

Granite Street Historic District Flood and Community Resilience Plan

*Building a Safer, Stronger, & More Resilient
Neighborhood*

DRAFT

Created Collaboratively by:
Kristen Leahy, Town of Hardwick
Kate O'Neill, The Center for an Agricultural Economy
Andrea Phelps, Granite Street Neighbors
SLR Consulting
Katt Tolman, The Center for an Agricultural Economy

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Granite Street Historic District Flood and Community Resilience Plan

Executive Summary

The Granite Street Historic District Flood and Community Resilience Plan was developed to help residents, local officials, and community partners reduce flood risk while preserving one of Hardwick's neighborhoods. Repeated flooding in 2023 and 2024 demonstrated that traditional recovery efforts alone are not enough to address the increasing frequency and severity of flood events. This plan provides a community-driven framework for improving preparedness, protecting homes and infrastructure, supporting recovery, and guiding future resilience investments.

The Granite Street Historic District is located between Cooper Brook and the Lamoille River and includes approximately 51 residences, several businesses along Wolcott Street, and Atkins Field, an important community gathering space. The district's historic homes, walkable character, and strong social connections are among its greatest strengths. At the same time, its location within the floodplain makes it vulnerable to flooding from multiple sources, including Cooper Brook, backwater from the Lamoille River, localized stormwater issues, groundwater, and aging drainage infrastructure.

This planning effort combined technical analysis with extensive community engagement to better understand neighborhood needs and identify practical solutions. Thirty households, representing approximately 59 percent of the district's 51 residences, participated in a detailed survey, while additional residents contributed through community meetings, workshops, neighborhood conversations, and Steering Committee discussions. Residents consistently expressed a strong desire to remain in the district while pursuing practical actions that reduce flood risk and improve preparedness.

The planning process confirmed that no single project will eliminate flood risk within the Granite Street Historic District. Instead, resilience will be achieved through a layered approach that combines property-level mitigation, neighborhood infrastructure improvements, emergency preparedness, and larger watershed-scale flood mitigation projects. Residents identified protecting homes and utilities, improving communication, expanding emergency preparedness, strengthening neighborhood connections, and maintaining reliable electrical service as among their highest priorities.

The plan identifies three overarching resilience goals: preparing for future disasters through improved communication and preparedness; protecting homes, utilities, and infrastructure through targeted mitigation projects; and strengthening recovery systems while supporting long-term adaptation. Several resilience initiatives have already been implemented or are actively advancing, including a residential utility elevation program, trained emergency communications volunteers at the town level, an operational Supply and Support Center, a portable neighborhood warning siren, preparedness education, and continued community engagement through the neighborhood.

Priority capital projects identified through the planning process include the Spring Street Extension floodplain restoration concept, Granite Street culvert improvements and flood benching, neighborhood stormwater improvements, and continued support for Lamoille River watershed projects, including Jackson Dam, LVRT embankment modifications, Sawmill Park floodplain restoration, and confluence restoration. Together, these projects provide multiple layers of flood risk reduction by addressing both neighborhood conditions and the broader watershed that influences flooding throughout Hardwick.

This plan is intended to serve as a practical implementation guide rather than a static planning document. It establishes a framework for prioritizing projects, pursuing funding opportunities, coordinating partners, and measuring progress over time. By combining technical expertise with local knowledge and community leadership, the Granite Street Historic District Flood and Community Resilience Plan provides a roadmap for building a safer, stronger, and more resilient neighborhood while preserving the qualities that make the district an important part of Hardwick.

Vision Statement

The Granite Street Historic District is a connected, informed, and resilient community that works together to reduce flood impacts, support neighbors during emergencies, protect homes and infrastructure, maintain critical services, and strengthen long-term quality of life.

1. Introduction

Purpose of the Plan

The Granite Street Historic District Flood and Community Resilience Plan was developed to help the Town of Hardwick, neighborhood residents, and community partners better prepare for, respond to, recover from, and adapt to future flooding. Rather than focusing on a single project or hazard, the plan provides a comprehensive framework for reducing flood risk through a combination of property-level mitigation, neighborhood infrastructure improvements, emergency preparedness, and watershed-scale flood resilience initiatives.

The plan is intended to serve as a practical implementation guide that identifies priorities, supports funding opportunities, and coordinates future investments while preserving the historic character, community connections, and quality of life that define the Granite Street Historic District. It also complements the Town of Hardwick's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) and The Hardwick Plan (Local Emergency Management Plan). As projects advance and neighborhood priorities evolve, relevant actions identified through this planning process can be incorporated into future updates of those plans, helping to maintain continuity between neighborhood resilience planning, long-term hazard mitigation, emergency preparedness, and future funding opportunities

Why the Granite Street Historic District Was Selected

The Granite Street Historic District has experienced repeated flooding from Cooper Brook, the Lamoille River, groundwater, and localized drainage issues. Flood events in 2023 and 2024 caused significant impacts to homes, transportation, utilities, and daily life, highlighting both the neighborhood's vulnerability and its importance to the broader community.

The district was selected because of its combination of historic resources, residential neighborhoods, proximity to critical commercial areas, and repeated flood impacts. In addition to the challenges posed by flooding, the neighborhood demonstrated exceptional resident engagement and a strong commitment to identifying practical, community-supported solutions that reduce future risk while allowing residents to remain in their homes.

Relationship to Hardwick's Broader Recovery and Resilience Efforts

The Granite Street Historic District is one component of Hardwick's broader strategy to increase community resilience following repeated flood disasters. The recommendations contained in this plan complement numerous ongoing municipal initiatives, including floodplain restoration, emergency management improvements, utility protection, housing recovery, infrastructure investments, and watershed-scale flood mitigation projects throughout the Lamoille River watershed.

Recognizing that neighborhood resilience depends upon both local actions and regional solutions, this plan emphasizes coordination with larger projects such as the Jackson Dam feasibility study, LVRT embankment modifications, floodplain restoration initiatives, and other investments intended to reduce flood risk throughout the watershed.

Municipal Planning Grant Overview

Development of this plan was supported through a Vermont Municipal Planning Grant (MPG). The project combined technical engineering analysis with extensive community engagement to identify practical, implementation-ready strategies for reducing flood risk within the Granite Street Historic District.

The planning process evaluated existing flood hazards, neighborhood vulnerabilities, community assets, and resident priorities while identifying capital projects and resilience strategies that can guide future engineering, funding, and implementation efforts.

Planning Process and Community Engagement

The planning process combined technical expertise with local knowledge to ensure that recommendations reflected both engineering analysis and community priorities.

Technical work included flood modeling, evaluation of neighborhood drainage and flood hazards, and identification of potential mitigation projects. Community engagement included a neighborhood survey, public meetings, workshops, Steering Committee discussions, community conversations, and ongoing collaboration with residents throughout the planning process.

Thirty households, representing approximately 59 percent of the district's residences, participated in the neighborhood survey, providing valuable insight into flood experiences, preparedness, community strengths, and future priorities. Additional input gathered throughout the planning process helped shape the recommendations contained in this plan.

Together, technical analysis and community engagement created a neighborhood resilience strategy that reflects both the physical challenges facing the Granite Street Historic District and the strengths of the people who call it home.

2. Survey Findings: Understanding Neighborhood Resilience

Resident engagement was the foundation of the Granite Street Historic District Flood and Community Resilience Plan. While engineering analyses identified how flooding occurs and evaluated potential mitigation projects, the resident survey provided critical insight into how flooding affects daily life, household preparedness, and neighborhood priorities.

The survey was designed to better understand residents' experiences with flooding, identify existing community strengths, and guide recommendations that reflect the needs and values of those who live in the neighborhood. The findings presented in this section are reinforced by input gathered through community meals, public meetings, workshops, Steering Committee discussions, and neighborhood conversations conducted throughout the planning process.

Survey Participation

Thirty households, representing approximately 59 percent of the 51 residences within the Granite Street Historic District, participated in the neighborhood survey. Additional residents contributed through community meals, neighborhood meetings, workshops, public events, and ongoing conversations with members of the Steering Committee.

Together, these engagement efforts provided broad community input that shaped the recommendations throughout this plan.

A Neighborhood with Deep Roots

The survey found that the Granite Street Historic District is a stable neighborhood with long-term residents who have strong connections to their homes and community. Nearly three quarters of respondents have lived in the neighborhood for more than six years, and more than half have lived there for over a decade.

Residents consistently expressed a desire to remain in the neighborhood while reducing flood risk and protecting the homes and relationships they have built over many years.

Flooding is a Shared Experience

Flooding is a defining experience for many neighborhood residents. Nearly nine out of ten survey respondents reported experiencing flooding, with many describing multiple flood events over several decades.

Residents identified flooding from Cooper Brook, the Lamoille River, groundwater, stormwater, and neighborhood drainage problems, reinforcing that flood risk results from multiple interacting conditions rather than a single source.

Residents Want Practical Mitigation

Residents expressed strong support for practical, achievable actions that help protect existing homes rather than relocation.

The highest priorities identified through the survey included:

- Learning about grant and funding opportunities
- Home flood risk assessments
- Backup generators
- Utility elevation
- Backflow prevention
- Basement improvements

These findings support the plan's emphasis on property-level mitigation, infrastructure improvements, and continued assistance for homeowners seeking to reduce future flood damage.

Emergency Preparedness Can Be Strengthened

The survey revealed a neighborhood with strong social connections and a willingness to help one another during emergencies.

Most respondents indicated they would assist neighbors during a flood, and the majority reported knowing where they would go during an emergency. However, relatively few households reported having a formal emergency preparedness plan.

