



# Hardwick Community Planning Forum Town of Hardwick, Vermont

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\*This project is funded by the Bylaw Modernization Grant Program administered by the Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development.\*

# •AGENDA•

6:30 p.m. Introductions: Zoning Administrator, Project Consultant

6:35 p.m. Review the Agenda

6:40 p.m. Project Overview: Project goals, funding source, geography and included districts

6:45 p.m. Overview of Vermont HOME Act (Act 047)

7:00 p.m. Hardwick Community Housing Plans and Needs

- Municipal Plan (2019) Housing Goals
- Hardwick Housing Stock
- Gaps in Hardwick Housing Availability

7:15 p.m. Types of Bylaw Changes Under Discussion and Consideration by the Planning Commission

7:45 p.m. Facilitated Community Discussion and Public Input

8:25 p.m. Next Steps and Future Opportunities for Community Input

8:30 p.m. Adjourn



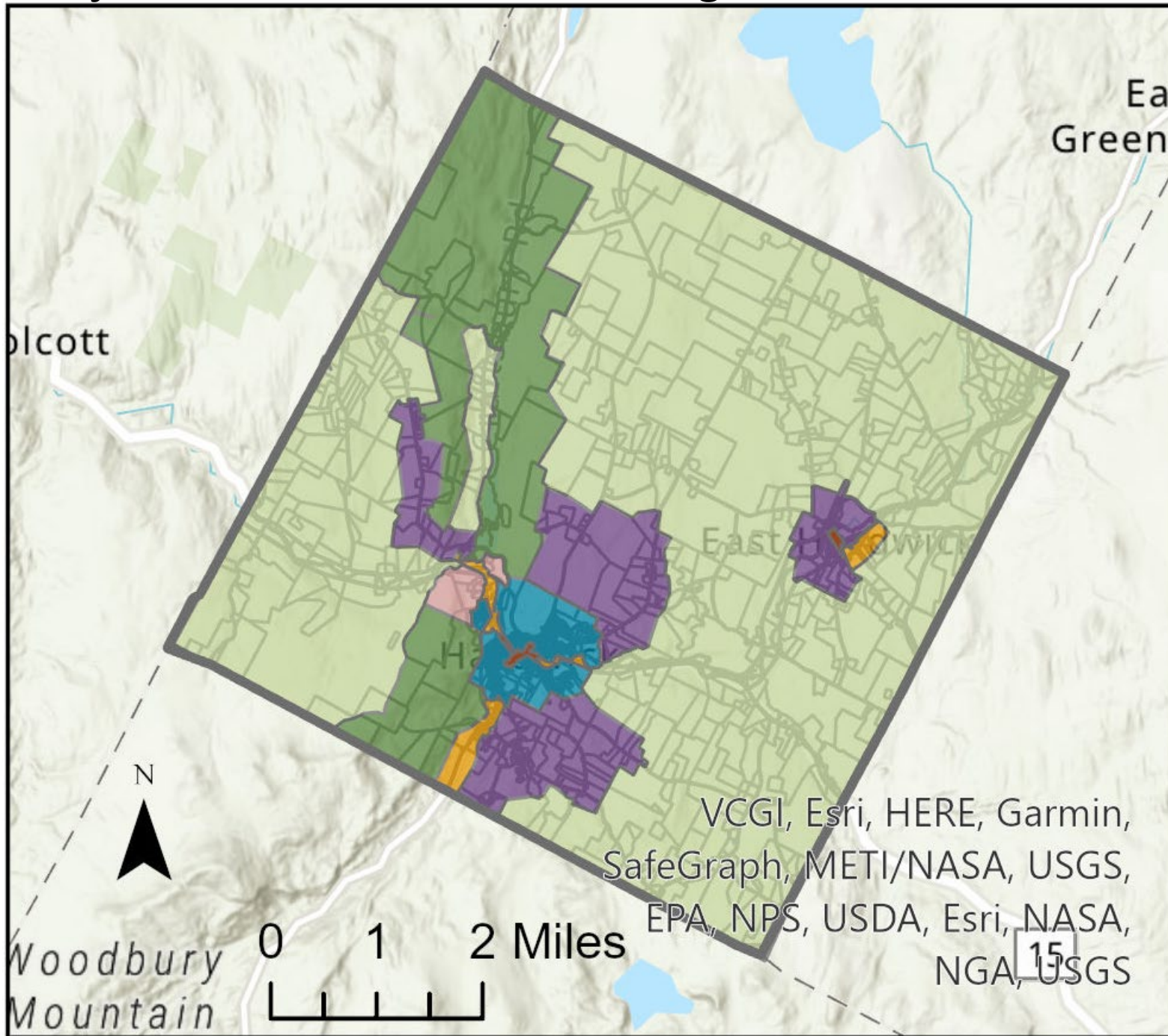
## **Bylaw Modernization**

### **Project Goals:**

The Bylaw Modernization Project will review the Town's unified development bylaws and draft amendments. Those amendments will:

- Reflect "smart growth" principles
- Support the creation of additional housing options
- Target housing development in Hardwick's Designated Downtown and in the Designated Village Center of East Hardwick.

# Project Overview: Hardwick Zoning



## Hardwick Zoning Districts

### DISTRICT

- Central Business
- Compact Residential
- Forest Reserve
- Highway Mixed-Use
- Industrial
- Rural Residential
- Village Neighborhood

