
1 LAND USE

2 *More than two centuries have brought about many changes in Norwich's landscape as it has been*
3 *transformed from a wilderness by settlers in the 1770s, to a rural town of farms and villages, to a*
4 *bedroom community for nearby employment centers. The topography may be the same, but forests were*
5 *cleared and allowed to grow again, pastures were created and then disappeared, streams were dammed*
6 *and undammed, farmsteads were built and abandoned, and villages emerged.*

7 *This land use plan attempts to identify those features of the natural and working landscape that should be*
8 *preserved and to direct future land development in a manner that respects the desire of the community to*
9 *preserve its rural character and quality of life while creating homes and employment opportunities for*
10 *current residents and future generations. The plan responds to our mutual needs and interdependencies*
11 *as a community while respecting the rights and concerns of individual citizens.*

12 *It must be recognized that Norwich's landscape has never been and cannot be static and that change can*
13 *be both necessary and positive. This land use plan describes current land use patterns in Norwich, assesses*
14 *recent land use trends and establishes policies to direct future land use changes.*

15 **Norwich's Land Use History**

16 Chapter 2 of this plan follows the transition of Norwich from a largely uninhabited wilderness in the mid-
17 1700s to the residential community it has become today. Most of the land in Norwich has been through
18 many changes since the original settlers arrived—first cleared of trees, then grazed clean by sheep, then
19 either allowed to revert to forest or converted to pasture or hay field for dairy farms. Norwich is now 76
20 percent forested, and farm fields and pastures account for only 14 percent of its land area.

21 For the most part, major land use changes in Norwich have been in response to economic changes of a
22 regional, national or global nature. Transportation has played a significant role in these changes with the
23 1848 opening of the railroad that connected Norwich to markets throughout the country and the building
24 of Interstates 91 and 89 in the early 1970s that put the entire Northeast within a day's drive of Norwich.
25 The effect of changes in transportation, markets, and regulations on a regional, national and global level,
26 and resulting changes in our agricultural activity have had a dramatic impact on the working landscape.

1 Current Land Use in Norwich

2 **Residential Land Uses**

3 ~~Over the past 50 years,~~ Norwich's pattern of residential development ~~has changed from~~continues the
4 linear patterns along major roads and arteries~~the early compact settlements separated by open farmland~~
5 ~~to a linear spread of houses along many of town's major roads.~~ Several large subdivisions with relatively
6 small lots were created in or near the Norwich village area before the enactment of state subdivision
7 regulations in 1968. Through the 1970s, development continued to occur closer to the Norwich village
8 area. In the 1980s, construction began spreading further out along Turnpike Road, Beaver Meadow Road
9 and New Boston Road.

10 ~~Much of this later development has been in lots slightly larger than 10 acres due to the exemption from~~
11 ~~state septic regulations for such parcels. The 10-acre exemption, created in 1968, had less impact after~~
12 ~~1997 when the town on-site wastewater disposal regulations were changed to match those of the state~~
13 ~~and was removed entirely by the state in 2002. This 10-acre pattern created lots "too small to plow, but~~
14 ~~too big to mow." This meant lots were not large enough for economically viable agriculture or forestry,~~
15 ~~but larger than needed for a private residence.~~

16 Active farms have been disappearing from Norwich since the mid-1900s and former pastures or hay fields
17 are now house lots or are reverting to woodland. A strong economy in the Upper Valley, the excellent
18 reputation of the school system, and the availability of land drove residential development in the 1980s.
19 The rate of growth slowed in the 1990s and 2000s,~~but the amount of open space being converted to~~
20 ~~residential lots continues to be substantial as shown in Figure 12-2 and the average new house lot is~~
21 ~~approximately five acres. (See Chapters 4 and 5 for a more detailed analysis of population and housing~~
22 ~~growth in Norwich.)~~

23 ~~Potentially, there is enough land for many times the number of houses now in Norwich under current~~
24 ~~zoning even with substantial reduction of potential new lots in the Rural Residential District due to~~
25 ~~density limitations adopted in the 2002 Subdivision Regulations. However, there are constraints on~~
26 ~~residential development other than zoning, such as limited septic disposal capacity, steep slopes, limited~~
27 ~~access, state and federal wetlands rules, conservation easements, and private deed restrictions. There~~
28 ~~are a number of factors that could increase the pace of residential development in Norwich, including:~~