These findings suggest that while community capacity is already strong, additional preparedness education and neighborhood planning can further improve resilience.

Communication Matters

Residents rely on multiple sources of information before and during flood events, including TextMyGov, Town emails and text messages, social media, television, and communication with neighbors.

The survey also identified opportunities to increase enrollment in emergency notification systems and continue improving communication before, during, and after emergencies.

Special Considerations

Survey responses identified households with mobility limitations, electricity-dependent medical equipment or refrigerated medications, and pets requiring evacuation planning.

These findings reinforce the importance of reliable emergency communications, neighborhood wellness checks, maintaining electrical service whenever possible, and ensuring emergency response planning reflects the diverse needs of residents.

What Residents Value Most

While flood mitigation was a central topic throughout the survey, residents also emphasized the qualities that make the Granite Street Historic District a desirable place to live.

Recurring themes included:

- Remaining in the neighborhood
- Better communication before and during flood events
- Practical education and preparedness
- Financial assistance for home improvements
- Strong neighborhood relationships
- Continued municipal investment in flood mitigation
- Preserving community connections while reducing flood risk

These priorities provided the foundation for the resilience goals and implementation strategies presented in this plan.

Voices from the Neighborhood

The survey also captured the perspectives of residents in their own words. Several comments reflect the values and priorities that emerged throughout the planning process.

"Building and strengthening community ties before the next (inevitable) flood is wise and forward thinking."

"The Town has taken a couple of suggestions and implemented them. They have been very responsive."

"Don't want to flood, don't want to lose home."

"Thank you. Thank you. Thank you."

These comments illustrate that residents are not simply seeking protection from future floods - they are committed to preserving the neighborhood, strengthening community relationships, and working together to build long-term resilience.

Survey Findings Summary

Theme	Key Finding
Participation	30 households participated (approximately 59% of all residences)
Neighborhood Stability	Nearly 80% of respondents have lived in the neighborhood for more than six years.
Flood Experience	Nearly 90% of respondents have experienced flooding.
Home Protection	Residents identified grants, home assessments, utility elevation, generators, and property-level mitigation as top priorities.
Emergency Preparedness	Strong willingness to help neighbors, with opportunities to strengthen household preparedness planning.
Communication	Residents support expanding emergency notifications and improving communication before and during flood events.
Community Strength	Residents expressed a strong desire to remain in the Granite Street Historic District while reducing future flood risk through practical, community-supported solutions.

3. The Granite Street Historic District Neighborhood

The Granite Street Historic District is one of Hardwick's older residential neighborhoods and reflects the community's industrial heritage, architectural character, and enduring sense of place. Located between Cooper Brook and the Lamoille River, the district developed during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as Hardwick grew into a regional center for the granite industry. Today, the neighborhood remains an important part of the community, combining historic homes, local businesses, public spaces, and strong neighborhood connections.



Neighborhood History and Development

Development of the Granite Street Historic District closely followed the expansion of Hardwick's granite industry. Workers and their families settled in the area because of its proximity to local quarries, manufacturing facilities, and the village center. Many of the homes that define the

neighborhood today were constructed during this period and continue to contribute to the district's historic character.

Over time, the neighborhood has evolved while maintaining its predominantly residential nature. Its compact development pattern, walkable streets, mature trees, and proximity to community services continue to make it a desirable place to live.

Granite Industry Legacy

The neighborhood's history is closely tied to Hardwick's reputation as one of Vermont's historic granite communities. The homes, streetscapes, and overall layout of the district reflect this legacy and contribute to the community's identity. Today, the Granite Street Historic District serves not only as a reminder of Hardwick's industrial past but also as an active residential neighborhood that continues to adapt to changing community needs.

Community Characteristics

The Granite Street Historic District consists primarily of owner-occupied and rental single-family homes with several multifamily residences interspersed throughout the neighborhood. The district is bordered by Cooper Brook to the east, the Lamoille River and Wolcott Street to the north, and South Main Street to the west, and extends south toward Atkins Field and adjacent residential areas.

In addition to its residential character, the neighborhood benefits from its proximity to the Wolcott Street commercial corridor, local parks, schools, community facilities, and the village center. Residents can access many daily services on foot, contributing to the neighborhood's strong sense of community and connectivity.

Housing and Population

The district contains approximately 51 residential properties representing a diverse mix of household sizes, ages, incomes, and housing types. Many homes were constructed before modern floodplain management practices and current building standards, making them particularly susceptible to flooding and utility damage.

Despite repeated flood events, survey responses demonstrate that residents remain strongly committed to the neighborhood. Most respondents have lived in the district for many years and



expressed a clear desire to remain in their homes while pursuing practical measures that reduce flood risk and improve resilience.

Existing Strengths

Throughout the planning process, residents consistently emphasized that the neighborhood's greatest strength is its people. Neighbors know one another, share information, aid during emergencies, and actively participate in community events and improvement efforts.

Additional neighborhood strengths include:

- Strong neighborhood identity
- Historic character
- Walkability
- Access to community services
- Active resident engagement
- Local leadership
- A culture of volunteerism and mutual assistance

These strengths provide an important foundation for future resilience efforts.

Community Assets

The Granite Street Historic District benefits from numerous public facilities, community organizations, and gathering places that contribute to neighborhood resilience.

Key assets include:

- Jeudevine Memorial Library
- Buffalo Mountain Forest
- Memorial Building
- Police and Senior Center
- Hazen Union School
- Center for an Agricultural Economy
- Atkins Field, including the farmers market pavilion and community gathering space
- Wolcott Street businesses
- Granite Street Neighbors

Together, these assets support daily life while also serving important roles during emergencies, recovery efforts, community outreach, and neighborhood events.

What Residents Value About Living Here

Resident engagement revealed that people value the Granite Street Historic District for much more than its historic buildings or convenient location. Survey responses consistently highlighted the importance of neighborhood relationships, walkability, access to community resources, and the shared commitment to helping one another during difficult times.



Many residents described the district as a place where neighbors know one another, families have lived for generations, and community members work together to solve problems. While reducing flood risk is a primary goal of this plan, residents also emphasized the importance of preserving the neighborhood's historic character, sense of belonging, and quality of life.

These qualities represent the foundation upon which future resilience efforts will build. The recommendations presented in this plan are intended not only to reduce flood impacts but also to strengthen the characteristics that make the Granite Street Historic District a vibrant and valued part of the Town of Hardwick.

4. Flood Risks and Challenges



The Granite Street Historic District has experienced repeated flooding for generations. While flooding is not new to the neighborhood, the floods of 2023 and 2024 demonstrated the complexity of the district's flood risk. Its location between Cooper Brook and the Lamoille River exposes residents to multiple sources of flooding that can occur simultaneously, increasing both the extent of damage and the difficulty of emergency response and recovery.

Flood risk is not the same throughout Hardwick. In some locations, high-velocity flows and riverbank erosion can make protecting structures in place difficult or infeasible over the long term. Within much of the Granite Street Historic District, recent damages have also resulted from inundation, backwater, groundwater, and drainage problems. These conditions create opportunities for property-level mitigation, utility protection, drainage improvements, floodplain restoration, and other measures that can reduce future damage while supporting residents who want to remain in the neighborhood. Individual properties may face different levels and types of risk and should continue to be evaluated accordingly.

No single project can eliminate flood risk within the district. Long-term resilience will require coordinated actions at the property, neighborhood, and watershed scales.



Flood History and Recent Flood Events

Flooding has long shaped the history of the Granite Street Historic District, but the floods of July 2023 and July 2024 underscored the neighborhood's vulnerability. Homes, businesses, roads, and utilities were damaged as floodwaters entered buildings, transportation routes became impassable, and residents were temporarily isolated from essential services.



These recent disasters reinforced the need to move beyond recovery toward long-term resilience by identifying practical measures that reduce future flood impacts while preserving the neighborhood's historic character and quality of life.

Cooper Brook Flooding

Cooper Brook is one of the primary sources of flooding within the Granite Street Historic District. During intense rainfall, the brook rises rapidly, overtops its banks, and inundates nearby streets and properties. Because Cooper Brook responds quickly to localized storm events,

flooding can occur with little warning, making timely communication and emergency preparedness especially important.

Recent hydraulic modeling has improved understanding of how floodwaters move through the neighborhood and has identified opportunities to reduce localized flooding through targeted infrastructure improvements and floodplain restoration.

Lamoille River Flooding

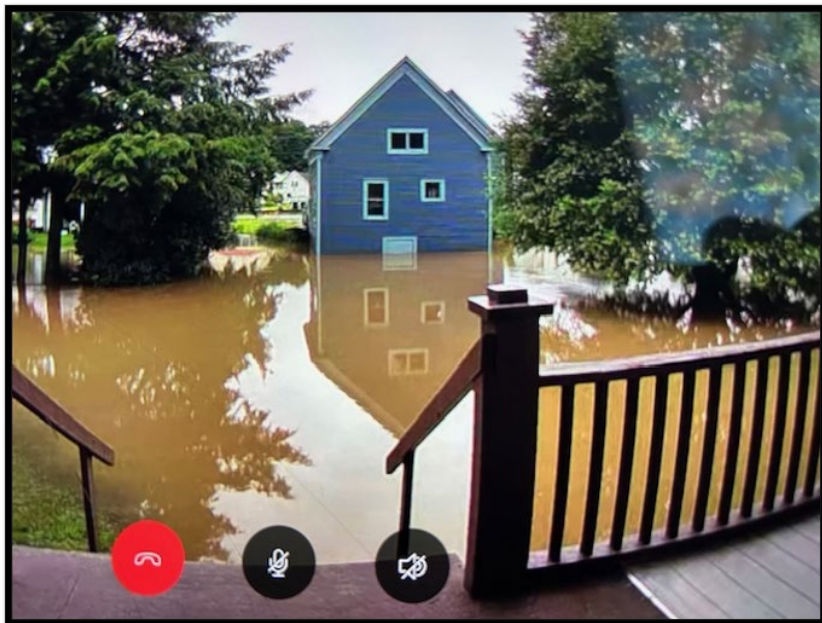
Flooding from the Lamoille River presents a different but equally significant challenge. During major flood events, elevated river levels create backwater conditions that reduce the ability of Cooper Brook and local drainage systems to discharge effectively. As a result, water remains within the neighborhood for longer periods and contributes to more extensive flooding.