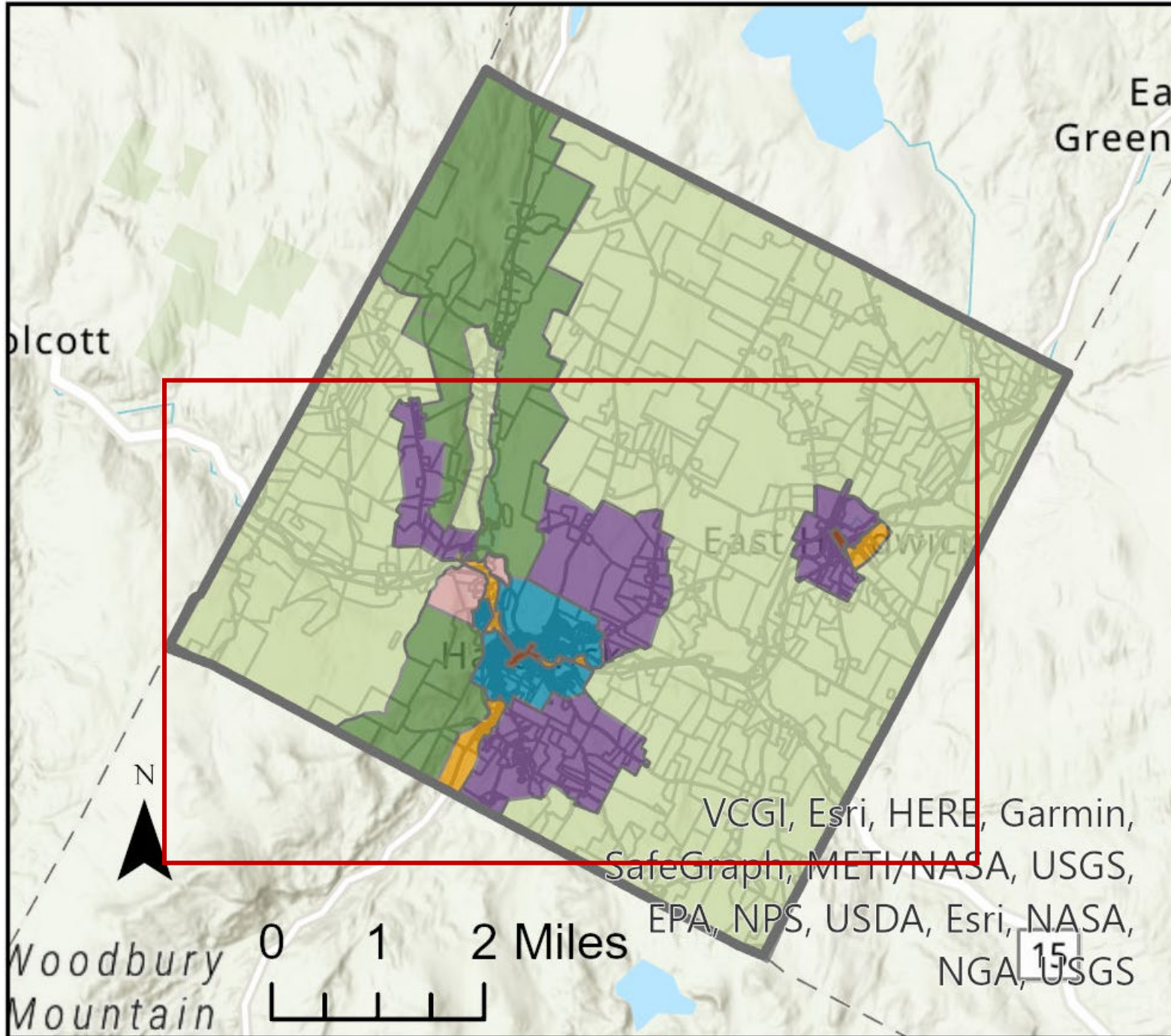
Parcel Boundaries

Hardwick Town Boundary

Hardwick has 7 zoning districts covering 39 square miles and one flood hazard overlay district.

VCGLI, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, USDA, Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS

