

Hardwick and the Five Neighborhoods of Flood Impacts 2023 to 2026

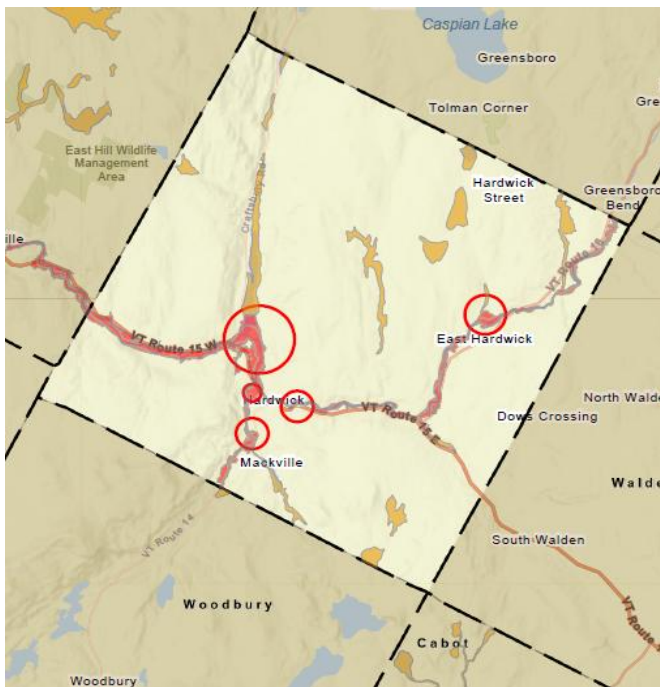
Town of Hardwick – Flood Recovery and Resilience Update Understanding Our Five Neighborhood Approach

As Hardwick continues to recover from the July and December 2023 and July 2024 flood events, the Resilience & Adaptation Office has adopted a five-neighborhood approach to guide response, recovery, and future resilience investments. This method recognizes that different areas of town face different risks and levels of engagement and allows us to better match our time, capacity, and available funding to each area's unique needs.

The five neighborhoods include:

1. **East Hardwick Village Center**
2. **Granite Street Historic District and Cooper Brook Area**
3. **Vermont Route 14 South Corridor**
4. **Wolcott Street and Commercial District**
5. **North Main, Mill Street, and Core Downtown**

This structure helps ensure that less vocal or more dispersed areas are not overlooked and resources are distributed in a way that reflects both the severity of flood impacts and the realities of community communication and capacity. This approach allows the Town to align engineering, land use decisions, emergency response, and community engagement within the same geographic frame, improving coordination while respecting limited municipal capacity.



Town-wide initiatives:

- EDA grant for River Models of the Lamoille River and Cooper Brook. SLR International Incorporated has recently concluded the modeling work and finished the analysis.
- The Hardwick Plan – 2026 has been adopted and includes a Volunteer Amendment with four new local categories Emergency Volunteer Mobilization, Emergency Communications, Emergency Shelter, and the Supply and Support Center. This local emergency management plan provides guidance to each component of the community, including businesses, farms, and residences.
- Neighbor to Neighbor Supply and Support Center is a sustainable and ready-to-go element of emergency response.

- The Town Flood Resilience Website pages at Hardwickvt.gov have been updated and have more information for the public.
- The Hardwick Unified Development Bylaws were updated in September 2024, and the Flood Hazard Area Overlay rules now match the requirements from the State of Vermont and FEMA and are ready for the anticipated update to the Floodplain maps.
- The Hardwick Unified Development Bylaws were also updated in 2026 with the addition of a River Corridor Overlay to further improve hazard mitigation funding matches and advance conservation around erosion-impacted properties.
- Six bridges have engineering under way for permanent replacements/upgrades.
- Eleven damaged roads will have updated culverts by the end of 2026. Additional mitigation projects are ongoing on all roads in town.
- The expanded Emergency Alert notification system (TextMyGov) and VT Alert system have been implemented.
- High-Water Mark Documentation Project documenting July 2023, December 2023, and July 2024 flood elevations across multiple neighborhoods to support public education, engineering calibration, and future mitigation design.
- Community Flood Education Series (Spring 2026) focused on floodplain processes, insurance, mitigation options, and household-scale resilience strategies.
- Emergency Volunteer Training Series (Spring 2026) aligned with the Volunteer Amendment to the Hardwick Plan, including communications, supply center operations, and neighborhood-based response roles.
- Neighborhood-Based Resilience Coordination piloted through Granite Street Neighbors and extended to other impacted areas to strengthen communication, preparedness, and recovery capacity.
- Historic Flood Documentation and Archival Coordination in partnership with the Hardwick Historical Society to support public understanding of long-term flood patterns and risk.
- Coordinated sequencing of buyouts, infrastructure upgrades, and floodplain restoration to avoid isolated investments and maximize cumulative risk reduction.

Neighborhood priorities are sequenced based on flood impact severity, readiness of property owners, availability of matching funds, and the Town's capacity to advance projects responsibly and effectively.