- 29 ~~• A strong regional economy.~~
- 30 ~~• State-wide planning, regulation, and growth designations.~~
- 31 ~~• Continued state adoption of new technology for on-site wastewater treatment or introduction of~~
32 ~~a municipal wastewater system.~~

- ~~• High taxes on undeveloped land forcing or encouraging owners to subdivide and sell.~~
- ~~• Continued excellence of local schools relative to others in the region.~~
- ~~• Less restrictive land use regulations.~~

As Norwich considers options regarding future development, it should be mindful of the core philosophy underlying our existing zoning system, if Norwich is to allow for more houses without destroying the rural character and scenic beauty of the town, development should be directed into areas suitable for that growth. To this end, under the existing zoning regulations, specific areas of the town that are easily accessible to good roads, town services, schools and public transportation – such as the historical village center area – have been zoned for more compact development, while outlying areas of town without that accessibility have been zoned for lower densities of development. In outlying areas, Norwich encourages new non-agricultural buildings to be grouped or “clustered” to preserve larger contiguous parcels for agriculture, forestry or the protection of rural character and scenic beauty.

~~Demand for residential housing, high property taxes, and the poor economic return from farming and forestry apply constant pressure to develop open land in Norwich. The housing demand is mostly created by regional economic factors (see Chapter 5, Housing Plan) but, as long as the town maintains its attractive rural character, good schools and town services, this demand will most likely continue.~~

~~Norwich currently issues zoning permits for 6 or less new homes in a year. The rate of development is extremely low so discerning a pattern is difficult, but typically these homes are outside the village area or immediate surrounds.~~

Commercial Land Uses

Commercial development in Norwich has remained primarily in the Village Business District and along the east side of Route 5 South in the Commercial/Industrial District. The limited commercial activity along River Road mostly consists of “grandfathered” businesses that pre-date zoning. Although, at times, there has been demand for more commercial space, availability has been limited by the lack of a municipal wastewater system and the town’s Zoning Regulations. The Village Business District is almost filled to capacity. The Commercial/Industrial District on Route 5 South has direct access to the state highway and Interstate 91, but the area has been only partially developed due to poor conditions for on-site wastewater disposal and the presence of Class II wetlands. Future development has been limited by the conversion of a portion of the 70-acre commercially-zoned parcel owned by the Dresden School District to athletic playing fields.

Comment [RF1]: This suggests the need to rezone the playing fields

1 ~~Home businesses exist throughout the town, but the visibility of many is low because zoning regulations~~
2 ~~allow only one sign up to four square feet and no outside display of goods or equipment. Many of these~~
3 ~~businesses have no signs at all.~~

4 ~~Although at one time, additional commercial development in Norwich was considered by some to have a~~
5 ~~positive effect on the property tax burden by increasing the value of the Grand List without adding~~
6 ~~students to the school, Acts 60 and 68 changed Vermont's school funding formula and implemented a~~
7 ~~statewide system to redistribute education tax revenue based on per pupil funding. Under the current~~
8 ~~education funding system, the argument can no longer be made that commercial development~~
9 ~~necessarily will result in tax benefits for residential property owners. The debate around school funding~~
10 ~~over the past two decades points out that towns should not substitute tax policies for land use policies, as~~
11 ~~the tax structure may change and yesterday's "fiscal winner" may not remain as such.~~

12 **Public and Privately Conserved Land**

13 Approximately 11 percent of land in Norwich is either permanently protected from development or
14 controlled by the town/fire district, state or federal government. ~~Additional land may be protected by~~
15 ~~private deed restrictions; however, since these restrictions may be removed in some cases by future~~
16 ~~owners or may not legally hold up over time, they do not have the same force as conservation easements~~
17 ~~held by qualified organizations.~~

18 Working Lands and Open Space

19 For more than 50 years, working farms have been disappearing from the Norwich landscape as the town
20 transitioned from a primarily agricultural community to a primarily residential community. However, it
21 now appears that farms will not vanish entirely from Norwich. From 1997 to 2007, there was an increase
22 in the number of farms operating in town. The 2007 Agricultural Census counted 30 farms in the Norwich
23 zip code as compared to 21 in 1997.