Flood risk within the Granite Street Historic District is therefore influenced not only by conditions within the neighborhood but also by processes occurring throughout the broader Lamoille River watershed.

Stormwater and Drainage Concerns

In addition to river flooding, residents identified localized drainage problems and stormwater management as recurring concerns. Heavy rainfall can overwhelm existing drainage infrastructure, resulting in ponding, basement flooding, and localized street flooding even during events that do not produce significant river flooding.





Addressing these localized issues can reduce property damage, improve access, and complement larger watershed-scale flood mitigation efforts.

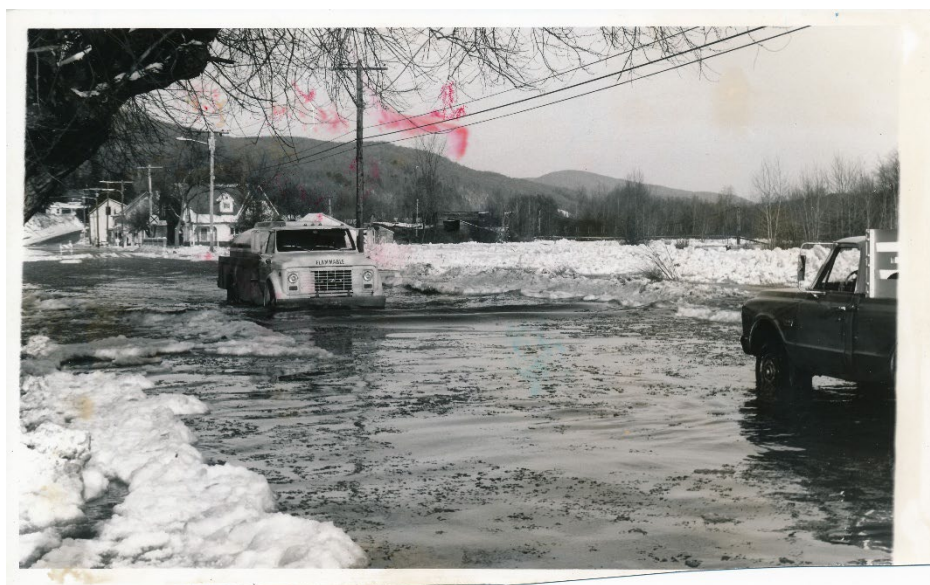
Existing stormwater infrastructure requires ongoing maintenance to function as intended. The bioretention area located at the intersection of Cottage Street and Lower Cherry Street, identified in the Town's 2018 Stormwater Master Plan, presents an opportunity for near-term improvements through restoration and routine maintenance. The planning process also identified the

need for a comprehensive neighborhood stormwater assessment to guide future investments and inform updates to the Town's Stormwater Master Plan.

Natural features also contribute to the neighborhood's flood resilience. Cooper Brook, the Lamoille River floodplain, wetlands, and nearby open spaces can provide important flood storage and conveyance functions. Protecting and restoring these natural functions should be considered alongside improvements to roads, culverts, drainage systems, and individual properties as future projects are developed.

Transportation and Access Challenges

Flooding affects more than homes and businesses - it also disrupts transportation and emergency access. During major flood events, portions of the neighborhood may become isolated as roads are overtopped or closed, limiting access for emergency responders and making it difficult for residents to reach essential services.



Maintaining safe transportation routes and improving emergency communications are important components of the neighborhood's resilience strategy.

Utility Vulnerabilities

Many homes within the Granite Street Historic District contain furnaces, water heaters, electrical panels, and other critical utilities located in basements or other flood-prone areas. Flood damage to these systems often results in extended displacement, costly repairs, and delayed recovery even after floodwaters recede.



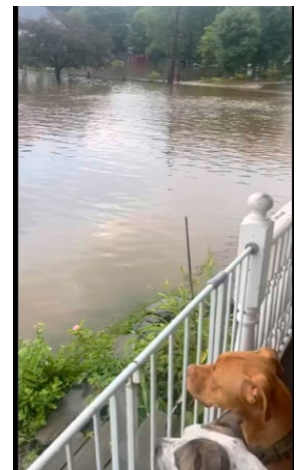
Reliable electrical service is also a significant concern. Many households rely on electrically powered sump pumps to reduce basement flooding, making prolonged power outages a secondary hazard during flood events. Protecting utilities and improving electrical resilience are therefore among the highest priorities identified by residents.

Impacts on Homes and Residents

Flooding affects every aspect of neighborhood life. In addition to physical damage to homes and infrastructure, flood events disrupt employment, transportation, schools, businesses, healthcare access, and daily routines. Recovery often extends well beyond the initial disaster as residents navigate

repairs, insurance claims, financial challenges, and emotional stress.

Survey responses demonstrated that residents remain deeply committed to the neighborhood despite these repeated challenges. Residents consistently expressed a desire to remain in their homes and support for practical actions that reduce flood risk while preserving the neighborhood's historic character



and strong community connections.

Future Climate Considerations

Climate projections indicate that Vermont is likely to experience more frequent heavy precipitation events and greater variability in weather patterns, increasing the potential for future flooding. These changing conditions reinforce the need to move beyond disaster recovery toward proactive resilience planning.

The recommendations contained in this plan recognize that future resilience will require both neighborhood-scale investments and broader watershed initiatives. By combining property-level mitigation, infrastructure improvements, emergency preparedness, and floodplain restoration, the Granite Street Historic District can reduce future flood impacts while strengthening its ability to prepare for, respond to, recover from, and adapt to changing conditions.

- SLR graphics and modeling figures

5. Community Assets, Preparedness, and Capacity

Resilience is shaped not only by the hazards a community faces, but also by the people, organizations, facilities, and preparedness systems that help residents anticipate, respond to, and recover from disasters. Throughout the planning process, residents consistently identified the Granite Street Historic District's greatest strength as its sense of community. Strong neighborhood connections, active local organizations, growing emergency management capacity, and a culture of volunteerism provide a solid foundation for future resilience efforts.

The assets described in this chapter are as important to the neighborhood's resilience as physical infrastructure. Together, they strengthen the community's ability to prepare for future flood events, support one another during emergencies, and recover more quickly after disasters.

Neighborhood Connections

The Granite Street Historic District benefits from a strong network of neighbors who routinely support one another during emergencies and throughout the recovery process. During recent flood events, residents shared information, checked on vulnerable neighbors, assisted with cleanup, and connected households with available resources.

Residents' willingness to assist one another creates opportunities to strengthen neighborhood preparedness beyond emergency response. Residents can support emergency communications, preparedness outreach, wellness checks, volunteer cleanup and recovery efforts, and neighborhood projects. Some property-level mitigation activities may also benefit from coordinated education, technical assistance, or group purchasing opportunities that make improvements more accessible to participating households.

The name Granite Street



Neighbors has been used throughout this planning process to refer collectively to residents of the neighborhood. It is not a formal organization but reflects the connections among residents and provides a shared identity for neighborhood communication, engagement, and resilience efforts. Together with the informal support networks that already exist, these relationships represent one of the neighborhood's most valuable resilience assets.



Community Facilities

Several public facilities and community organizations located within or adjacent to the district contribute to neighborhood resilience by providing gathering spaces, information, services, and emergency support.

Key community assets include:

- Jeudevine Memorial Library
- Memorial Building
- Buffalo Mountain Town Forest
- Police and Senior Center
- Hazen Union School
- Center for an Agricultural Economy

- Atkins Field, including the farmers market pavilion and community gathering space

These facilities support everyday community life while also serving important roles during emergencies through information sharing, community outreach, food access, volunteer coordination, and recovery activities.

Emergency Preparedness

The flood disasters of 2023 and 2024 highlighted the importance of investing not only in infrastructure, but also in preparedness. Since those events, the Town of Hardwick has significantly expanded its emergency management capabilities while working with residents and community partners to improve communication, coordination, and disaster readiness.

Current preparedness initiatives include:

- Emergency Operations Center
- Emergency Shelter
- Supply and Support Center
- Emergency Communications Volunteers
- Portable neighborhood warning siren for the Granite Street Historic District
- Emergency notification systems, including TextMyGov and VT-Alert
- Household preparedness education
- Community Go Bag workshops
- Muck and Gut volunteer training
- Ongoing preparedness outreach and resource sharing



These initiatives help ensure that residents receive timely information, have access to emergency resources, and are better prepared before, during, and after flood events. Together, they strengthen the neighborhood's capacity to respond effectively while reducing reliance on outside assistance during the critical early stages of a disaster.

Local Knowledge and Leadership

Residents possess extensive knowledge of neighborhood flooding patterns, drainage concerns, transportation challenges, and community needs developed through decades of lived experience. This local knowledge complements technical engineering analyses and provides valuable insight into how flooding affects daily life within the district.