# Project Overview: Project Area Geography



## Hardwick Zoning Districts

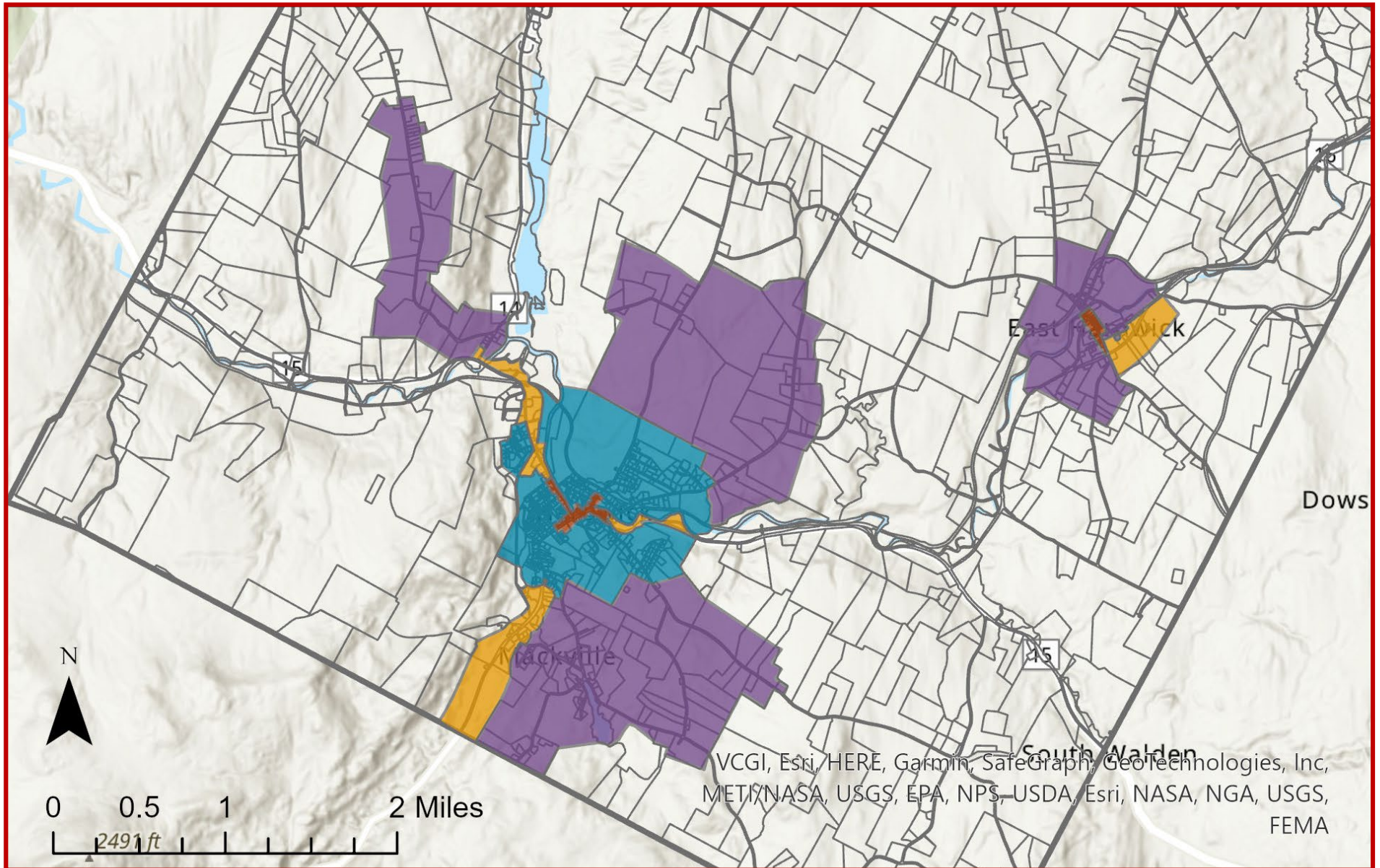
### DISTRICT

- Central Business
- Compact Residential
- Forest Reserve
- Highway Mixed-Use
- Industrial
- Rural Residential
- Village Neighborhood

- Parcel Boundaries
- Hardwick Town Boundary

VCGL, Esri, HERE, Garmin,  
SafeGraph, METI/NASA, USGS,  
EPA, NPS, USDA, Esri, NASA,  
NGA, USGS

# Project Overview: Project Area Zoning Districts



- Central Business
- Compact Residential
- Highway Mixed-Use
- Village Neighborhood

The project area includes 4 of Hardwick's 7 zoning districts and covers approximately 6.5 square miles of Hardwick's total 39 square miles.

## Vermont HOME Act (Act 047)

Enacted on June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023, the HOME Act contains municipal zoning reforms for residential districts served by municipal water and sewer.