Neighborhood Specific Initiatives

Each neighborhood section reflects a different mix of physical risk, community structure, and implementation readiness, requiring tailored strategies rather than uniform solutions.

1. Downtown Hardwick (Lamoille River)

**Hardwick Downtown Partnership*

Flood Resiliency Projects in Process:

- Mill Street restoration project
- EWP 2024 – 2 slope stabilization projects
- Scoping study for the Downtown section. CDBG-DR funding received, Stone Environmental hired.
- 3 buyouts (2 complete – one demolished)
- Restoration of the Retaining Wall next to the Village Diner (FEMA) – in process with the pedestrian bridge installation.

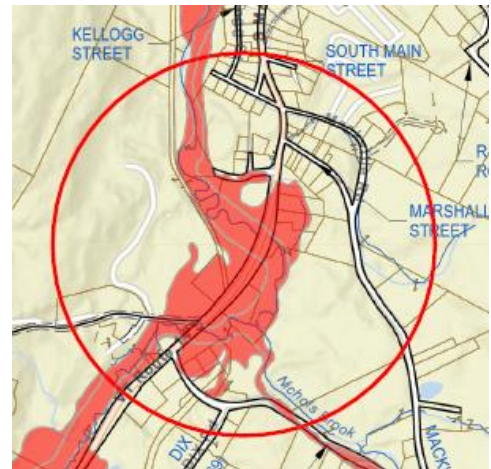


2. Route 14 – (Cooper Brook)

** No formal neighborhood organization currently identified*

Flood Resiliency Projects in Process:

- 2 buyouts completed and demolished.
- Restoration project after two buyouts finalized (NRCD)
- 1 EWP 2024
- 2 Lift Stations for the WWTF (FEMA) will be upgraded

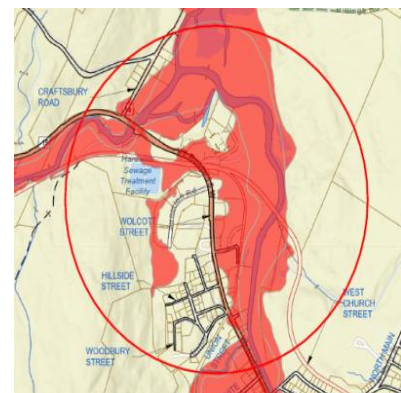


3. Wolcott Street Commercial (Lamoille River)

**Hardwick Business Community*

Flood Resiliency Projects in Process:

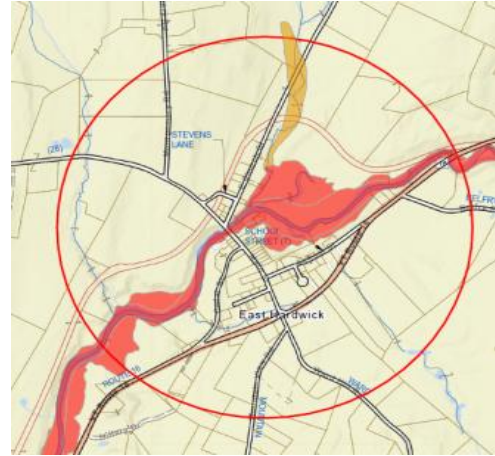
- Wastewater Treatment Facility Plant upgrades or restoration (FEMA)
- Jackson Dam Feasibility Study/Engineering
- 6 buyouts (Sawmill Park - Future concept) – 3 purchased and demolished.
- LVRT Embankment identified (EDA)
- Lamoille River Floodplain Restoration. CDBG-DR funding received. SLR International hired.



4. East Hardwick (Lamoille River)

**East Hardwick Neighborhood Organization*
Flood Resiliency Projects in Process:

- Better Connections Stormwater Overview
- 2 FRCF buyouts completed – demolition to follow.
- EWP 2023 – 1 historic property completed
- 1 FRCF buyout completed in 2023-2024
- School Street Bank Stabilization (FEMA funded)



5. Granite Street Historic District (Cooper Brook and Lamoille River)

**Granite Street Neighbors & the Center for An Agricultural Economy*
Flood Resiliency Projects in Process:

- Municipal Planning Grant in process – flood mitigation and flood resiliency planning with SLR International.
- Fire Station removal from the Floodplain (FEMA & MTAP)
- Future mitigation project at the Fire Station site.
- Utility Elevation funds received – CRDMF
- High-Water Mark Project
- Atkins Neighborhood Conversations (Summer 2026)
- Neighborhood-Based Volunteer Training coordinated with the Town’s Emergency Management framework and local volunteer organizations.



Lessons learned in each neighborhood are intentionally carried forward to inform work in other areas, allowing the Town to adapt its approach over time rather than repeating one-size-fits-all solutions.

Together, these town-wide and neighborhood-specific efforts reflect Hardwick’s commitment to pairing technical mitigation with community-based resilience, ensuring that recovery investments strengthen both physical systems and social capacity.