The planning process also highlighted the importance of local leadership and collaboration. Residents, municipal staff, the Steering Committee, nonprofit organizations, emergency management volunteers, and community partners have worked together to identify priorities, develop practical solutions, and advance implementation of resilience projects.

The experiences gained through recent flood events have strengthened relationships throughout the neighborhood and demonstrated that resilience depends not only on infrastructure improvements but also on informed residents, trusted partnerships, and an engaged community.

Building on Existing Strengths

The Granite Street Historic District is not starting from scratch. The neighborhood already possesses many of the relationships, facilities, volunteer networks, and preparedness systems needed to strengthen resilience. The recommendations presented in the following chapters build upon these existing assets, focusing on expanding preparedness, protecting homes and infrastructure, improving communication, and advancing projects that reduce flood risk over time.



6. Community Vision

The Granite Street Historic District planning process was built upon a simple question: **What would a more resilient neighborhood look like?** Through surveys, community meetings, workshops, and conversations with residents, a clear vision emerged. While flood mitigation was an important focus, residents consistently emphasized that resilience is about more than reducing floodwaters. It is also about protecting homes, maintaining essential services, strengthening community relationships, and ensuring that people can continue to live safely in the neighborhood they value.

The following themes emerged consistently throughout the planning process and provide the foundation for the recommendations contained in this plan.

What We Heard

Safety

Residents want to feel safe before, during, and after flood events. This includes reducing flood risks, improving emergency response, maintaining safe evacuation routes, and ensuring that vulnerable residents receive assistance when needed.

Communication

Timely, accurate, and reliable communication was identified as one of the neighborhood's highest priorities. Residents expressed support for expanding emergency notifications, strengthening neighborhood communication networks, and providing clear information before, during, and after flood events.

Property Protection

Residents overwhelmingly expressed a desire to remain in the Granite Street Historic District while reducing damage to their homes. Practical solutions such as utility elevation, home flood assessments, drainage improvements, and financial assistance for mitigation projects were consistently identified as priorities.

Reliable Utilities and Power



Maintaining electrical service emerged as a critical concern throughout the planning process. Many homes rely on sump pumps to reduce basement flooding, making power outages a significant secondary hazard during flood events. Residents also emphasized the importance of protecting furnaces, water heaters, electrical systems, and other critical utilities from flood damage.

Neighborhood Connections

One of the neighborhood's greatest strengths is its people. Residents consistently described neighbors helping neighbors before, during, and after flood events. Preserving and strengthening these relationships was viewed as an essential component of long-term resilience.

Recovery Support

Residents recognized that recovery continues long after floodwaters recede. Access to information, volunteers, financial assistance, municipal support, and community organizations all contribute to helping residents recover more quickly and reduce future losses.

Future Investments

Residents expressed strong support for continued investment in projects that reduce flood risk while preserving the neighborhood's historic character and quality of life. Participants recognized that resilience will require both neighborhood-scale improvements and larger watershed projects that address flooding throughout the Lamoille River system.

Vision Statement

The Granite Street Historic District is a connected, informed, and resilient community that works together to reduce flood impacts, support neighbors during emergencies, protect homes and infrastructure, maintain critical services, and strengthen long-term quality of life.

This vision recognizes that resilience is not achieved through a single project or investment. It is built over time through collaboration, preparedness, practical mitigation, informed decision-making, and continued investment in both the neighborhood and the broader watershed. The recommendations presented in the following chapters are intended to transform this shared vision into practical actions that strengthen the Granite Street Historic District for generations to come.

7. Resilience Strategy

The recommendations contained in this plan are organized around three resilience goals identified through resident engagement, technical analysis, and lessons learned from recent flood events. Together, these goals provide a framework for reducing flood risk while strengthening the Granite Street Historic District's ability to prepare for, respond to, recover from, and adapt to future disasters.

Goal 1: Prepare

Improve preparedness, communication, and awareness before disasters occur.

Recent flood events demonstrated that timely information, trusted communication systems, and household preparedness are essential to reducing risk. Residents consistently identified communication as one of the neighborhood's highest priorities and expressed support for expanding preparedness education and emergency notification systems.

Key actions include:

- Neighborhood warning siren
- Emergency communications volunteers at the town level
- Expanded enrollment in emergency notification systems
- Community preparedness education
- Go Bag workshops
- Household preparedness resources and outreach

These initiatives help ensure that residents receive timely information, understand available resources, and are better prepared before floodwater begins to rise.



Flood Traffic Management and Neighborhood Access

During flood events, vehicle traffic through inundated streets can create additional hazards for residents and emergency responders. Vehicle wakes can also push floodwater toward homes and increase impacts to already vulnerable properties. The Town will develop a simple flood traffic management protocol for the Granite Street neighborhood that identifies locations for temporary road closures and barricades when flooding occurs, establishes responsibility for placing and removing barricades, and provides for coordination among Police, Fire, Public Works, and emergency management personnel.

The protocol should identify predetermined closure points that can be activated quickly as conditions develop, while maintaining emergency access where feasible. Public messaging through TextMyGov, VT-Alert, social media, and other Town communication systems should accompany closures so residents understand when access is restricted and why.

Goal 2: Protect

Reduce damage to homes, utilities, infrastructure, and the surrounding watershed.

The planning process confirmed that flood risk within the Granite Street Historic District results from multiple interacting factors, including flooding from Cooper Brook, backwater effects from the Lamoille River, neighborhood drainage limitations, and broader watershed conditions. As a result, no single project will eliminate flood risk. Instead, resilience will be achieved through a combination of neighborhood-scale improvements and larger watershed investments. The Residential Utility Elevation Program represents an important first step in reducing damage to flood-prone homes, but utility protection is only one component of residential flood mitigation. Depending on individual property conditions, additional strategies may include backflow prevention, basement improvements, flood-damage-resistant materials, flood openings, drainage improvements, backup power, structural modifications, and other measures appropriate for older and historic buildings.

The Town should continue working with residents and technical partners to expand access to information, technical assistance, and funding for appropriate property-level mitigation measures.

Neighborhood-Scale Projects

These projects directly reduce flood impacts within the Granite Street Historic District and improve the resilience of homes and infrastructure.

Key projects include:

- Residential utility elevation program
- Granite Street culvert improvements and flood benching
- Spring Street Extension Floodplain Restoration
- Neighborhood stormwater improvements

Lamoille River Watershed Projects

Flooding within the neighborhood is also influenced by conditions throughout the Lamoille River watershed. Continued support for watershed-scale projects is essential to achieving long-term flood resilience.

Key projects include:

- Jackson Dam feasibility study and potential dam removal

- LVRT embankment modifications
- Confluence floodplain restoration
- Sawmill Park floodplain restoration

Together, these projects provide multiple layers of flood risk reduction by improving neighborhood infrastructure, restoring floodplain function, reducing localized flooding, and addressing broader watershed processes.

Goal 3: Recover and Adapt

Strengthen recovery systems and support long-term resilience investments.

Recovery begins long before a disaster occurs. Building strong community partnerships, maintaining neighborhood connections, and continuing to invest in resilience help reduce future losses while supporting faster recovery following flood events.

Key actions include:

- Strengthen neighborhood support systems
- Coordinate recovery resources and assistance
- Continue community engagement through Granite Street Neighbors
- Conduct Muck and Gut volunteer training
- Monitor implementation progress and update the plan as conditions change

The Granite Street Historic District has already made significant progress by expanding emergency management capacity, strengthening volunteer networks, and developing implementation-ready projects. Continued collaboration among residents, municipal officials, nonprofit organizations, and community partners will ensure that the recommendations contained in this plan remain active, achievable, and responsive to future needs.

Together, these three goals recognize that resilience is built through preparation, practical mitigation, strong community relationships, and sustained investment. By implementing these recommendations, the Granite Street Historic District can continue building a safer, stronger, and more resilient future while preserving the historic neighborhood and community character that residents value.



8. Priority Action Plan

The Granite Street Historic District Flood and Community Resilience Plan is intended to guide implementation over the coming years by identifying practical actions that improve preparedness, reduce flood risk, and strengthen the neighborhood's ability to recover from future disasters. While many of the recommendations will require additional funding, engineering, or partnerships, several important initiatives are already underway. The following priorities provide a roadmap for continued implementation and investment.

Immediate Actions (0–2 Years)

These actions are underway, funded, or capable of being implemented in the near term.

- Operate the neighborhood warning siren and complete permanent installation at Atkins Field.
- Continue implementation of the residential utility elevation program.
- Restore and establish annual maintenance of the bioretention area at the intersection of Cottage Street and Lower Cherry Street, consistent with the recommendations of the 2018 Stormwater Master Plan.
- Maintain and support trained Emergency Communications Volunteers at the town level.
- Expand enrollment in emergency notification systems, including TextMyGov and VT-Alert.
- Conduct community preparedness education, including the Go Bag Workshop.
- Continue preparedness outreach and distribution of household preparedness resources.
- Develop and implement a neighborhood flood traffic management protocol, including predetermined road-closure locations, barricade placement, departmental responsibilities, emergency-access procedures, and public notification. The purpose is to prevent unnecessary vehicles from entering flooded portions of the neighborhood and reduce vehicle-generated wakes that can worsen flooding impacts on homes.

Near-Term Actions (2–5 Years)

These actions require additional engineering, planning, partnerships, or funding but have been identified as high priorities through technical analysis and community engagement.

- Advance Granite Street culvert improvements and flood benching.
- Advance the Spring Street Extension floodplain restoration project.
- Implement neighborhood stormwater improvements.
- Explore opportunities to improve electrical resilience for homes that rely on sump pumps and other critical utilities.
- Expand community preparedness and volunteer training, including Muck and Gut training.
- Complete a comprehensive neighborhood stormwater assessment and incorporate findings into the next update of the Town's Stormwater Master Plan.