Comment [RF2]: Check data

24 ~~Only one dairy farm remains in operation, but agriculture in Norwich is becoming increasingly diversified.~~
25 ~~There are at least seven farms currently operating in Norwich, according to a survey done by Norwich~~
26 ~~Historic Preservation Commission and Norwich Historical Society as part of the exhibit: "Norwich Farms:~~
27 ~~Cycles of Change." New farmers are turning to value-added, specialty and local food products to make~~
28 ~~agriculture economically viable. The town's farms raise sheep, beef cattle, hogs and poultry, and grow~~
29 ~~fruits and vegetables, which are sold at roadside stands and farmer's markets to Upper Valley residents~~
30 ~~and businesses who want to eat and serve more locally grown food. Rural landowners continue to~~
31 ~~undertake other traditional activities like maple sugaring, harvesting timber from managed woodlots, and~~

~~extracting sand or gravel for sale to supplement their income. Increasing numbers of Norwich residents keep horses on large and small lots.~~

Several hundred acres of farmland have been conserved in Norwich, which ensures that these lands will not be developed and will remain available for agricultural use. The best way to protect Norwich’s working and open lands remains for agriculture and forestry to be economically viable. While there is little local control over the economics of farming and forestry, the town should support the alternatives to the traditional dairy farm that are emerging - diversified agriculture, farm-based businesses, and local food and energy production – as a way to protect working and open lands. Undeveloped land with productive soils for agriculture or forestry has been inventoried and future development should be planned so as not to destroy access to this irreplaceable resource.

In 2007, 129 parcels totaling 12,165 acres were enrolled in the state’s current-use program, which is intended to reduce the property taxes paid by owners of working farms and managed forest land. The landowner pays tax based on the value of the land for farming or agriculture and the state reimburses the town the difference between what the landowner pays and the full tax based on fair market value.

Comment [RF3]: Check data

Despite the amount of residential development in Norwich over the past 50 years, there are still many large parcels. The 2007 Grand List shows that 54 percent of the town’s total acreage is in parcels of more than 50 acres (143 parcels) and that 32 percent is in parcels of more than 100 acres (55 parcels). Further, there remains a significant amount of cleared land in Norwich that is under-utilized, ~~as many former farms have been divided into large lots. Some owners of these residential lots grow hay for sale, primarily to keep the land open, or brush hog the pastures to keep growing hedgerows, juniper and pasture pines at bay. Limiting further fragmentation of these larger landholdings would have a number of benefits for the town including retaining a base of farm and forest land for future generations and protecting the rural character valued by current residents.~~

Agricultural, forest, and open space land provide lower property tax receipts for the town than developed land; however, ~~they also require very little in town services as compared with developed land. Agricultural, forest, and open space land does not provide children for the school or put any cars on town roads. This financial benefit to the town is in addition to the aesthetic benefits of living in a “rural” town and the environmental benefits of land conservation. In most cases, when open space land is developed for residential use, the additional new taxes do not cover the additional costs to the town over time. (See Chapter 4 for a more detailed analysis of the costs versus benefits of development.) Large developments in areas of town with limited access and facilities could be very costly for all taxpayers in the future.~~

Future Land Use

Formatted: Normal

1 If Norwich is to protect its natural resources, preserve agricultural land, and maintain its rural character
2 and scenic beauty, development will need to become less haphazard and more planned than it has been
3 in recent decades. ~~New economic forces have replaced those that shaped the town before the 1960s. The~~
4 ~~value of land is no longer in agriculture and logging, but in residential development. If left unregulated,~~
5 ~~residential development could occur in every “nook and cranny” that modern technology can find access~~
6 ~~and sewage disposal capability for, just as in the 19th century, when the town was clear cut without~~
7 ~~restrictions with timber and sheep as the economic engine.~~

