design guidelines; these do not have to be limited to the private realm. Creating consistency in

5. Resources

a downtown, village, or corridor is an important part of defining its identity both within and beyond the community. As part of a Complete Streets Project, a municipality should identify the specific materials, street furniture, trees, and public signage (including wayfinding) that will be used in the target area. These choices can be incorporated into the overall design guidelines to address both public and private realms.

This program could leverage the municipality's funding under Chapter 90 to ensure that multimodal infrastructure is connected, over time, throughout the community.

<https://www.mass.gov/complete-streets-funding-program>

Massachusetts Department of Transportation, Shared Streets and Spaces

This program provides funds to support the improvement of "plazas, sidewalks, curbs, streets, bus stops, parking areas, and other public spaces." The focus is on public health, safe mobility, and renewed commerce.

<https://www.mass.gov/shared-streets-and-spaces-grant-program>

FEDERAL RESOURCES

Two recent programs may have implications for funding that could assist the Town with larger projects. The full extent of these programs is not yet known, so the Town should watch for specific funding announcements.

- **Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.** This act will support many programs, including rebuilding and repairing roads and bridges and addressing the resiliency of infrastructure to climate change, including flooding.
- **Inflation Reduction Act.** This act focuses on the clean energy economy and may provide incentives for some of the recommendations for electrification in this plan.

LOCAL RESOURCES

Local Taxes

Communities in Massachusetts have the option to adopt additional local taxes:

- **Local Option Meals Excise.** Towns who adopt this tax may collect an additional 0.75% of the vendor's gross receipts from restaurant meal sales. Egremont has not adopted this.
- **Local Option Room Occupancy Excise.** Towns may collect an additional tax on room rentals of up to 6% for 90 days or less (Egremont collects the full 6%) and short-term rentals of property for 31 days or less (up to 3%).
- **Marijuana tax rate.** Egremont has adopted the maximum tax rate of 3% on marijuana sales.

Egremont received no funds from the Meals Tax in FY2023; just over \$82,000 from Room Occupancy and just over \$18,000 from short-term rentals (MA DLS).

The Community Preservation Act

The Community Preservation Act (CPA) is a tool to help municipalities preserve open space and historic sites, create affordable housing, and develop outdoor recreational facilities.

"Community preservation monies are raised locally through the imposition of a surcharge of not more than 3% of the tax levy against real property. Contrary to a common misconception, the CPA surcharge does not raise the tax rate; it assesses a surcharge on property tax bills after they have been calculated based on the community's current tax rate.

Example: A home is assessed at \$350,000. After subtracting the first \$100,000 in residential property value (this is an optional and very popular CPA exemption), the homeowner's net value to be surcharged equals \$250,000. After applying Egremont's current tax rate of \$7.93 per \$1,000, the amount subject to the CPA surcharge would be about \$2,000. With a 1.5% CPA surcharge applied, the CPA surcharge for this homeowner would be approximately \$30 per year."

Source: Community Preservation Coalition; <https://www.communitypreservation.org/about>

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts distributes an annual match funds to CPA communities. The Town of Egremont has not yet adopted the CPA. However, as an example, Great Barrington has adopted the CPA and in 2023, the town collected \$566,336 in surcharges and received a state match of \$370,156.

5. Resources

WEBSITES

DATA SOURCES	
AARP Livable Communities.	https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/
Berkshire Regional Planning Commission	https://berkshireplanning.org/
Citizen Planner Training Collaborative	https://masscptc.org/
This is an excellent resource for Planning Board members and others interested in municipal planning. A recent webinar discussed the development of master plans in Massachusetts.	
Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)	https://www.mass.gov/orgs/housing-and-community-development
MassDevelopment	https://www.massdevelopment.com/
Both DHCD and MassDevelopment have grant programs and resources for implementation.	
Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)	https://www.mass.gov/orgs/massachusetts-department-of-transportation
This site provides information about MassDOT programs that may be appropriate for some strategies.	
Massachusetts Division of Local Services	https://www.mass.gov/orgs/division-of-local-services
In addition to training for local officials, DLS supports the Municipal Finance Trend Dashboard, which, like MHP's DataTown below, allows communities to compare themselves against others. The Dashboard is here: https://www.mass.gov/service-details/municipal-finance-trend-dashboard , and the Community Comparison report is here: https://www.mass.gov/service-details/community-comparison-report .	
MassGIS	https://maps.massgis.digital.mass.gov/MassMapper/MassMapper.html
MassGIS's MassMapper is an online mapping platform that allows people to view different data layers for their town.	
Massachusetts Historical Commission/ MACRIS	https://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/
The Massachusetts Historical Commission is under the purview of the Secretary of the Commonwealth. This site provides information about MHC, resources (including grants and tax credits), and a link to the MACRIS database, which provides detailed information about historical assets.	
Massachusetts Housing Partnership	www.mhp.net/datatown
MHP supports a data portal called DataTown, which has information about demographics, housing, jobs, and the labor force. The data can be downloaded as charts or a .csv file, allowing for additional analysis and Comparisons among towns. The data is updated frequently.	
Massachusetts Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program	https://www.mass.gov/municipal-vulnerability-preparedness-mvp-program
This site provides information about the MVP planning program, adaptation strategies, and supporting grants. More information is provided in two tools:	
The ResilientMA map viewer is here:	https://resilientma.org/map/
The ResilientMA data grapher is here:	https://resilientma.org/datagrapher/?c=Temp/state/maxt/ANN/MA/

