Wallingford, Vermont
2026 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan



Sediment & debris spilled onto an agricultural field by the Mill River near VT-103 – July 2023 (DR4720)

FEMA Approval Pending Adoption Date:
Municipal Adoption Date:
FEMA Formal Approval Date:

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1 INTRODUCTION

Community planning and action can reduce the impact of expected but unpredictable natural events. The goal of this Plan is to advance mitigation investments that will reduce the risks posed by natural hazards and increase Wallingford's resilience to their impacts.

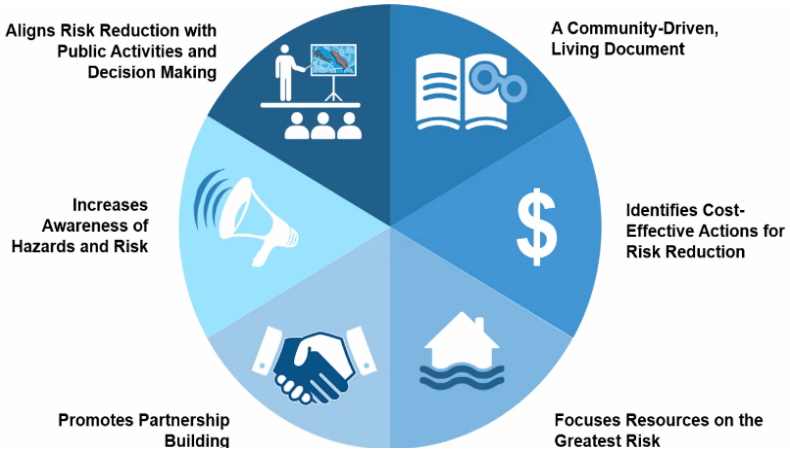
Hazard Mitigation is any sustained policy or action that reduces or eliminates long-term risk to people and property from the effects of natural hazards. All levels of government have come to recognize that it is less expensive to prevent disasters than to repeatedly repair damage after disasters strike. While the hazards themselves cannot be eliminated, it is possible to identify local hazards, where their impacts may be most severe, and what actions and policies can be implemented to reduce the severity of their impacts.

Furthermore, the Town seeks to be in accordance with the strategies, goals, and objectives of the ***2023 State Hazard Mitigation Plan.***

This Plan recognizes that many hazards are interrelated and can cause cascading effects. Communities should therefore take a holistic approach to mitigation and integrate its principles and practices throughout government operations.

2 PURPOSE

The purpose of this Plan is to identify all natural hazards facing the Town of Wallingford, rank them according to local vulnerabilities, and develop strategies to reduce the risks they pose. Once adopted, this Plan is not legally binding; instead, it outlines goals and actions to prevent future loss of life and property. The benefits of mitigation planning are summarized in the graphic on the right.



Source: FEMA LHMP Workshop 2024

3 COMMUNITY PROFILE



Land Use and Development Patterns

The forests and streams of the Green Mountains and the fertile soil of the Otter Creek Valley provided Wallingford settlers with the wood, waterpower, and farmland needed to establish their frontier agricultural community in 1780. Wallingford Village, a milling and manufacturing center for valley farms, developed at the confluence of Roaring Brook and Otter Creek. To the south, a stage stop along the road had evolved into the village of South Wallingford by 1830. After the Bellows Falls to Rutland railroad was completed in 1849, East Wallingford grew around a station on that line as a lumbering and manufacturing center.

The early 20th century saw an important shift in Wallingford's economy, as local manufacturing plants were acquired by out-of-state corporations while the recreation industry gained prominence. Traces of the once-dominant dairy industry, represented by Greek Revival-style farmsteads, are preserved in the fertile valley region of South Wallingford, known as the Rural Otter Creek Valley Multiple Resource Area. Some historic population centers, like Centerville, have few physical remains and now exist only in name.