8 **Land Use Planning Areas**

Comment [RF4]: Need to discuss and redo

9 ~~For the purpose of describing the desired future land use patterns in Norwich, the town has been divided~~
10 ~~into land use districts as shown on the Future Land Use Map. Their purpose is to describe the future land~~
11 ~~use pattern and character envisioned (or under consideration, as noted) in various parts of the town. The~~
12 ~~density, scale and mix of land uses appropriate for each land use planning district are identified and~~
13 ~~important land use issues are discussed below.~~

14 ~~These areas are not intended to be regulatory, like zoning districts, and their boundaries are generalized.~~
15 ~~A land use planning area may encompass several zoning districts or, conversely, a single zoning district~~
16 ~~may include more than one land use planning area. The descriptions that follow are a sketch plan of the~~
17 ~~town’s vision for its future. As with a conceptual architectural drawing, a set of blueprints will need to be~~
18 ~~drafted to construct the building. The town’s land use regulations and related implementation tools are~~
19 ~~the detailed instructions that will ensure that the vision described in this land use plan is achieved over~~
20 ~~time.~~

21 Village Business, Village Residential I and Village Residential II Districts

22 ~~These lands include the most densely developed parts of town and are accessible from state and~~
23 ~~interstate highways. The scale, size, density, etc. of these planning districts are intended to match those~~
24 ~~of current zoning regulations. However, given additional analysis by the Planning Commission as part of~~
25 ~~this plan’s update or update to the zoning regulations, to further the goals and objectives of this plan~~
26 ~~(e.g., provision for affordable housing), it is understood that the scale, size, density, etc. of these~~
27 ~~established planning districts may require amendment. Note, however, that the planning district~~
28 ~~boundaries are well established. Any change to these boundaries or the creation of any new district~~
29 ~~needs to be accomplished through a plan amendment or re-write process.~~

30 ~~At the nucleus of this area is the Norwich village area (predominately the Village Business District)—the~~
31 ~~historic center of the town. The village is densely developed, compact, human-scaled, pedestrian-~~
32 ~~oriented and mixed use. It has a network of interconnected streets with sidewalks, street trees and~~
33 ~~buildings set close to the frontages. This area accommodates mixed use development, commercial uses~~

1 ~~and civic spaces. Extending out from this area are historic and more recently constructed residential~~
2 ~~neighborhoods — the Village Residential I and Village Residential II Districts.~~

3 ~~It is the intent of this plan that the Norwich village area:~~

- 4 ~~• Remain the heart of the community where civic buildings and uses are located.~~
- 5 ~~• Retain its architectural integrity through the preservation of historic buildings and the compatible~~
6 ~~design of new structures.~~
- 7 ~~• Be pedestrian, rather than automobile, oriented by providing sidewalks and trail connections,~~
8 ~~managing and calming traffic, and offering parking in a manner that maintains the aesthetic~~
9 ~~character of this historic center.~~

10 ~~To support a compact settlement pattern, Norwich zoning regulations currently provide that the Norwich~~
11 ~~village area and adjacent lands can be developed at higher densities than lands more distant from this~~
12 ~~center. Residential neighborhoods nearer the Village Business District should provide sidewalks and trails~~
13 ~~that allow residents to walk to school, shopping, services, transit stops and employment. Open spaces~~
14 ~~and parks should be preserved to protect important resources and provide opportunities for outdoor~~
15 ~~recreation and a connection to nature.~~

16 ~~Due to limited building space, parking constraints and traffic congestion, the existing Village Business~~
17 ~~District is most appropriate for businesses serving the needs of the community rather than those~~
18 ~~primarily drawing customers from outside Norwich. Because of transportation constraints and the desire~~
19 ~~to preserve the rural character of the town, the most appropriate location for commercial development~~
20 ~~serving regional markets is east of Route 5 South in the Commercial/Industrial District and includes such~~
21 ~~businesses as King Arthur Flour.~~

22 **Designated Village Center** (defined here only for purposes related to the Vermont Downtown Program and re-applying
23 for the town's former designation)

24 The Norwich Village Center (Village Center) includes the Village Business District and additional area along
25 Main Street north to the Norwich Public Library on Hazen Street and south to the Norwich Historical
26 Society and Marion Cross School. (see Village Designation Map in the appendices). The Village Center is
27 part of the Norwich Village Historic District listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
28 Approximately 23 of the principal structures in the Village Center are listed as “contributing buildings” to
29 the Historic District. Uses include some residential properties, many Norwich businesses, the town hall,
30 police and fire station, public library, elementary school, Historical Society, the Norwich Congregational
31 Church and the town green.