- Develop homeowner education and technical assistance opportunities focused on property-level flood mitigation, including approaches appropriate for older and historic homes.

Long-Term Actions (5+ Years)

These actions focus on larger watershed initiatives and the continued evolution of neighborhood resilience.

- Support implementation of Lamoille River watershed projects, including Jackson Dam, LVRT modifications, Sawmill Park floodplain restoration, and confluence restoration.
- Maintain neighborhood engagement through Granite Street Neighbors and other community partners.
- Review, update, and refine the Neighborhood Flood and Community Resilience Plan as projects are completed and new opportunities emerge.

Implementation Table

The following table is intended to serve as a living implementation tool. It should be updated periodically as projects advance, funding is secured, and implementation responsibilities evolve.

Action	Current Status	Lead Organization	Key Partners	Potential Funding	Timeline
Neighborhood Warning Siren	Portable unit operational; permanent installation at Atkins Field pending	Town of Hardwick	Hardwick Police Department	Municipal Budget	2026–2027
Residential Utility Elevation Program	Underway	Town of Hardwick	Homeowners, State Partners	State Appropriation / Grants	2026–2027
Residential Flood Mitigation Education & Technical Assistance	Additional opportunities needed beyond the Utility Elevation Program	Town of Hardwick	Homeowners, floodplain/building professionals, state and community partners	Technical Assistance / State & Federal Grants	2-5 Years
Emergency Communications Volunteers	Operational	Town of Hardwick	Volunteers	Municipal	Ongoing
Emergency Notification Enrollment (TextMyGov &	Ongoing	Town of Hardwick	Residents	Municipal	Ongoing

Action	Current Status	Lead Organization	Key Partners	Potential Funding	Timeline
VT-Alert)					
Community Preparedness Education & Go Bag Workshops	Ongoing	Town of Hardwick	Community Partners	Municipal	Annual
Neighborhood Flood Traffic Management & Road Closure Protocol	Protocol to be developed; traffic calming/enforcement can be used during flood events in the interim.	Town of Hardwick	Police Department, Fire Department, Public Works	Municipal	0–2 Years
Granite Street Culvert Improvements & Flood Benching	Conceptual design complete; engineering and funding needed	Town of Hardwick	Engineering Partners	State & Federal Grants	2–5 Years
Spring Street Extension Floodplain Restoration	Conceptual design complete; engineering and funding needed	Town of Hardwick	Engineering Partners	State & Federal Grants	2–5 Years
Restore & Maintain Cottage Street / Lower Cherry Street Bioretention Area	Identified in 2018 Stormwater Master Plan; restoration and annual maintenance needed	Town of Hardwick	Public Works	Municipal / Stormwater Grants	0–2 Years
Neighborhood Stormwater Assessment	Needs completion to identify deficiencies and future projects	Town of Hardwick	Engineering Partners	State Stormwater Grants	2–5 Years
Incorporate Granite Street into Next Stormwater Master Plan Update	Future planning effort	Town of Hardwick	Engineering Partners	Municipal Planning Grant / Stormwater Grants	2–5 Years
Neighborhood Stormwater Improvements	To be prioritized following assessment	Town of Hardwick	Engineering Partners	State & Federal Grants	2–5 Years
Electrical Resilience for Homes	Evaluation needed	Town of Hardwick	Utility Providers, Homeowners	Utility Programs / Grants	2–5 Years

Action	Current Status	Lead Organization	Key Partners	Potential Funding	Timeline
Dependent on Sump Pumps					
Community Preparedness & Muck and Gut Training	Initial training planned; ongoing expansion	Town of Hardwick	Community Partners, Volunteers	Municipal / Grant Funding	Ongoing
Jackson Dam Project	Feasibility complete; advancing toward design	Multiple Partners	CCNRCD, State Agencies	State & Federal Grants	5+ Years
Lamoille Valley Rail Trail Embankment Modifications	Concept identified	Multiple Partners	VTrans, VHB, Engineering Partners	State & Federal Grants	5+ Years
Confluence Floodplain Restoration	Planning underway	Multiple Partners	SLR, State Agencies	State & Federal Grants	5+ Years
Sawmill Park Floodplain Restoration	Planning and property acquisition underway	Town of Hardwick	State Partners	State & Federal Grants	5+ Years
Annual Review and Update of the Neighborhood Flood & Community Resilience Plan	Annual implementation review	Town of Hardwick	Granite Street Historic District residents and community partners	Municipal	Annual

This action plan is intended to be updated as projects move from concept to design, construction, and completion. It provides a practical framework for tracking progress, coordinating partners, and identifying future funding opportunities while ensuring that implementation remains aligned with the priorities identified by residents throughout the planning process.

9. Measuring Progress and Next Steps

The Granite Street Historic District Flood and Community Resilience Plan is intended to be a living document that guides implementation, supports funding opportunities, and evolves as projects are completed and new priorities emerge. Measuring progress will help the Town, residents, and community partners maintain momentum while ensuring that future investments continue to reflect neighborhood needs.

Tracking Progress

Implementation of this plan should be reviewed regularly to document completed projects, evaluate progress toward identified goals, and identify opportunities for future action. While some recommendations can be completed in the near term, others will require ongoing coordination, engineering, and investment over many years.

Progress should be measured not only by completed construction projects, but also by improvements in preparedness, community engagement, emergency management capacity, and the neighborhood's overall ability to withstand and recover from future flood events.

Roles and Responsibilities

Successful implementation will require continued collaboration among residents, municipal staff, elected officials, nonprofit organizations, state and federal agencies, and other community partners.

The Town of Hardwick will play a coordinating role in advancing implementation; however, many recommendations depend upon partnerships, grant funding, volunteer participation, and continued neighborhood engagement. Granite Street residents and future project partners will continue to play an important role in communicating with residents, supporting project development, and helping maintain momentum.

Annual Review Process

An annual review of this plan is recommended to:

- Evaluate progress on priority actions.
- Update project status and implementation timelines.
- Identify new funding opportunities.
- Incorporate lessons learned from recent flood events.
- Revise priorities as community needs and conditions change.
- Celebrate completed projects and community accomplishments.

Whenever practical, the annual review should be incorporated into existing municipal planning, emergency management, or resilience activities to ensure the plan remains an active implementation tool rather than a document placed on a shelf.

As part of the annual review, the Town should also consider whether actions identified through this plan should be incorporated into future updates of the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, The Hardwick Plan, capital planning, stormwater planning, or other relevant municipal programs. Connecting neighborhood priorities to these broader planning efforts will help maintain continuity as projects advance, funding opportunities emerge, and municipal priorities evolve.

Potential Indicators

Progress may be measured using a variety of implementation and community resilience indicators, including:

- Number of residential utility elevations completed.
- Enrollment in emergency notification systems.
- Participation in preparedness workshops and training.
- Volunteer participation in emergency response and recovery activities.
- Advancement of neighborhood capital projects from planning through construction.
- Progress on Lamoille River watershed projects that reduce flood risk within the district.
- Reduction in repetitive flood losses over time.
- Resident participation in neighborhood meetings and resilience initiatives.

These indicators should be viewed collectively rather than individually, recognizing that resilience is built through many small improvements over time rather than a single project or investment.

Future Resident Engagement



The neighborhood survey provides a baseline for understanding resident experiences, preparedness, and priorities. A similar survey may be useful following a significant flood event, after major implementation milestones, or periodically as conditions and neighborhood needs change. Comparing future results with the original survey can help identify emerging concerns, evaluate progress, and determine whether resilience investments continue to reflect resident priorities.

Looking Ahead

The Granite Street Historic District Flood and Community Resilience Plan represents an important step in Hardwick's ongoing efforts to strengthen community resilience following repeated flood disasters. While the recommendations contained in this plan are specific to the Granite Street Historic District, the planning process demonstrates the value of combining technical analysis, community engagement, emergency management, and implementation planning at the neighborhood scale.

As projects are completed and lessons are learned, this approach may serve as a model for future neighborhood-scale resilience planning efforts in other areas of Hardwick. Applying similar planning processes to neighborhoods with different flood risks, infrastructure needs, and community characteristics can help build a more resilient community while recognizing that each neighborhood requires solutions tailored to its unique challenges and strengths.

Ultimately, resilience is not achieved through a single project or plan. It is built over time through continued investment, strong partnerships, informed residents, and a shared commitment to protecting the places that make Hardwick a vibrant community. This plan provides a roadmap for that ongoing work.

Appendices

Appendix A – Community Survey Analysis

Survey Participation

Thirty households, representing approximately **59 percent** of the 51 residences within the Granite Street Historic District, participated in the survey. The high participation rate reflects the neighborhood’s strong interest in reducing flood risk while preserving the community’s historic character and quality of life.

About the Neighborhood

Length of Residency

The survey demonstrates that the Granite Street Historic District is a stable, long-established neighborhood.

Length of Residency	Households	Percent
Less than 1 year	1	3%
1–5 years	7	23%
6–10 years	6	20%
More than 10 years	16	53%

Key Finding

Nearly **73%** of respondents have lived in the neighborhood for more than six years, and over half have lived there for more than a decade. This reflects strong neighborhood stability and long-term investment in the community.

Flood Experience

Has your property experienced flooding?

Response	Households	Percent
Yes	26	90%
No	3	10%

Most respondents have experienced flooding, with many reporting multiple flood events over several decades. Recent floods in 2023 and 2024 were the most frequently identified events.

Reported Sources of Flooding

Residents identified multiple causes of flooding.