Wallingford is situated in southern Rutland County, bordered by the towns of Clarendon, Shrewsbury, Mount Holly, Mt. Tabor, Danby, and Tinmouth. It ranks as the tenth-largest municipality in the Region and is located only 10 miles south of Rutland City, Vermont's fourth-largest municipality. The Town has evolved from a self-sufficient farming and commercial hub to a collection of increasingly interconnected communities. Originally characterized by closely packed villages surrounded by open land, farms, and residences, the area's land-use pattern has gradually shifted towards a more dispersed layout of residential and commercial areas.


The Old Stone Shop

Most non-federal land is used for residential purposes. Agriculture was once a key part of Wallingford's early development, but the number of farms has steadily declined since the 1800s. However, the Town still hosts several commercial dairy and small-scale beef farms. Livestock like sheep, goats, veal, and horses are raised alongside other domestic animals. Beyond traditional farming, the community also supports small-scale vegetable growers, maple syrup and honey production, Christmas tree farms, greenhouse or landscaping businesses, and the extraction of sand, gravel, and limestone.

Most of the Town's community facilities are situated in Wallingford Village. These include the Gilbert Hart Library, Town Hall, Wallingford Elementary School, the U.S. Post Office, the Wallingford Fire Station, and the Wallingford Thrift Store, as well as several churches, antique shops, inns, and country stores. East Wallingford hosts an additional Fire Department building and Post Office.

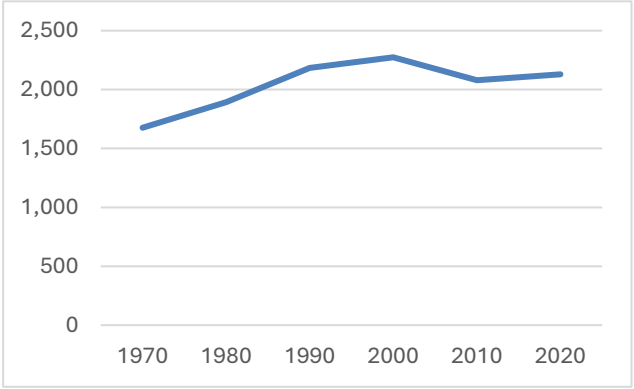
Land Features

Wallingford features three distinct physiographic regions, contributing to its diverse topography. The Town's remote eastern area lies within the Green Mountain region, which includes a large part of the Green Mountain National Forest, especially along the borders of Mount Holly and Mt. Tabor. This physiographic region extends along a north-south line that divides the town, with peaks ranging from 2,200 feet (Bear Mountain) to 2,650 ft (White Rocks). A narrow depression, known as the Vermont Valley region, runs through the Town's center at an elevation of ±600 feet, containing U.S. Route 7, Otter Creek, and the villages of Wallingford and South Wallingford. The Taconic Mountain region, which covers the western part of town known as West Hill, remains largely undeveloped. This region, along with other ridgelines and high-altitude areas, features shallow soils and steep slopes, making them fragile and susceptible to erosion.

Forests are a significant resource in Wallingford. Nearly one-third of the Town's total land area (over 8,900 acres) is in Green Mountain National Forest or National Park Service ownership, including White Rocks Mountain and a ten-mile segment of the Appalachian/Vermont Long Trail. An estimated 24.6% of the Town's private land (or 6,883 acres) is enrolled in Vermont's Current Use Value Program, meaning it is actively managed for agricultural or forestry products. Two miles upstream from Wallingford Village, 355 acres of land are part of the Otter Creek Wildlife Management Area.

Demographics and Growth Potential

The 2020 Decennial U.S. Census shows a population of 2,129 and 1,103 housing units, of which around 918 are occupied. From 1970 to 2000, Wallingford's population grew from 1,676 to 2,274 – an increase of nearly 600 people. The population then dipped slightly to ±2,100 beginning in the 2010s. American Community Survey data suggests the COVID-19 pandemic did not significantly affect population numbers.