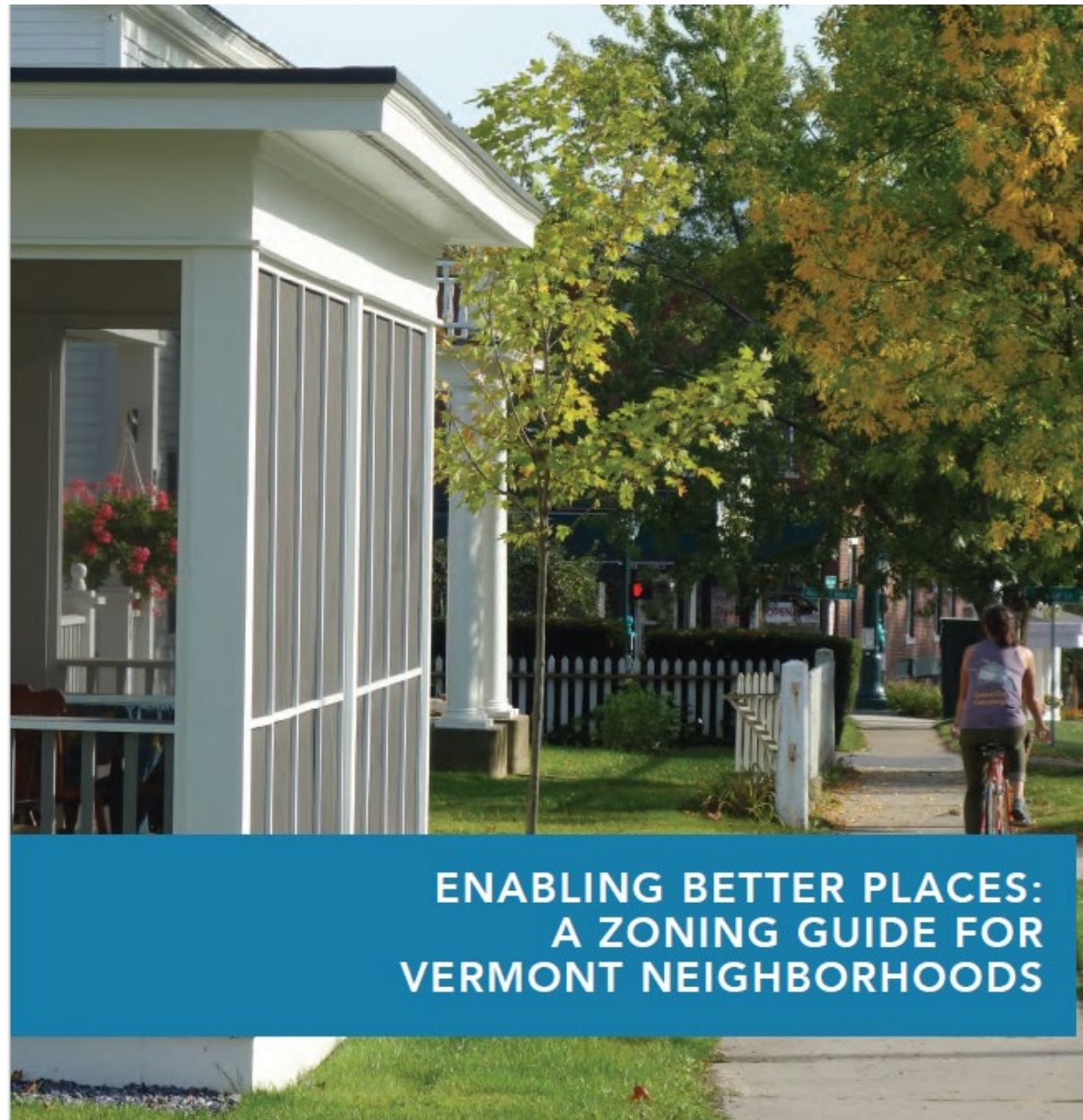
Specific to municipal regulations, the HOME Act:

- Limits number of parking spaces that municipalities can require per residential unit.
- Requires that multi-family buildings are allowable uses in districts where residential is an allowable use.
- Sets building and lot standards for residential units.
- Establishes emergency shelters as a protected public use and places limits on what municipal bylaws can regulate in relation to shelters.
- Allows a 40% density bonus and 1-floor building height bonus for affordable housing development.



## 6 Key Topics for Reform

1. Dimensional Requirements
2. Parking Standards
3. Allowable Uses
4. Street Standards
5. Accessory Dwelling Units
6. Development Review Process



Full document can be accessed online at:  
<https://accd.vermont.gov/content/zoning-for-great-neighborhoods>





2019  
Hardwick  
Municipal  
(Town) Plan:  
Housing  
Goals

## Goals, Policies & Recommendations

### GOAL

- For Hardwick to have safe and affordable housing available in a variety of types for all incomes, ages, and for those with special needs.

### POLICIES

- Multifamily housing is encouraged in our village centers.
- Affordable housing should minimize long-term living costs through high quality design, efficient construction, energy efficiency, and proximity to employment.
- Hardwick supports efforts to assist elderly and disabled residents who wish to remain in their homes, and community-based health care systems that enable elderly and disabled people to remain in the community.

# Hardwick Community Housing Profile (2021)



## Households

Vermont  
262,514

Hardwick  
1,224



## Homeless individuals (One Night Count, 2022)

Vermont  
2,780

County  
139



## Median household income

Vermont  
\$67,674

Hardwick  
\$61,116

Source: Vermont Housing Finance Agency, [housingdata.org](https://housingdata.org), Data displayed for years ending in "0" are counts from the Decennial Census conducted that year. All other data are 5-year rolling estimates ending in 2021 except annual One Night Count.