Source	Responses
River/Brook Overflow	23
Groundwater Infiltration	12
Stormwater Backup	6
Other localized causes	Several

Key Finding

Residents recognize that flooding results from multiple interacting causes rather than a single source, reinforcing the need for both neighborhood-scale and watershed-scale solutions.

Flood Impacts

Most Common Impacts

Impact	Responses
Basement flooding	24
Road access blocked	11
Structural damage	9
Vehicle damage	4
Loss of power	3

Key Finding

The survey demonstrated that the greatest impacts occur at the household level. Basement flooding, damaged utilities, blocked transportation routes, and prolonged recovery were common experiences following flood events.

Financial Recovery

Financial Assistance

Response	Households
Received assistance	17
No assistance	9

Response	Households
Not sure	1

Sources included FEMA, insurance, flood insurance, and community donations.

Volunteer Assistance

Only one-third of respondents reported receiving volunteer assistance for cleanup or repairs.

Organizations mentioned included:

- The Civic Standard
- kuRRVE
- CAE
- Friends and neighbors
- Family members

Home Mitigation Priorities

Residents overwhelmingly supported practical actions to reduce future flood damage.

Highest Priorities

Improvement	Responses
Elevate utilities	15
Install generator	15
Basement improvements	12
Install sump pump	11
Floodproof basement	11
Install backflow preventer	11
Improve drainage	10

Residents also expressed overwhelming interest in:

- Home Flood Risk Assessments (73%)
- Learning about grants and funding opportunities (92%)

Emergency Preparedness

Household Preparedness

Response	Households
Written emergency plan	8
No plan	8
Some preparedness but no written plan	13

Would Assist Neighbors

Response	Households
Yes	21
Maybe	7
No	2

Know Where to Go During a Flood

- Yes – 25 households
- No – 1 household
- Would remain home if possible – 4 households

Key Finding

Residents demonstrate strong community connections and a willingness to assist one another, but additional household preparedness planning would strengthen neighborhood resilience.

Special Considerations

The survey identified households with additional needs during emergencies.

Need	Responses
Pets	16
Electricity-dependent medical equipment or refrigerated medications	11
Mobility limitations	8
Transportation needs	1

These findings reinforce the importance of emergency communications, wellness checks, backup power, and neighborhood support systems.

Communication

Residents receive emergency information from many different sources.

Most frequently used:

- Facebook/Facebook Messenger
- Town emails and text messages
- TextMyGov
- Television
- VT-Alert
- Radio
- Neighbors

Only **50%** of respondents are enrolled in both VT-Alert and TextMyGov, while another **10%** requested assistance enrolling. This represents an immediate opportunity to strengthen neighborhood preparedness.

Community Education Priorities

Residents expressed strong interest in future preparedness workshops.

Most requested topics included:

- Creating Go Bags
- DIY floodproofing
- Flood cleanup
- Knowing when to evacuate
- Mental health after disasters
- Flood and homeowner insurance

These responses directly informed the Town's preparedness programming.

What Residents Told Us

Several themes emerged consistently throughout the survey.

"Building & strengthening community ties before the next (inevitable) flood is wise and forward thinking."

"Don't want to flood – don't want to lose home."

"Thank you. Thank you. Thank you."

“The Town has taken a couple of suggestions and implemented them... They have been very responsive.”

Together, these comments demonstrate that residents are seeking practical solutions, continued municipal leadership, and stronger neighborhood preparedness—not relocation.

Survey Findings Summary

Theme	Finding	Planning Response
Neighborhood Stability	Long-term residents with deep community ties	Focus on helping residents remain in place
Flood Experience	Nearly 90% have experienced flooding	Multi-layered resilience strategy
Home Protection	Utility elevation, generators, drainage, and floodproofing ranked highest	Utility Elevation Program and infrastructure improvements
Funding	92% want information about grants	Homeowner assistance and funding outreach
Preparedness	Strong willingness to help neighbors, but limited written emergency plans	Preparedness education and Go Bag workshops
Communication	Multiple communication methods used; enrollment can improve	Emergency communications volunteers, TextMyGov, VT-Alert, neighborhood siren
Community Strength	Residents value neighborhood relationships and want to stay	Neighborhood-centered implementation strategy

Appendix B – Community Engagement Summary

Community engagement was a central component of the Granite Street Historic District Flood and Community Resilience Plan. The planning process was designed to combine technical analysis with the knowledge, experiences, and priorities of the people who live in the neighborhood.

Engagement occurred throughout the planning process rather than through a single public meeting or survey. Residents participated through neighborhood gatherings, community meals, a detailed resident survey, workshops, Steering Committee discussions, informal conversations, educational events, and review of potential resilience strategies. Thirty households participated in the neighborhood survey, representing approximately 59 percent of the district's 51 residences.

The engagement process focused on several recurring questions: How does flooding affect residents and daily life in the neighborhood? What makes preparedness and recovery difficult? What do residents value and want to preserve? What practical measures could help people remain safely in their homes? How can communication and emergency preparedness be improved? And which neighborhood and watershed investments should be priorities?

What Residents Told Us

Several themes remained consistent throughout the planning process.

Residents expressed a strong desire to remain in the Granite Street Historic District while reducing future flood damage. Property-level priorities included utility elevation, backup power, basement improvements, backflow prevention, drainage improvements, home flood risk assessments, and better access to information about grants and financial assistance.

Communication and preparedness were also recurring concerns. Residents generally reported strong connections with neighbors and a willingness to assist one another during emergencies, but relatively few households had formal emergency plans. Residents supported improved emergency notifications, preparedness education, and continued neighborhood communication before, during, and after flood events.

Residents also identified needs that can affect a household's ability to prepare for or respond to flooding, including mobility limitations, electricity-dependent medical equipment or refrigerated medications, pets, and transportation needs. These findings helped reinforce the importance of reliable communications, backup power, wellness checks, and neighborhood support systems.

At the same time, residents consistently described the neighborhood itself as an important source of resilience. Neighbors share information, check on one another, help with cleanup, connect households with resources, and bring substantial knowledge of local flooding and drainage conditions. These relationships and experiences were treated as community assets alongside physical infrastructure and technical flood mitigation projects.

Atkins Neighborhood Conversations

Community engagement also included the Atkins Neighborhood Conversations, a summer 2026 series held during Monday community meals at Atkins Field. These informal gatherings created opportunities for residents to learn about flooding and watershed processes, ask questions, and talk directly with people working in river science, floodplain management, and flood resilience.

Topics included how streams respond during floods, river and floodplain processes, sediment and dredging, and flood insurance. The conversations were intended to make technical information more accessible while giving residents an informal setting to ask questions that might not arise during a traditional public meeting.



The Atkins conversations complemented the formal planning process rather than serving as plan-specific public hearings. They helped build a shared understanding of how rivers and watersheds function and why different approaches to flood mitigation may be appropriate in different locations. They also strengthened relationships among residents, municipal staff, community organizations, and technical partners.

Holding these conversations during an existing neighborhood community meal was intentional. Bringing information into a familiar community setting reduced some of the formality associated with conventional municipal meetings and allowed residents to participate while sharing a meal and talking with neighbors. The experience demonstrated the value of combining public education, relationship-building, and resilience planning rather than treating them as separate activities.

From Engagement to Action

Resident participation was used to shape the plan, not simply to document public opinion. Information gathered through the survey, meetings, conversations, and other engagement helped establish the plan's three resilience goals: Prepare, Protect, and Recover and Adapt.

Resident priorities are reflected throughout the Priority Action Plan. Examples include the neighborhood warning siren, Residential Utility Elevation Program, emergency notification enrollment, preparedness education, neighborhood flood traffic management, property-level mitigation education, electrical resilience for homes dependent on sump pumps, stormwater improvements, and continued neighborhood engagement.

Importantly, implementation did not wait for completion of the plan. Several initiatives identified through the broader resilience effort were already underway or operational during the planning process, including residential utility elevation, emergency communications volunteers, the Supply and Support Center, the portable neighborhood warning siren, and preparedness education.

Granite Street Neighbors

The name Granite Street Neighbors was used throughout the planning process to refer collectively to residents of the neighborhood. Granite Street Neighbors is not a formal organization and does not have a governing structure or formal membership.

Instead, the name reflects the relationships among residents and provides a shared identity for neighborhood communication, engagement, and resilience activities. The informal nature of the group allows residents to participate in different ways and at different levels while building upon the neighbor-to-neighbor relationships that already existed before this planning effort.

Engagement Timeline

The development of this plan grew from a sustained neighborhood conversation that began following the recent floods and continued throughout the planning process.

Date	Engagement
August 12, 2024	Initial neighborhood gathering following the 2024 flood, providing an opportunity for residents to share experiences, concerns, and recovery needs.
September 15, 2025	Granite Street neighborhood meeting focused on flood resilience, neighborhood concerns, and the developing planning effort.
Winter 2025–2026	Neighborhood update providing information on ongoing resilience work and upcoming opportunities for participation.
Winter 2025-2026	Resident survey completed by 30 households, representing approximately 59 percent of neighborhood residences.
May 20, 2026	Neighborhood dinner and planning meeting to discuss survey findings, resilience priorities, ongoing projects, and next steps.
Summer 2026	Atkins Neighborhood Conversations held during Monday community meals, providing informal flood and watershed education and opportunities for discussion with technical experts.
Throughout 2026	Steering Committee discussions, project-specific outreach, and ongoing conversations with residents informed development of recommendations and priorities.
September 30, 2026	Final neighborhood gathering to review the developing plan, discuss priorities and next steps, and close out the Municipal Planning Grant planning process.