Between 2010 and 2020, the median age of Wallingford residents increased from 47.5 to 50.1, slightly higher than Rutland County's median age of 47. Nearly 25% percent of the population in Wallingford is over 65, and around 23% are considered disabled. The Town's population density is 49 people per square mile, lower than the overall state density of 68 people per square mile.

Wallingford has an estimated 111 seasonal units. This represents 10% of the total housing stock, lower than the 17% average for Rutland County. Of the permanent residences, about 85% are site-built single-family units, about 7% are multi-family units of various sizes, and about 6% are manufactured or mobile homes. Renters occupy around 15% of residences.

***Growth potential for Wallingford is mixed**. Residential growth is somewhat limited by the fact that a large portion of the Town lies within either the FEMA-mapped floodplain or National Forest lands. However, there is the opportunity for targeted commercial and retail growth, given the recent expansion of "Planned Growth" areas surrounding the Wallingford Village Center and several existing vacant commercial sites.*

Precipitation and Water Features

Wallingford experiences about 142 days of precipitation annually, making it drier than most locations in Vermont. The average annual rainfall is 44.4 inches, with July being the rainiest month. The average annual snowfall is 82.2 inches; while January is the snowiest month, significant snowfall occurs for seven months of the year. Projections from the University of California San Diego predict that by 2044, under scenarios of both intermediate and extreme greenhouse gas emissions, Wallingford will see 0-3 days of extreme precipitation per year. This relatively wide range results from the Town's varied topography, with lower-lying valleys having fewer extreme precipitation days (0-1) than the Green or Taconic Mountains (2-3).

Otter Creek, one of Vermont's largest rivers, runs alongside US Route 7 and passes near Wallingford Village Center. Similarly, the Mill River, a tributary of Otter Creek, approaches the East Wallingford Village Center. Both waterways are within FEMA-designated floodplains and State-mapped river corridors, indicating a significant flood risk to nearby populated areas that have historically been the focus of development. Other important tributaries, mainly in the Green Mountain region, include Bully, Feller, Homer Stone, Patch, and Roaring Brooks. Notable waterbodies include Elfin Lake, Wallingford Pond, Fifield Pond, and Little Rock Pond.

According to the Agency of Natural Resources, an estimated 6.4% of the Town's land area (or ~1,791 acres) is classified as Class II Wetlands. These play an important role in water absorption and retention, helping to mitigate flood risk and replenish groundwater supplies.

Average Temperatures

July is the hottest month in Wallingford, with an average temperature of 80.4°F, making it warmer than most places in Vermont. On average, there are 3.4 days per year when the high temperature exceeds 90°F. January is the coldest month of the year in Wallingford, with an average nighttime temperature of 7.9°F. There are ±173 days each year when nighttime low temperatures fall below freezing, which is about average compared to most places in Vermont.

*The Vermont Climate Action Office reports that **the period from 2010-2020 was the warmest decade on record**. If this trend continues, Wallingford will likely exceed 4 days with temperatures above 90°F by 2050.*

Projections from the University of California, San Diego predict that by 2044, under both intermediate emissions and extreme emissions scenarios, Wallingford will see 0-20 days above 90°F and 140-200 days below 32°F per year. The relatively wide range of below-freezing days results from the Town's varied topography, with lower-lying valleys having fewer cold days (140-160) than the Green or Taconic Mountains (180-200).

Drinking Water and Sanitary Sewer

Municipal water service is provided by Wallingford Fire District # 1 and the South Wallingford Water Cooperative. Fire District # 1 serves ±334 customers in Wallingford Village and the areas surrounding the Wallingford Lodge. This gravity-fed system includes a gravel well, a 400,000-gallon water storage tank, and approximately four miles of distribution piping. The well is in the Otter Creek floodplain off Meadow Street. The South Wallingford Cooperative serves ±24 households on Homer Stone Road, Hartsboro Road, and US Route 7 S. It is a gravity-fed spring with a treatment house located on Homer Stone Road.