32 The Village Center was previously a Designated Village Center under the Vermont Downtown Program
33 but the designation could not be renewed due to a lack of specific support in the 2011 Norwich Town

1 Plan. The Norwich Village center meets both the statutory definition of a Village Center and other state
2 guidelines. The Village Center designation will make various tax credits available to property owners for
3 improvements related to historic restoration, code compliance, and accessibility, and provides the town
4 with priority consideration for various state grant programs. The town intends to reapply for the
5 designation following adoption of this Town Plan. There are currently no plans to expand the Village
6 Center.

7 Route 5 South/River Road *(currently part of the Rural Residential District)*

8 ~~While not a planning area defined by this plan, several parcels on the west side of Route 5 South and
9 along River Road are served by state highways and easily accessible to Interstate 91, schools, municipal
10 services, and public transportation. Due to this area's accessibility, some discussion already has occurred
11 to change the planning and zoning for this area.~~

12 ~~However, a significant restraint on development in this area is the lack of wastewater disposal
13 infrastructure via a municipal wastewater facility or other alternative to individual on-site septic systems
14 as well as public support. Due to poor soil conditions outside of the existing village, the capacity of on-site
15 systems is limited. A municipal wastewater facility has been discussed and researched, but never built;
16 this is possibly due to the cost, lack of an existing health hazard, fear of too much development, or a
17 combination of these concerns. The 2005 Norwich Sewer Committee Report found that there was no
18 immediate public health emergency and that the future need for municipal or community wastewater
19 systems should be part of a long term public town planning process.~~

20 ~~In 2014-2015, the town commissioned a report to review options for this area and in 2016, the Planning
21 Commission began investigating the possibility of developing a new zoning district to make compact
22 development more feasible in this area and to increase the incentives in this area for the development of
23 affordable housing. A number of important considerations were raised in a public forum in 2017 about
24 this concept, and the commission is presently considering how best to respond to and incorporate public
25 input. The commission wishes to give further consideration to public input as well as the nuances of this
26 important topic. Because such a zoning district is not presently authorized under this town plan, its
27 creation would require a future change to the town plan, including additional public participation beyond
28 minimum statutory requirements (i.e., the singular public hearing required of the Planning Commission).~~

29 Historic "Cluster" Areas *(Rural Residential District areas and overlay districts currently regulated by zoning regulations)*

30 ~~The re-creation of "outlying villages", either in the historic locations of the original settlements or in new
31 locations, would create a focus for denser residential development in specific locations. This historic style
32 of compact clustering of homes, is frequently organized around a crossroads, civic building or public~~

1 ~~space. It may contain less than a handful of residences or be large enough to support one or more small,~~
2 ~~neighborhood-serving businesses.~~

3 ~~Some existing clusters in town include Beaver Meadow, Union Village, Pompanoosuc, and New Boston.~~
4 ~~There may be other areas in the Rural Residential District that could represent new locations for such~~
5 ~~type of clustering. Establishing a new cluster should be considered whenever plans are being made to~~
6 ~~develop a large tract of outlying, rural land. Not all outlying lands are suited to support this development~~
7 ~~pattern, but compared to low density, scattered development, it is a preferred alternative that can allow~~
8 ~~for growth while preserving rural character.~~

9 ~~The creation of common cultural and recreational areas within these areas could create a sense of a local~~
10 ~~community. The Town of Norwich has become large enough that some of the advantages of a small~~
11 ~~community, are at risk. Existing and new outlying areas could be enhanced to generate smaller~~
12 ~~communities. Small parcels of common land could facilitate this. Higher density in these areas could bring~~
13 ~~down the cost of housing, save open land and provide common recreational facilities, create more active~~
14 ~~communities, and save on town services.~~

15 ~~Valley Areas (Rural Residential District areas and overlay districts currently regulated by zoning regulations)~~