The engagement process was intentionally varied because no single method reaches everyone. Surveys provided structured information that could be compared across households. Neighborhood meetings allowed residents to hear from one another and discuss shared concerns. Educational conversations helped build understanding of flood and watershed processes. Steering Committee discussions provided continuity throughout the project, while informal conversations created opportunities for residents to raise concerns or ideas outside formal meetings.

Together, these methods allowed technical analysis and lived experience to inform one another throughout development of the plan.

Continuing Engagement

Community engagement does not end with adoption or completion of this plan. The implementation framework calls for continued participation by residents and community partners as projects advance, funding opportunities emerge, and neighborhood conditions change.

The neighborhood survey also establishes a baseline that can be revisited over time. A similar survey may be useful following a significant future flood, after major implementation milestones, or periodically as neighborhood conditions and priorities change. Comparing future results with the original survey can help identify emerging concerns and determine whether resilience investments continue to reflect resident priorities.

Continued engagement should remain flexible and make use of existing neighborhood activities whenever practical rather than creating additional meetings simply for the sake of engagement. The experience of the Granite Street planning process demonstrated that meaningful participation can occur in many forms—from a detailed survey or project meeting to a community meal, educational conversation, or discussion between neighbors.

The goal is not simply to keep residents informed. It is to maintain the relationships, local knowledge, and shared capacity that allow residents, the Town, and community partners to continue adapting and working together as conditions change.

Appendix C

Maps and Technical Resources from SLR

Appendix D – Priority Project Profiles

The following project profiles provide additional information about several of the priority resilience investments identified through the Granite Street Historic District planning process. Together, these projects illustrate the layered approach to resilience reflected throughout the plan: reducing vulnerability at individual homes, addressing flood conditions within the neighborhood, and advancing larger projects that influence flooding across the Lamoille River watershed.

Detailed project profiles for the Granite Street Culvert and Flood Benching project and the Spring Street Extension Floodplain Restoration project were developed by SLR as part of the technical analysis completed for this planning effort.

Residential Utility Elevation Program

The Residential Utility Elevation Program addresses one of the most common and costly consequences of flooding within the Granite Street Historic District: damage to furnaces, water heaters, electrical panels, and other essential building systems located in flood-prone basements.

Neighborhood residents identified utility protection as a high priority during the planning process. Many homes within the district were constructed before modern floodplain standards and have critical mechanical and electrical systems below expected flood elevations. Damage to these systems can make a home uninhabitable even when the building itself remains structurally sound, extending displacement and increasing recovery costs. Reliable electrical service is also particularly important for households that depend on sump pumps and other electrically powered equipment during flood events.

The Town of Hardwick secured approximately \$700,000 through the State of Vermont's Community Resilience and Disaster Mitigation Fund to establish a residential utility elevation program. Eleven Granite Street households enrolled in the program. The program is intended to provide property-specific evaluation and design followed by elevation or relocation of vulnerable utilities where feasible.

The program represents an important shift from repeatedly repairing damaged equipment after floods toward reducing vulnerability before the next event. It also responds directly to residents' desire for practical mitigation measures that can allow them to remain in their homes. Utility elevation was among the highest-ranked household mitigation measures in the neighborhood survey.

Utility elevation will not eliminate flood risk to participating properties, nor will the same approach be appropriate for every building. It is one component of a broader property-level mitigation strategy that may also include backflow prevention, basement improvements, flood-damage-resistant materials, flood openings, drainage improvements, backup power, or other measures appropriate to individual properties and historic buildings.

The program also provides an opportunity to learn from implementation. As participating homes are evaluated and improvements completed, the Town and its partners can better understand the challenges associated with mitigating older flood-prone housing, the costs and benefits of different approaches, and opportunities to expand technical or financial assistance to additional homeowners.

Current Status: Eleven households enrolled; implementation underway.

Lead: Town of Hardwick

Funding: Vermont Community Resilience and Disaster Mitigation Fund

Resilience Benefits: Reduced damage to essential building systems; shorter recovery and displacement following floods; improved household safety and habitability; and increased ability for residents to remain in existing homes.

Lamoille River Watershed Projects

Flooding within the Granite Street Historic District cannot be addressed entirely within the boundaries of the neighborhood. Cooper Brook responds rapidly to intense rainfall, while high water levels in the Lamoille River can create backwater conditions that limit the ability of Cooper Brook and neighborhood drainage systems to discharge. As a result, flood conditions within Granite Street are influenced by



both local conditions and processes occurring throughout the broader watershed.

The neighborhood resilience strategy therefore includes several larger projects underway or under consideration elsewhere in Hardwick. These projects are not Granite Street projects in the same sense as the culvert improvements, Spring Street Extension floodplain restoration, or residential utility elevation

program. Each has its own planning, engineering, funding, permitting, and public process. They are included here because their potential effects on floodplain function, river conveyance, flood storage, and watershed conditions are relevant to long-term flood resilience within the neighborhood.

The principal watershed-scale projects currently identified include:

Jackson Dam. The Town and its partners are evaluating the future of Jackson Dam on the Lamoille River. Following completion of feasibility and hydraulic modeling, the project is advancing into additional design and evaluation. Because the dam influences conditions on the Lamoille River upstream of the Granite Street neighborhood, its future is one component of Hardwick's larger watershed resilience work.

Lamoille Valley Rail Trail Embankment. The elevated LVRT embankment crosses the Lamoille River floodplain and influences how floodwater moves through this portion of Hardwick. Potential modifications to portions of the embankment are being explored as part of broader efforts to improve floodplain function and reduce hydraulic constraints.



Confluence Floodplain Restoration. The Town is advancing floodplain restoration on municipally owned



property near the confluence of Cooper Brook and the Lamoille River. The project is intended to restore floodplain function and create additional space for floodwaters in an area directly connected to the river system affecting Granite Street.

Sawmill Park Floodplain Restoration. Following voluntary acquisition of flood-prone properties along Sawmill Lane, the Town is considering future floodplain restoration and open-space opportunities as additional

properties become available. The area provides an opportunity to restore floodplain function while transitioning repeatedly flooded land away from vulnerable residential use.

Together, these projects represent a watershed-scale complement to the neighborhood investments identified in this plan. The Granite Street strategy does not depend upon any single watershed project eliminating flood risk. Rather, the intent is to pursue multiple opportunities to restore floodplain function, address hydraulic constraints, reduce vulnerability, and give water more space where feasible. The plan similarly combines these larger investments with neighborhood infrastructure, property-level mitigation, preparedness, and emergency communication.

The projects are at different stages of development and will continue to evolve as engineering, environmental review, funding, landowner coordination, and public processes advance. Their inclusion in this plan should therefore be understood as recognition of their relationship to Granite Street's long-term resilience rather than as endorsement of a particular final design or outcome.

Current Status: Multiple projects in feasibility, design, planning, environmental review, property acquisition, or implementation.

Lead: Town of Hardwick and project-specific partners.

Potential Funding: Project-specific state and federal funding sources.

Resilience Benefits: Improved floodplain function and flood storage; reduction of hydraulic constraints where feasible; transition of repeatedly flooded properties to compatible open-space uses; and coordinated flood-risk reduction at the neighborhood and watershed scales.

Appendix E – Funding Opportunities and Implementation Matrix

Implementation of the Granite Street Historic District Flood and Community Resilience Plan will require a combination of municipal resources, state and federal grants, technical assistance, community partnerships, and continued coordination with larger Town and watershed projects.

Funding programs change over time, and eligibility will depend on project design, ownership, benefit-cost requirements, available appropriations, and other program-specific criteria. The following matrix is therefore intended as a starting point for implementation rather than a definitive list of funding sources.

Whenever possible, the Town should seek opportunities to coordinate related projects and funding applications. Some actions may be appropriate for stand-alone grants, while others may advance more effectively as components of larger municipal, emergency management, stormwater, housing, or watershed initiatives.

Priority Action	Current Status	Potential Funding / Support	Implementation Considerations	Timeframe
Neighborhood Warning Siren	Portable unit operational; permanent installation at Atkins Field pending	Municipal funds; emergency management funding; private/community support where appropriate	Complete permanent installation; establish operation, testing, maintenance, and public education procedures	0–2 years
Residential Utility Elevation Program	Underway; 11 households enrolled	Vermont Community Resilience and Disaster Mitigation Fund; future state or federal mitigation funding	Complete property assessments, design, and construction; document lessons and costs to inform future residential mitigation programs	0–2 years
Residential Flood Mitigation Education & Technical Assistance	Additional assistance needed beyond utility elevation	State and federal mitigation programs; technical assistance programs; community and nonprofit partners	Provide information on mitigation appropriate for older and historic homes; connect homeowners with technical and financial resources	2–5 years

Priority Action	Current Status	Potential Funding / Support	Implementation Considerations	Timeframe
Emergency Communications Volunteers	Operational at the town level	Municipal resources; emergency management grants; volunteer support	Maintain training, equipment, volunteer recruitment, and integration with Town emergency operations	Ongoing
Emergency Notification Enrollment	Ongoing	Municipal resources; existing VT-Alert and TextMyGov systems	Continue outreach and assist residents who need help enrolling	Ongoing
Community Preparedness Education & Go Bag Workshops	Ongoing	Municipal resources; emergency management grants; community partners	Continue accessible neighborhood-based education and incorporate lessons from future flood events	Annual/Ongoing
Neighborhood Flood Traffic Management & Road Closure Protocol	Protocol to be developed; traffic calming/enforcement can be used during flood events in the interim.	Municipal resources; emergency management planning support	Establish road-closure locations, barricade procedures, responsibilities, communications, and protocols for limiting vehicle wakes during floods	0–2 years
Cottage Street/Lower Cherry Street Bioretention Area	Restoration and annual maintenance needed	Municipal funds; state stormwater programs and grants	Restore function and establish routine inspection and maintenance responsibilities	0–2 years
Granite Street Culvert Improvements & Flood Benching	Conceptual design complete; additional engineering and funding needed	State and federal hazard mitigation, transportation, watershed, and resilience programs	Advance engineering and permitting; coordinate with other Granite Street drainage and floodplain improvements	2–5 years
Spring Street	Conceptual design	State and federal	Advance	2–5 years