Sewer service in Wallingford is also provided to customers who depend on Wallingford Fire District # 1. The core of the Village is serviced by a series of gravity-fed lines to the treatment plant on Creek Road behind True Temper in the Village. The only exception to the gravity collection system is an air ejector station on US Route 7 S. The 1960s vintage sewer treatment plant includes two pump stations, an oxidation ditch, chlorine clarifiers, and sludge drying beds. This facility is also located within the Otter Creek floodplain on Creek Road.

There is a second Wallingford Fire District for East Wallingford; however, it is exclusively for fire protection and does not accommodate public water or sewer systems. Thus, the remaining homes and businesses in Town rely on individually drilled wells and springs for potable water and on-site septic systems for sanitary sewer disposal.

Transportation

Wallingford covers 43.4 square miles and has a highway network that spans much of the area outside state- and federally managed lands. The main highway corridor, US Route 7, travels north-south through Vermont and beyond, running directly through the Wallingford Village Center. Heavy truck traffic and high overall traffic volumes, with an estimated annual daily traffic count of 4,400 to 6,900 in 2025, continue to raise concerns for the Town about noise pollution, historical integrity, and traffic-calming and safety measures.

VT Route 103, which straddles the northeast corner of Town, is also a major arterial road, though it does not directly go through East Wallingford. VT Route 140 is an east-west connector between Wallingford Village and East Wallingford. The latter also contains the eastern terminus of VT Route 155, though much of this road lies in Mount Holly. Other collectors of local significance include Roaring Brook Lane, East Street, and Creek, Cross; Dawson Hill, Dugway, Freeman Brook, Haven Hill; Hartsboro, Seward Hill, Sugar Hill, Tifft, and West Hill Roads. Personal vehicles are the primary mode of transportation, though the Marble Valley Regional Transit District bus system makes a few stops in Wallingford on its Rutland-Manchester Route along US-7.

According to 2026 VTrans Town Highway data, the Town has ±46.0 municipal road miles: 3.9 miles Class 2, and 42.1 miles Class 3. Approximately 82% are gravel or dirt, and 18% are paved. In addition, there are 16.6 miles of State highway in Wallingford; including Class 4 roads and legal trails, this brings the total to ±70.4 miles of traveled highways. The local road network is maintained by a Town highway maintenance crew of 3 full-time employees, whose garage is located on River Street.

*The Town's 2026 road erosion inventory shows that **59% of the road mileage is hydrologically connected, or within 100 feet of a water resource** (e.g., stream, wetland, lake, or pond). Proximity to water resources can make these sections of road more vulnerable to flooding and fluvial erosion.*

The Town's 2026 structures inventory (short structures and culverts) shows Wallingford has 13 short structures (bridges with 6'-20' span), all of which are owned and maintained by the State. There are ±561 culverts in the municipal road right-of-way; all were inventoried by the RRPC in 2026. Of these, 107 culverts are classified as being in "poor", "urgent", or "critical" condition and should be considered for replacement and/or upgrade in accordance with the Town's Road and Bridge Standards.

According to VTrans, there are seven (7) Town-owned long structures (bridges with >20' span), with an additional six (6) long structures owned by the State. One of these – B15 on VT Route 155 – has been closed since January 2023 due to a sizable hole in the bridge deck and other major structural deficiencies. VTrans inspects long structures every two years through the Town Highway Bridge Program.

Rail freight service passes through Wallingford and East Wallingford on two railroads operated by Vermont Rail System. Vermont Rail System continues to do standard track maintenance on both the Vermont Railway and the Green Mountain Railroad. The State of Vermont, through its Bridge Management Program, continues to inspect rail bridges along both rail lines.

Electric Utility Distribution System

Green Mountain Power (GMP) provides electric service to 1,192 accounts via two primary circuits. Average annual outage statistics for 2021-2025 are summarized in **Table 1**.