16 ~~Roads and streams radiate out from the Norwich village area to the west, north, and parallel to the~~
17 ~~Connecticut River to the east. These valleys contain level land suitable for development, but also scarce~~
18 ~~farmland, wetlands, and scenic vistas of the working landscape with hills in the background. Over the past~~
19 ~~several decades, the farm economy and development pressure has made it difficult for landowners to~~
20 ~~keep agricultural lands in productive use given the demand for and value of their property for residential~~
21 ~~development. Norwich, however, desires to maintain the rural character of its valley lands created~~
22 ~~through more than two centuries of productive use and retain a base of working farm and forest land for~~
23 ~~future generations.~~

24 ~~The town has recognized that it needs to be creative and consider innovative techniques to achieve these~~
25 ~~goals. In order to preserve rural character while accommodating reasonable amounts of development,~~
26 ~~Norwich should consider use of cluster development on these valley lands. Clustering is a development~~
27 ~~technique that groups allowed development together on smaller lots with a significant amount of the~~
28 ~~original parcel set aside as open space or productive land.~~

29 ~~Even well-planned development on rural lands often requires trade-offs. Is it better to protect scenic~~
30 ~~views by placing new development within a wooded area or are homes on open fields preferable to~~
31 ~~protect forested wildlife habitat? Are designs that place homes located near existing roads to minimize~~
32 ~~the need for costly infrastructure superior to those that place homes at the end of long access drives out~~
33 ~~of view of travelers on the public roads? The complexity of rural planning is that there is no right or wrong~~

1 ~~answer that can be applied town-wide. Each piece of land needs to be considered and assessed~~
2 ~~individually. The town's land use regulations should provide the flexibility to develop a rural parcel in the~~
3 ~~manner best suited to that particular piece of land and location.~~

4 ~~Commercial development in the rural areas should be limited to businesses that will have a very low~~
5 ~~impact on town services or infrastructure and will not adversely affect the rural character and current~~
6 ~~residential or agricultural uses. The level and type of commercial activity should be compatible with~~
7 ~~existing residential uses and sensitive to natural resources in the area such as the Connecticut River.~~

8 Upland Areas *(Rural Residential District areas and overlay districts currently regulated by zoning regulations)*

9 ~~Forested uplands dominate the western side of Norwich. Beyond the narrow stream valleys that extend~~
10 ~~up into the hills from the lowlands along the Connecticut River Valley, the terrain is steep and soils are~~
11 ~~shallow. Few roads bisect these areas with the result being large, unbroken tracts of forestland as shown~~
12 ~~on Map 10. Their physical character, value as wildlife habitat, fragile ecology and inaccessibility make~~
13 ~~these lands generally ill-suited for development other than low-impact recreation and sustainable forest~~
14 ~~uses. The ecological benefits of maintaining large blocks of unfragmented forest and wildlife habitat are~~
15 ~~discussed in the Natural and Historic Resources Chapter on pages 11-13 through 11-15 of this plan.~~

16 ~~Low-impact development that has been carefully sited and designed may be appropriate within the~~
17 ~~town's upland areas, but the overall density of development should remain very low. Impacts to be~~
18 ~~minimized include tree-clearing, disturbance of steep slopes, fragmentation of important wildlife habitat,~~
19 ~~and increased stormwater runoff and/or decreased water quality in upland streams. Recreational and~~
20 ~~forestry uses should be supported to the extent that they are undertaken in a sustainable manner that~~
21 ~~protects environmental quality. Scenic resources, such as views of prominent ridgelines and hillsides from~~
22 ~~public roads, may be protected by directing development to less-visible sites or maintaining an~~
23 ~~appropriate level of vegetative screening.~~

24 **Goals, Objectives and Actions**

25 **Goal K**

26 Maintain and enhance Norwich's historic settlement pattern of compact village and rural countryside
27 while accommodating growth at a sustainable rate, consistent with the size and scale of existing
28 developments in Norwich.

29 Objective K.1 Preserve and protect the town's natural resources, scenic beauty and rural
30 character while managing growth in outlying areas.

