

TRANSPORTATION

Highways

Classification & Function

Vermont's local roads are classified according to their importance and general use. This classification system applies to all town highways, and is used to determine the amount of state highway assistance provided to each community. Class 1 roads are those highways that while the responsibility of the town to maintain, are extensions of the state highway system and carry a state highway route number. Hardwick has 1.5 miles of class 1 roads including portions of Routes 14 and 15 that ran through the former village. Class 2 roads are the most important highways serving as corridors between towns, and consequently carry a large volume of local and regional traffic. Center Road, East Main Street (Greensboro Bend), Hardwick Street/East Church Street, and Belfry Road are Class 2 roads. Class 3 roads are comprised of secondary town highways that are passable year round by standard vehicles. Class 4 roads are dirt roads which are typically functional for only part of the year for normal traffic. The following table illustrates town highway mileages in Hardwick and surrounding communities.

Table 2. Town highway mileage by classification

<i>Town</i>	<i>Class 1</i>	<i>Class 2</i>	<i>Class 3</i>	<i>Total local (excluding Class 4 & Legal Trail)</i>	<i>Class 4</i>	<i>Legal Trail</i>	<i>Total State</i>
Hardwick	1.5	11.3	52.5	65.3	5.7	1.6	16.1
Craftsbury	0	18.2	42.4	60.6	6.5	2.7	8.0
Greensboro	0	11.2	44.9	56.1	11.8	0	7.7
Walden	0	9.1	33.5	42.6	10.0	3.4	7.2
Wolcott	0	10.7	38.2	48.9	7.4	4.58	7.0
Woodbury	0	5.1	31.8	36.9	25	1.2	7.7

Source: VT AOT 2019

Traffic

Traffic volumes increased slightly or remained stagnant in recent years. This marks a reversal of the earlier long-term trend of rising traffic volumes.

Road Maintenance Costs

During the 2018 fiscal year, the Town allocated \$807,944 for maintaining the Town highways and garage. In addition to the operation funds identified above, the Town of Hardwick set aside \$291,375 of funding for equipment purchases and specific highways projects. The table below illustrates the net local highway expenditures in Hardwick and similar towns for the same-fiscal year (including state aid spent on roads).

Table 3. Local road maintenance costs.

<i>Town</i>	<i>Road Miles</i>	<i>Fiscal year allocation</i>	<i>\$ budgeted/road mile</i>
Hardwick (FY 18-19)	65.3	\$807,944	\$12,373
Greensboro (FY 18-19)	56.1	\$686,296	\$12,233

Wolcott (FY 18-19)	48.9	\$582,524	\$11, 913
Woodbury (FY 18-19)	36.9	\$394,800	\$10,699

Source: 2018 Budget Data: Town Annual Reports Road Miles: VT AOT

Town Bridge & Highway Standards and Network Inventories

The town has adopted basic bridge and highway standards and has completed a preliminary network inventory in 2007. This inventory was updated in 2013. Vtrans expects the inventory to be updated every three years. Keeping these up to date will help Hardwick qualify for reduced matching requirements in State-sponsored road and bridge programs.

Rail

AMTRAK

The closest passenger rail service for Hardwick residents is Amtrak, located in Waterbury, Montpelier and Essex Junction. All of these depots serve Amtrak's "Vermont" line with a daily run between St. Albans and Washington, D.C.

Air

Hardwick residents are provided air transportation service through the Morrisville-Stowe State Airport on Route 100 in Morristown, and through the Burlington International Airport in South Burlington.

Recreational and non-vehicular transportation

Snowmobile Trails

The Vermont Association of Snow Travelers (VAST) maintains a network of snowmobile trails on private and public lands across the state. VAST trails through private and public lands connect Hardwick to all of the surrounding towns. VAST trails are maintained and groomed by volunteers, and provide an important link in a statewide recreation network. <http://www.vtvast.org>

ATV Trails

All-terrain vehicle (ATV) use is growing in popularity and there is interest in developing a trail network similar to VAST. The Vermont ATV Sportsman Association (VASA) is interested in developing ATV recreation in Vermont and in providing ATV trail access in collaboration with other groups and landowners. <http://vtvasa.org/>

Bicyclists, Pedestrians and Others

Most of Hardwick's local roads were designed with only the auto traveler in mind. As cyclists and pedestrians use these roads, conflicts can arise from lack of space and poor shoulders. The

ongoing development of the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail will potentially alleviate these issues. Future road projects should be designed to give greater consideration to non-motorized users.

Transit services

Buses/Human Services Transportation

Local bus service does not exist in Hardwick. For Hardwick residents, the nearest Vermont Transit sites are in St. Johnsbury, Waterbury, and Montpelier. Rural Community Transport (RCT) provides service by appointment to Lamoille, Caledonia, and Orleans County residents. RCT is a nonprofit corporation providing transportation to the elderly and disabled, Medicaid and general public through a van/bus and volunteer service. RCT transports people to adult day service facilities, senior meal sites and necessary medical treatments.

Goals, Policies, & Recommendations

GOALS

- Pedestrian and non-vehicular transportation networks should be safe and conveniently located to encourage their use.
- To support efforts to provide regional public commuter transportation services for the general public and special transportation services for those who require assistance.

POLICIES

- Hardwick should adopt a Complete Streets philosophy that includes universal design for accessibility.
- The town should continue planning for trailhead connections to the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail.
- Hardwick supports the use of bio-fuels and electric vehicles.

ACTIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- The Town should assess road and bridge conditions every three years to establish maintenance and repair priorities.
- The Select Board should continue to seek funding to improve and extend sidewalks.
- The town should review truck parking and seek opportunities to increase safe downtown parking.
- Hardwick should consider using bio-fuels or electric vehicles wherever economically possible. This can be through use in school buses and other municipal vehicles.
- The town should encourage the provision of safe and convenient alternatives to automobile travel for local trips, including the investigation of a commuter bus route from Hardwick to Montpelier, where many residents work.
- The Select Board should examine the feasibility of placement of electric charging stations in Hardwick.