The longest power outage affecting the greatest number of accounts between 2021 and 2025 was 10.70 hours, impacting 876 accounts in 2021. The longest outages during this period occurred in 2022, lasting over 57 hours and affecting 16 total accounts. In 2025, there was a 7.97-hour outage that affected 142 accounts.

Table 1: Power Outage Summary

Average Annual (2021-2025)	
Avg # of times a customer was without power in a year	2.34
Avg length of each outage in hours	4.27
Avg # of hours the typical customer was without power	9.74
2025 only	
Avg # of times a customer was without power in a year	1.52
Avg length of each outage in hours	4.83
Avg # of hours the typical customer was without power	7.36

Public Safety

Wallingford Fire District #1 provides fire protection services to most of the Town, including Wallingford Village and South Wallingford. This 16-member on-call volunteer Fire Department is based in the Fire Station located on River St. Wallingford Fire District #2 provides fire protection service to East Wallingford. This 8-member on-call volunteer Fire Department is based in the Fire Station located at 5988 VT Route 140 E. Both Departments are members of the Rutland County Mutual Aid Association, which allows for additional assistance from surrounding communities when resources within the Town are exhausted. Law enforcement is provided primarily by the Rutland County Sheriff's Department and the Vermont State Police.

Emergency medical response, including ambulance service, is provided by the Wallingford Rescue Squad, located just outside of Wallingford Village on Maple Street. The nearest hospital is the Rutland Regional Medical Center in Rutland City (±10 miles). Specialist/medivac support is available at Dartmouth Hitchcock (±63 miles), the University of Vermont (±84 miles), and LifeNet New York (±54 miles).

Emergency Management

Per the Local Emergency Management Plan (LEMP), the Town appoints an Emergency Management Director (EMD) and Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC). These individuals work with others in town to keep the LEMP up to date and coordinate with nearby municipalities and non-profit agencies that serve frontline populations. Wallingford offers various facilities for different needs: Lenny Burke Farm for individuals with disabilities, Wallingford House for seniors, and Serenity House and Emma's Place for rehabilitation.

Town Hall on School Street serves as the primary emergency operations center (EOC), with Wallingford Elementary School and Wallingford Rescue Squad serving as alternate locations. The elementary school also serves as the primary shelter, with Wallingford Lodge and Wallingford Rescue Squad serving as alternate locations. All properties can operate as warming and cooling centers to varying extents (i.e., on-site generators vs. portable hook-ups) in winter and summer, respectively.

4 PLANNING PROCESS

Plan Developers and Plan Development Process

The 2026 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan is an update to the 2021 single-jurisdiction mitigation plan. **Table 2** summarizes the process used to develop the 2026 update. Local Hazard Mitigation Planning Team members include the Emergency Management Coordinator, the Town Clerk, the Town Administrator, the Energy Committee Chair, a Selectboard representative, and a highway department representative. Of these, the highway representative and Town Administrator previously participated in the 2021 update. **Appendix C provides a detailed summary of public engagement throughout the Plan update process**, from the kickoff to the final draft; refer to page A-8 for more details.

Table 2: Plan Development Summary

Apr 29, 2026 Planning Team Kick-off Meeting: Discussed what a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan is; benefits of hazard mitigation planning; current plan status; planning process; and developed the public engagement strategy (see **Appendix C**). Planning Team working meetings were not open to the public.

Apr – Jul 2026: Completed Phase 1 engagement activities (see **Appendix C**).

May 26, 2026 Risk Assessment Workshop: Confirmed community profile information (Section 3), completed risk assessment, and began developing profiles for the highest risk natural hazards (Section 5). Subject matter experts attended the Workshop to assist with risk assessments for Invasive Species and Infectious Disease.

July 1, 2026 Planning Team Meeting: Finalized Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (Section 5) with input from Phase 1 engagement. This is a critical milestone in the plan development process. The draft Plan was prepared for presentation to the Selectboard and the first public comment period.