5. Resources

LOCAL RESOURCES

Egremont Historical Commission	https://www.egremonthistoricalcommission.org/
Greenagers	Facebook Page
History of Jug End	https://www.newenglandskihistory.com/Massachusetts/jugend.php

GENERAL PLANNING RESOURCES

American Planning Association	www.planning.org
Bloomberg City Lab	https://www.bloomberg.com/citylab
Congress for the New Urbanism	https://www.cnu.org/
Cornell Small Farms Program	https://smallfarms.cornell.edu/
Curbed	https://www.curbed.com/
Esri	https://livingatlas.arcgis.com/en/home/
International Ecotourism Society	https://ecotourism.org/what-is-ecotourism/
Lincoln Institute of Land Policy	https://www.lincolnst.edu/research-data/data/place-database
National Low Income Housing Coalition	https://nlihc.org/housing-needs-by-state/massachusetts
MassWoods	https://masswoods.org/sites/masswoods.net/files/Ch61-v2.pdf
Park Score	https://www.tpl.org/parkscore
Planetizen	https://www.planetizen.com/
Project for Public Spaces	www.pps.org
RAND - Community resilience	https://www.rand.org/topics/community-resilience.html
Route Fifty	https://www.route-fifty.com/
Strong Towns	https://www.strongtowns.org/
Smart Growth America	https://smartgrowthamerica.org/
Trust for Public Land	https://www.tpl.org/
Urban Land Institute	https://uli.org/
UMass Center for Agriculture, Food, and the Environment	https://ag.umass.edu/
Walk Score	https://www.walkscore.com/

5. Resources

REGIONAL, STATE, FEDERAL, AND INTERNATIONAL RESOURCES	
Federal Emergency Management Agency	https://www.fema.gov/ https://msc.fema.gov/portal/home
Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency	https://www.mass.gov/orgs/massachusetts-emergency-management-agency
East Coast Greenway	https://www.greenway.org/states/massachusetts
Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)	https://www.mass.gov/orgs/departments-of-conservation-recreation
Massachusetts Clean Energy and Climate Plan for 2050	https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-clean-energy-and-climate-plan-for-2050
Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)	https://www.mass.gov/orgs/housing-and-community-development
MassDevelopment	https://www.massdevelopment.com/
Massachusetts Division of Local Services	https://www.mass.gov/orgs/division-of-local-services
Massachusetts Food System Collaborative	https://mafoodsystem.org/
Massachusetts Green Community	https://www.mass.gov/guides/becoming-a-designated-green-community
Massachusetts Housing Partnership	https://www.mhp.net/
MassHousing	https://www.masshousing.com/
Massachusetts Smart Growth/Smart Energy Toolkit	https://www.mass.gov/service-details/smart-growth-resources
Massachusetts State Historic Preservation Plan, 2017-2023	https://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/mhcpdf/statepresplan20182022webversion.pdf
Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties	https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/secretary-standards-treatment-historic-properties.htm
Source Water Protection	https://www.mass.gov/source-water-protection
United Nations - Sustainable Development	https://sdgs.un.org/
U.S. Census	https://www.census.gov/
U.S. Census - American Community Survey	https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs
USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture	https://www.nifa.usda.gov/topics/sustainable-agriculture
U.S. Economic Development Administrations	https://www.eda.gov/
U.S. Department of Housing and Community Development	https://www.hud.gov
U.S. Forest Service	https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/urban-forests
USDA Rural Development	https://www.rd.usda.gov/about-rd
World Economic Forum	https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2022/10/what-is-regenerative-agriculture/

Picture Credits

Cover Photo: David Seligman

Pages 5, 7, 8, 15, 16, and 24: Mary McGurn

Pages 53, 642 and 74: Innes Associates Ltd.

Page 53, black-and-white photo: MACRIS Inventory, unknown photographer