Priority Action	Current Status	Potential Funding / Support	Implementation Considerations	Timeframe
Extension Floodplain Restoration	complete; additional engineering and funding needed	floodplain restoration, hazard mitigation, watershed, and resilience programs	engineering, permitting, landowner coordination if necessary, and funding strategy	
Neighborhood Stormwater Assessment	Needs completion	State stormwater funding; Municipal Planning Grant or similar planning resources	Evaluate drainage deficiencies and opportunities throughout the neighborhood; use findings to establish future priorities	2–5 years
Stormwater Master Plan Update	Future municipal planning effort	Municipal Planning Grant; state stormwater planning assistance; municipal resources	Incorporate Granite Street findings and update the Town's 2018 Stormwater Master Plan	2–5 years
Neighborhood Stormwater Improvements	To be identified and prioritized through assessment	State and federal stormwater, infrastructure, and resilience programs	Prioritize projects following neighborhood assessment and coordinate with culvert and floodplain projects	2–5 years
Electrical Resilience for Homes Dependent on Sump Pumps	Evaluation needed	Utility programs; state resilience or energy programs; future grant opportunities	Evaluate backup power and other approaches; determine whether neighborhood-scale or individual-property solutions are most practical	2–5 years
Community Preparedness & Muck and Gut Training	Initial training planned; continued capacity building needed	Emergency management grants; municipal resources; nonprofit and community partners	Maintain trained local volunteers and periodically refresh skills and safety procedures	Ongoing
Jackson Dam	Feasibility complete;	Project-specific state	Separate project	Long-term /

Priority Action	Current Status	Potential Funding / Support	Implementation Considerations	Timeframe
Project	advancing toward design	and federal watershed, hazard mitigation, infrastructure, and resilience funding	with its own engineering, environmental review, public process, permitting, and funding strategy	Project dependent
LVRT Embankment Modifications	Concept identified through hydraulic modeling	State and federal transportation, hazard mitigation, and resilience funding	Requires coordination with VTrans and other project partners; additional engineering and evaluation required	Long-term / Project dependent
Confluence Floodplain Restoration	Planning and environmental review underway	Existing CDBG-DR funding; additional project-specific funding if necessary	Coordinate implementation with related Cooper Brook and Lamoille River resilience work	Near-term / Project dependent
Sawmill Park Floodplain Restoration	Property acquisition and planning underway	State and federal hazard mitigation, floodplain restoration, and watershed funding	Future restoration depends on voluntary property acquisition and development of an appropriate reuse/restoration concept	Long-term / Project dependent
Plan Review and Update	Annual implementation review	Municipal resources	Update project status, funding opportunities, responsibilities, and timelines; incorporate relevant actions into other municipal plans and programs	Annual

Funding Strategy

The Town should approach funding as an ongoing implementation process rather than waiting for a single funding source capable of implementing the entire plan. Different actions are likely to require

different funding pathways, and projects may advance in phases as planning, engineering, permitting, and construction funding become available.

Priority should be given to maintaining projects in a state of readiness whenever practical. Conceptual designs, cost estimates, documented community support, preliminary permitting information, and clearly identified project benefits can allow the Town to respond more quickly when appropriate funding opportunities become available.

The Town should also continue looking for opportunities to combine funding sources and coordinate Granite Street investments with broader municipal projects. For example, stormwater work may advance through stormwater planning programs, residential mitigation through housing or hazard mitigation resources, preparedness through emergency management programs, and larger floodplain projects through watershed, infrastructure, or disaster-recovery funding.

Maintaining the Matrix

This matrix should be reviewed as part of the annual implementation review described in Chapter 9. Funding sources should be added, removed, or updated as programs change, and project status should be revised as actions move from planning to design, funding, construction, and completion.

The purpose of the matrix is not to predict exactly how each project will be funded. It is to maintain a clear connection between the priorities identified by residents and the practical work necessary to move those priorities toward implementation.

Appendix F – Municipal Planning Grant

Deliverables Crosswalk

The Granite Street Historic District Flood and Community Resilience Plan was developed with support from the Vermont Municipal Planning Grant Program. The planning process combined community engagement, technical analysis, identification of resilience strategies, and implementation planning to develop a practical framework for reducing flood risk and strengthening neighborhood resilience.

The following crosswalk identifies where the principal products of the Municipal Planning Grant planning process are incorporated into the final plan.

Planning Component / Deliverable	Where Addressed in Final Plan	Key Products / Outcomes
Neighborhood Conditions and Existing Context	Chapter 3 – The Granite Street Historic District Neighborhood	Neighborhood history and development; housing and population characteristics; existing strengths; community assets; neighborhood values
Community Engagement	Chapter 2 – Survey Findings; Chapter 6 – Community Vision; Appendix A – Community Survey Analysis; Appendix B – Community Engagement Summary	Resident survey; neighborhood meetings and meals; Steering Committee discussions; workshops; Atkins Neighborhood Conversations; resident priorities and community vision
Flood Risk and Vulnerability Assessment	Chapter 4 – Flood Risks and Challenges; Appendix C – Maps and Technical Resources	Flood history; Cooper Brook flooding; Lamoille River backwater; stormwater and drainage; transportation and access; utility vulnerability; impacts on homes and residents; future climate considerations
Community Assets and Capacity	Chapter 3 – Existing Strengths and Community Assets; Chapter 5 – Community Assets, Preparedness, and Capacity	Neighborhood relationships; community facilities; emergency preparedness systems; local knowledge; volunteer capacity; community leadership
Technical Flood Analysis	Chapter 4; Appendix C – Maps and Technical Resources; SLR technical materials	Hydraulic modeling; evaluation of neighborhood drainage and flood conditions; identification and evaluation of potential mitigation opportunities
Community Resilience Strategy	Chapter 6 – Community Vision; Chapter 7 – Resilience Strategy	Community vision and three resilience goals: Prepare, Protect, and Recover and Adapt
Property-Level Resilience Strategies	Chapters 4 and 7; Appendix D – Priority Project Profiles	Residential Utility Elevation Program; homeowner mitigation strategies; electrical

Planning Component / Deliverable	Where Addressed in Final Plan	Key Products / Outcomes
		resilience; technical assistance and education
Neighborhood-Scale Flood Mitigation Projects	Chapter 7; Chapter 8 – Priority Action Plan; Appendix D – Priority Project Profiles	Granite Street culvert improvements and flood benching; Spring Street Extension floodplain restoration; neighborhood stormwater improvements
Watershed-Scale Resilience Strategies	Chapters 4 and 7; Appendix D – Priority Project Profiles	Relationship of neighborhood flood risk to the larger Lamoille River watershed; Jackson Dam; LVRT embankment; Confluence Floodplain Restoration; Sawmill Park
Emergency Preparedness and Community Capacity	Chapters 5 and 7; Chapter 8 – Priority Action Plan	Neighborhood warning siren; Emergency Communications Volunteers; emergency notification enrollment; Go Bag education; Muck and Gut training; neighborhood support systems
Priority Actions and Implementation Roadmap	Chapter 8 – Priority Action Plan	Immediate (0–2 year), near-term (2–5 year), and long-term (5+ year) actions; current project status; lead organizations; partners; funding pathways; implementation timelines
Funding and Implementation Strategy	Chapter 8; Appendix E – Funding Opportunities and Implementation Matrix	Potential funding pathways; implementation considerations; project readiness; coordination with municipal, state, federal, and community partners
Monitoring and Continued Implementation	Chapter 9 – Measuring Progress and Next Steps	Annual review process; roles and responsibilities; progress indicators; future resident engagement; integration with other municipal plans and programs
Final Neighborhood Flood and Community Resilience Plan	Entire Plan	Integrated neighborhood-scale resilience framework combining technical analysis, resident priorities, preparedness, property-level mitigation, infrastructure, watershed projects, funding, and implementation

Final Planning Product

The final Granite Street Historic District Flood and Community Resilience Plan brings the individual components of the Municipal Planning Grant project together into a single implementation framework.

Rather than treating technical analysis, community engagement, preparedness, and capital planning as separate products, the plan connects them through a common set of neighborhood resilience goals and priority actions.

The planning process combined engineering analysis with local knowledge and resident participation. Thirty households, representing approximately 59 percent of neighborhood residences, participated in the survey, with additional participation through meetings, workshops, community conversations, and Steering Committee discussions.

The resulting plan identifies actions at multiple scales, from household utility protection and emergency preparedness to neighborhood infrastructure and larger Lamoille River watershed projects. It also establishes an implementation structure that identifies project status, lead organizations, partners, potential funding sources, and anticipated timelines.

The plan is intended to remain active beyond completion of the Municipal Planning Grant. Annual review, progress tracking, continued resident engagement, and incorporation of relevant actions into future municipal planning efforts will allow the work initiated through the grant to continue as projects move from planning and conceptual design toward funding and implementation.

Appendix G – Local Emergency Information

Official alert systems

Where to find current emergency information

Shelter/EOC information

Etc.