July 20, 2026 Draft Plan Presentation: Draft Plan presented to the Selectboard to encourage input from local government and the public that could affect the plan's conclusions and better integrate with Town initiatives. The meeting was recorded, aired on Public Access Television (PEGTV), and is available on their YouTube channel and the Town website.

July 20 – Aug 3, 2026 Draft Plan Public Comment Period: Draft Plan posted for first public comment period. Draft plan discussed at the Aug 3 Selectboard meeting with opportunity for public comments – coincided with close of first public comment period. The Selectboard authorized proceeding with the development of the mitigation strategy on Aug 3.

Aug 12, 2026 Planning Team Meeting: Discussed comments received on Jul draft Plan; finalized Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (Section 5), and began work on Hazard Mitigation Strategy (Section 6).

Sep – Nov 2026: Completed Phase 2 engagement activities (see **Appendix C)**.

Sep 3, 2026 Mitigation Action Evaluation Workshop: Evaluated a broad range of possible actions to address the highest risk natural hazards. Subject matter experts attended the workshop to assist the planning team with action evaluation.

Sep 23, 2026 Planning Team Meeting: Developed actions proposed for implementation (Section 6); began work on Plan Maintenance (Section 7) and Mitigation Strategy – Changes Since 2021 (Section 4).

Oct 15, 2026 Planning Team Meeting: Finalized actions proposed for implementation (Section 6) with input from Phase 2 engagement; finished work on Plan Maintenance (Section 7) and Mitigation Strategy – Changes Since 2021 (Section 4). The final draft Plan was prepared for presentation to the Selectboard and a second public comment period.

Nov 2, 2026 Final Draft Plan Presentation: Presented to the Selectboard to encourage input from local government and the public. Input at this milestone is crucial as it is the last opportunity to weigh in on the plan contents before submittal for Approval Pending Adoption. The meeting was recorded, aired on PEGTV, and is available on their YouTube channel and the Town website.

Nov 2 – Nov 16, 2026 Final Draft Plan Public Comment Period: Final draft Plan posted for last public comment period. Draft Plan discussed at Nov 2 Selectboard meeting with opportunity for public comment – coincided with close of last public comment period. At meeting, Selectboard granted approval to submit final draft to VEM for APA review.

In addition to the local knowledge of Planning Team members and other relevant parties, several existing plans, studies, reports, and technical information were used in preparing this Plan; see **Table 3**.

Table 3: Existing Plans, Studies, Reports, & Tech Info

2026 FEMA NFIP Insurance Reports: used to determine how many structures are insured, number/type of repetitive loss properties (Section 5), and describe NFIP compliance (Section 6).

2026 Local Emergency Management Plan: used to identify local organizations that support at-risk populations to ensure these organizations are invited to participate in the Plan update.

2026 Road Erosion Inventory: referenced to develop Transportation info in Community Profile (Section 3), flood risk hazard profile (Section 5); and mitigation actions to address floods (Section 6).

2026 Structures Inventory (culverts and short structures): referenced to develop Transportation info in Community Profile (Section 3), and to develop flood risk profile (Section 5) and mitigation actions to address floods (Section 6).

2026 State of Vermont Highway Mileage Summary: used to develop Transportation info in Community Profile (Section 3).

2026 Wallingford Municipal Plan: referenced to develop Community Profile (Section 3), Mitigation Strategy Updates – Changes Since 2021 (Section 4), and Integration into Existing Plans and Procedures (Section 6).

2025 FEMA Local Mitigation Planning Handbook & 2025 FEMA Local Mitigation Planning Policy Guide: used to ensure Plan meets Federal mitigation planning requirements.

2025-2021 Green Mountain Power Outage Data: used to develop Table 1 in Community Profile (Section 3).

2023 State of Vermont Hazard Mitigation Plan: referenced to develop risk assessment, including invasive species and infectious disease, and hazard profiles (Section 5).

2023 State of Vermont Municipal Vulnerability Indicators Tool: referenced to develop Average Temperatures info in Community Profile (Section 3) and risk assessment and hazard profiles (Section 5).