# Hardwick Community Housing Profile (2021)

## Median primary home sale price

Vermont  
\$309,000

Hardwick  
\$180,000

## Median year homes built

Vermont  
1975

Hardwick  
1963

## Median gross rent



Vermont  
\$1,070

Hardwick  
\$647

# Hardwick Community Housing Profile (2021)

% of households paying more than 50% of income towards housing expenses

Vermont

14%

Hardwick

2%



Median household income of town's residents as percentage of countywide median

Hardwick

110%

% of town's workforce that live in a different town



Hardwick  
73%

Average annual increase in households



Vermont  
0.60%

Hardwick  
0.27%

## Hardwick Housing Gaps –

**Missing Middle** – affordable housing options for households earning 80%-120% of area median income.

**Variety of housing types** – 76% of homes in Hardwick are single family dwellings. There is a gap in single family attached homes (townhouses, row houses) and there are fewer 2, 3 and 4 family dwellings than the state average.

**Newer Homes** – 57% of Hardwick's housing stock was constructed prior to 1970. Newer homes can help with affordability, durability, health and safety. Hardwick's housing stock is substantially older than housing in the state as a whole.

**Smaller bedroom counts** – 63% of homes in Hardwick have 3 or more bedrooms, while 68% of households are comprised of 2 or fewer people. This mismatch can make housing less affordable.

**Flood Safe Housing** – New housing should be located outside flood hazard areas.

# **Bylaw Amendments Under Consideration**

## **6 Key Topics for Reform**

1. Dimensional Requirements
2. Parking Standards
3. Allowable Uses
4. Street Standards
5. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)
6. Development Review Process

# Bylaw Amendments Under Consideration

## Specific Changes

### 1. Dimensional Requirements

- *Match minimum lot size requirement to local patterns.*
  - A. To reduce the Minimum Lot size in the Village Neighborhood (Class 1, 2, & 3) zoning district from 7,500 square feet to 5,000 square feet in the draft version of the Bylaw Modernization Update. This change would meet 86% parcel conformity.
  - B. To reduce the Minimum Lot size in the Compact Residential – Class 1 zoning district from 10,000 square feet to 5,000 square feet in the draft version of the Bylaw Modernization Update. This change will align Compact Residential – Class 1 with the Village Neighborhood minimum lot sizes.
  - C. To reduce the Minimum Lot size in the Compact Residential – Class 2 zoning district from 20,000 square feet to 10,000 square feet in the draft version of the Bylaw Modernization Update.

# Bylaw Amendments Under Consideration

## Specific Changes

### 1. Dimensional Requirements

- *Match minimum lot size requirement to local patterns.*
  - D. To reduce the Minimum Lot size in the Highway Mixed Use (Class 1, 2, 3) zoning district from 20,000 square feet to 5,000 square feet in the draft version of the Bylaw Modernization Update. This change would create 72% parcel conformity.
  - E. To reduce the existing small lot minimum lot size required for development to 5,000 sf to align with the previously proposed minimum lot size changes.



# Bylaw Amendments Under Consideration

## Specific Changes

### 1. Dimensional Requirements

- *Align other dimensional standards with the existing or desired pattern.*
  - A. To reduce the minimum frontage in the Central Business zoning district from 50 feet to 25 feet in the draft version of the Bylaw Modernization Update.
  - B. To reduce the minimum frontage in the Highway Mixed Use zoning district from 100 feet to 65 feet in the draft version of the Bylaw Modernization Update.
  - C. To reduce the minimum frontage in the Village Neighborhood zoning district from 70 feet to 50 feet in the draft version of the Bylaw Modernization Update.

# Bylaw Amendments Under Consideration

## Specific Changes

### 1. Dimensional Requirements

- *Align other dimensional standards with the existing or desired pattern.*
  - D. To reduce the minimum frontage in the Compact Residential – Class 1, Class 2, and Class 3 zoning district to 50 feet in the draft version of the Bylaw Modernization Update.
- *Reduce density cap requirements.*
  - A. To reduce the Minimum Lot Area per unit in the Village Neighborhood – Class 2 & Class 3 zoning districts from 1 per 7,500 square feet to 1 per 3,500 square feet in the draft version of the Bylaw Modernization Update.
  - B. To reduce the Minimum lot area per unit in the Highway Mixed Use – Class 1 zoning district from 1 per 5,000 square feet to 1 per 1,250 square feet in the draft version of the Bylaw Modernization Update. This change would align with the new State regulations (Act 047 – HOME Act).