1 Action K.1.a To the extent development is proposed on larger parcels in the Rural
2 Residential District, encourage clustered and compact development balanced by
3 conservation of open space.

4 ~~Action K.1.b Promote, through incentives in land use regulations, the clustering of
5 residential housing with the goal of preserving larger contiguous parcels for farming,
6 forestry and the preservation of open space.~~

Comment [RF5]: See density factor

7 Action K.1.c Consider creating incentives for clustering of residential housing and
8 commercial developments in order to preserve natural resources and open lands.

9 Action K.1.d Support the use of conservation easements to preserve open space.

10 Action K.1.e Limit the allowed density for properties in outlying areas where there is
11 limited access to services.

12 Objective K.2 Direct new development to those locations best suited to accommodate it,
13 particularly areas that are easily accessible to good roads, town services, schools and public
14 transportation.

15 Action K.2.a Develop guidelines and criteria to identify land that is physically capable of
16 supporting development.

17 Action K.2.b Make inventories and maps of all protected natural resource areas readily
18 available to all residents, landowners or their agents.

19 Action K.2.c Review the current zoning setbacks and protection zones for natural
20 resource areas including wetlands, shorelines, and aquifers, and, if needed, establish new
21 zones and setbacks.

22 Action K.2.d Maintain other protection areas such as steep slopes and ridgeline areas
23 which may need additional evaluation on a site-specific basis prior to development.
24 These areas should be clearly delineated on maps, and specific criteria and conditions for
25 development should be established.

26 Objective K.3 Limit commercial development through performance standards to a type, scale and
27 design that is compatible with the character of the town and the neighborhood.

28 Action K.3.a Use performance standards to allow the type of commercial development
29 appropriate for each of three categories: (a) Outlying neighborhood services; (b) Village
30 businesses; (c) Regional commercial development.

1 ~~Action K.3.b Re-evaluate performance standards on an ongoing basis to determine their~~
2 ~~effectiveness and make changes as needed.~~

Comment [RF6]: Ongoing? Cant squeeze this in around rewriting plans :-)

3 Action K.3.c Support the ability of Norwich residents to work from home or operate
4 businesses on their residential property to the extent that the activity is compatible with
5 surrounding land uses and does not adversely impact neighbors' quality of life.

6 Action K.3.d Create criteria and performance standards for commercial uses in the Rural
7 Residential District to allow low-impact uses that will not adversely affect residential and
8 agricultural uses.

9 Action K.3.e Ensure that commercial development provides public spaces such as seating
10 for public use, picnic tables, flower beds or a small park.

11 Objective K.4 Preserve and protect the character of the Norwich village area.

12 ~~Action K.4.a Encourage village businesses that are primarily intended to serve the needs~~
13 ~~of and enhance the vitality of the local community.~~

Comment [RF7]: See Zoning

14 ~~Action K.4.b Apply for state designation (of the original area designated) as a "village~~
15 ~~center" to recognize the town's efforts to maintain the vitality and livability of its historic~~
16 ~~village area and to provide priority consideration for state grants and other resources.~~

Comment [RF8]: done

17 Objective K.5 Encourage and strengthen agricultural and forest industries.

18 ~~Action K.5.a Promote use of sound forest and agricultural management practices.~~

Comment [RF9]: VT does it

19 ~~Action K.5.b Evaluate, define, map and protect prime agricultural soils.~~

20 ~~Action K.5.c Implement strategies to enhance the long-term viability of agricultural and~~
21 ~~forestlands.~~

Comment [RF10]: No jurisdiction

22 ~~Action K.5.d Support the viability of working farms through: (a) non-restrictive zoning for~~
23 ~~agriculture; (b) allowing commercial uses that help support the agricultural uses and/or~~
24 ~~preservation of land for agriculture; and (c) property tax relief at the town level.~~

Comment [RF11]: done

25 ~~Action K.5.e Allow for the manufacture and marketing of value-added agricultural and~~
26 ~~forest products.~~

Comment [RF12]: VT already mandates this

27 ~~Action K.5.f Promote the sale and consumption of locally grown food products.~~

Comment [RF13]: Doesn't belong in land Use chapter, maybe Econ Dev