2021 Vermont Climate Assessment: referenced to develop flood risk profile (Section 5).

2020 United States Census Report: referenced to develop Demographics and Growth Potential info in Community Profile (Section 3).

2019 Wallingford Road Stormwater Master Plan: referenced to develop flood risk profile (Section 5) and mitigation actions to address floods (Section 6).

2017 FEMA Region 1 Mitigation Ideas for Natural Hazards: Used to develop mitigation actions to address impacts from severe winter storms, strong wind, drought, extreme temperatures, wildfires, and floods (Section 5).

2015 Zoning & Subdivision Regulations and 2011 Flood Hazard Area Regulations: Referenced to describe Wallingford's Planning capabilities and NFIP Compliance (Section 6).

2013 FEMA Mitigation Ideas: A Resource for Reducing Risk to Natural Hazards: used to develop mitigation actions to address impacts from severe winter storms, strong wind, drought, extreme temperatures, wildfires, and floods (Section 5).

2009 Mill River Corridor Plan; 2009 Roaring & Baker Brook SGA; 2009 Upper Otter Creek Phase 2 SGA; 2007 Mill River Phase 1 & 2 SGA; and 2005 Upper Otter Creek Phase 1 SGA: referenced to develop flood risk profile (Section 5) and mitigation actions to address floods (Section 6).

2008 Flood Insurance Study for Rutland County, Vermont: referenced for flood risk profile (Section 5); however, given the age of the document, it provided little in terms of assessing and profiling current flood risk.

FEMA Disaster Declarations for Vermont: used to develop risk profiles and hazard histories (Section 5).

GIS Data Layers: incorporated into base mapping to assess and profile flood hazards (Section 5), including **FEMA Flood Rate Insurance Maps and National Flood Hazard Layers.**

National Oceanic and Atmospheric (NOAA) National Climatic Data Center's Storm Events Database & FSA Disasters Archive: regional data for Rutland County used to develop risk profiles and hazard histories. (Section 5).

OpenFEMA Dataset Public Assistance Funded Project Summaries for Vermont: used to develop risk profiles and hazard histories (Section 5).

VTrans Town Highway Bridge Inspection Reports: referenced to develop Transportation info in Community Profile (Section 3), flood risk profile (Section 5), and mitigation actions to address floods (Section 6).

VTrans Transportation Resilience Planning Tool: Used to develop flood risk profile (Section 5) and mitigation actions to address floods (Section 6).

Vermont Dam Inventory (VDI): Referenced to develop flood risk profile (Section 5) and mitigation actions to address floods.

Mitigation Strategy Update – Changes Since 2021

In 2021, Wallingford identified the following natural hazards that they believed posed the highest risk to the community:

- Thunderstorms with associated flash flooding, fluvial erosion, inundation flooding, and high winds
- Winter Storms with associated extreme cold, snow, ice, and high winds.

As the Town sought to implement the 2021 mitigation strategy, it looked for opportunities to incorporate information and recommendations from the 2021 Plan into other plans, programs, and procedures. Below are some examples.

The Selectboard has worked closely with the Road Commissioner and the highway department to incorporate risk information and hazard mitigation goals into annual operating budgets, including the development of a formal Capital Improvement Plan in 2025. This integration remains an ongoing priority.

*Wallingford has **effectively integrated information from the 2021 Plan** into budgets and other plans.*

In 2018, Wallingford completed its first road erosion inventory under the Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP). The MRGP is required by the Vermont Clean Water Act and aims to protect water quality by reducing stormwater-related erosion from municipal roads. Nearly 60% of Wallingford's municipal roads are regulated by the MRGP.