# Bylaw Amendments Under Consideration

## Specific Changes

### 2. Parking Standards

- *Require no more than 1 parking space per dwelling unit.*

A. To set the parking per residential unit rate for all residential units, regardless of parcel class, in the Town of Hardwick at 1 space per dwelling unit in the draft version of the Bylaw Modernization Update. This change will bring Hardwick into compliance with the new State regulations (Act 047 – HOME Act) and will maintain consistency, clarity, and ease of permitting.

# Bylaw Amendments Under Consideration

## Specific Changes

### 3. Allowable Uses

- *Allow residential uses “by-right” including multifamily dwellings (at least up to 4 units).*

A. To move Single Family Dwelling, Two Family Dwelling and Multi-Family Dwelling from Conditional Use to Allowable Use in the Central Business zoning district in the draft version of the Bylaw Modernization Update.

B. To move Multi-Family Dwelling from Conditional Use to Allowable Use in the Village Neighborhood (Class 1, 2, & 3) in the draft version of the Bylaw Modernization Update.

C. To move Multi-Family Dwelling from Conditional Use to Allowable Use in the Compact Residential zoning district (Class 1, 2, & 3) in the draft version of the Bylaw Modernization Update.

# Bylaw Amendments Under Consideration

## Specific Changes

### 3. Allowable Uses

- *Allow residential uses “by-right” including multifamily dwellings (at least up to 4 units).*

D. To move Multi-Family Dwelling from Conditional Use to Allowable Use in the Highway Mixed Use zoning district (Class 1, 2, & 3) in the draft version of the Bylaw Modernization Update.

### 4. Street Standards

- *Where feasible, implement Complete Streets to support pedestrian and cyclist connectivity.*

### 5. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

- *Hardwick already allows ADUs in all districts being considered.*

### 6. Development Review Process

- *Reduce requirements for conditional-use approval and site plan review and simplify application process.*

## **Bylaw Amendments Under Consideration**

### **Additional Changes to Comply with Vermont HOME Act**

- A. To add an exemption to the maximum building height standard to allow for a bonus story for Affordable housing. This change would align with the new State regulations (Act 047 – HOME Act).
  
- B. To reduce the Minimum lot area per mobile home in a mobile home park from 6,000 sf to 5,000 sf to align with the requirements for other housing types.
  
- C. To remove the requirement that mobile home parks have a 25-foot landscape buffer around the entire perimeter of a mobile home park. This change eliminates the higher standard being required for mobile home parks as opposed to other housing types.

## **Bylaw Amendments Under Consideration**

### **Additional Changes to Comply with Vermont HOME Act**

- D. To remove the requirement that mobile home parks have a minimum of 100 sf of indoor storage for each mobile home in the park. This is a higher standard than required of other housing types and should be removed from the bylaws.
  
- E. To add Temporary Shelters to the Protected Public Uses included in the bylaw. This change would align with the new State regulations (Act 047 – HOME Act).

## **Next Steps and Engagement Opportunities:**

**March 12, 2024:** Planning Commission Meeting – Discussion of draft bylaw amendments

**April 9, 2024:** Planning Commission Meeting – Discussion of revised draft bylaw amendments

**May and June 2024:** Planning Commission Public Hearings on draft bylaw amendments

**September and October 2024:** Select Board Public Hearings on draft bylaw amendments

**December 1, 2024:** Project Complete



# EXAMPLE PARCELS



Central Business District Non-Conforming (South Main Street)  
(Under Minimum Lot Size)



Village Neighborhood District Non-Conforming (Lower Cherry Street)  
(Under Minimum Lot Size)



Village Neighborhood District Non-Conforming (West Church Street)  
(Under Minimum Lot Size)



Compact Residential District Non-Conforming (E. Church Street)  
(Under Minimum Lot Size)



Highway Mixed-Use District Non-Conforming (Wolcott Street)  
(Under Minimum Lot Size)