The Town has made significant progress in bringing its roads and drainage systems up to basic MRGP maintenance standards. Since 2018, the Town has improved approximately 8.64 miles of municipal roads. These infrastructure improvements protect water quality and make the roads more resilient to flash flooding. As of October 2026, only ±0.50 road miles are completely non-compliant with MRGP standards, while ±2.80 road miles are only partially compliant. This progress is reflected in the 2026 update to the Town's Road Erosion Inventory.

Wallingford is one of two municipalities in Rutland County to have a Hot Weather Response annex for their Local Emergency Management Plan (see page 27). The Town has activated this response plan numerous times since 2023 during heatwaves that posed a threat to public health and safety. While no one has utilized Wallingford's cooling center options to date, public visibility and awareness of these procedures have likely influenced personal behaviors and kept at-risk populations safe from the detrimental health effects of extreme heat.

The Wallingford Conservation Commission (WCC) is conducting a multi-year program to test methods for removing and controlling the invasive Japanese Knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*). The test site is a 2-acre patch near the intersection of Waldo Lane and VT-140, where the plant was observed breaking through the pavement and creeping toward the banks of Otter Creek. Using an evidence-based method from the NH Dept. of Agriculture, WCC treated ~0.66 acres by trimming stalks and suffocating them with tarps and mulch. This method has successfully suppressed growth, and the invasive plant is expected to disappear from this treated area by 2029. While it is uncertain at this time whether WCC can expand its efforts, the program has helped educate the public about the dangers posed by Japanese Knotweed, and the WCC would like to expand upon this educational effort.

*Mitigation actions taken by Wallingford since 2021 have **made the community more prepared and less vulnerable** to future natural hazard impacts.*

Wallingford has also made progress in completing some of the mitigation actions identified in the 2021 Plan – see **Appendix B**.

Looking back over the past five years, Wallingford has not experienced significant changes in land use, development, or population. For instance, there have been no expansions of public infrastructure, such as roads or sewer utilities. Of the 280 zoning permits issued between January 2021 and October 2026, 105 (or 37.5%) are related to renovations to existing homes, decks, porches, and sheds. New decks, porches, sheds, and accessory garages constitute 63 (or 22.5%) of permits. It is unknown if these are located in the FEMA-mapped floodplain or State-mapped River Corridors; however, it can be assumed that these small scale, isolated pockets of development likely do not have a major impact on community vulnerability. Residential development is rather minimal in comparison; the rate of new housing growth in Wallingford equates on average to 2 new housing units per year since 2021.

As stated in the Community Profile (page 3), Wallingford's growth potential is mixed. Residential land is the primary use of non-federal land in Town, but it is unlikely to expand much beyond the Wallingford Village area because of limited public water and sewer utilities, hilly terrain, and certain soil types that restrict septic system expansion. The Town is addressing gaps in cellular service by installing a new telecommunications tower in East Wallingford, but some areas still have limited or no reception.

In addition to the limitations posed by regulations in FEMA Special Flood Hazard Areas, Structures in the State-mapped River Corridors will be required to have a State permit beginning in 2028. Finally, the 2026 Rutland Regional Plan indicates that, of the four Future Land Use Areas designated for Planned Growth (Downtown Centers, Village Centers, Planned Growth Areas, Village Areas[1]), only about 1% of Wallingford's land is considered suitable for growth: Wallingford Village, East Wallingford, and South Wallingford.

Nevertheless, targeted retail and commercial growth, especially in the form of "infill" development, is possible and encouraged within these areas, which are delineated in the Town of Wallingford's Future Land Use Map (see the following page). Per Wallingford's Municipal Plan, the emphasis on any development is that it will be appropriate in size, scale, and historic character.

***Changes in population demographics and weather patterns** are the primary drivers for a shift in the Town's mitigation priorities in 2026.*

Based on the above, it is reasonable to assume that changes in population, land use, and development are not driving factors in Wallingford's mitigation priorities. More significantly, the Town has seen shifts in key demographics, primarily in the median age of residents (50.1) and the percentage of residents over age 65 (25%). These demographic changes have done more to increase the Town's vulnerability to natural hazards.

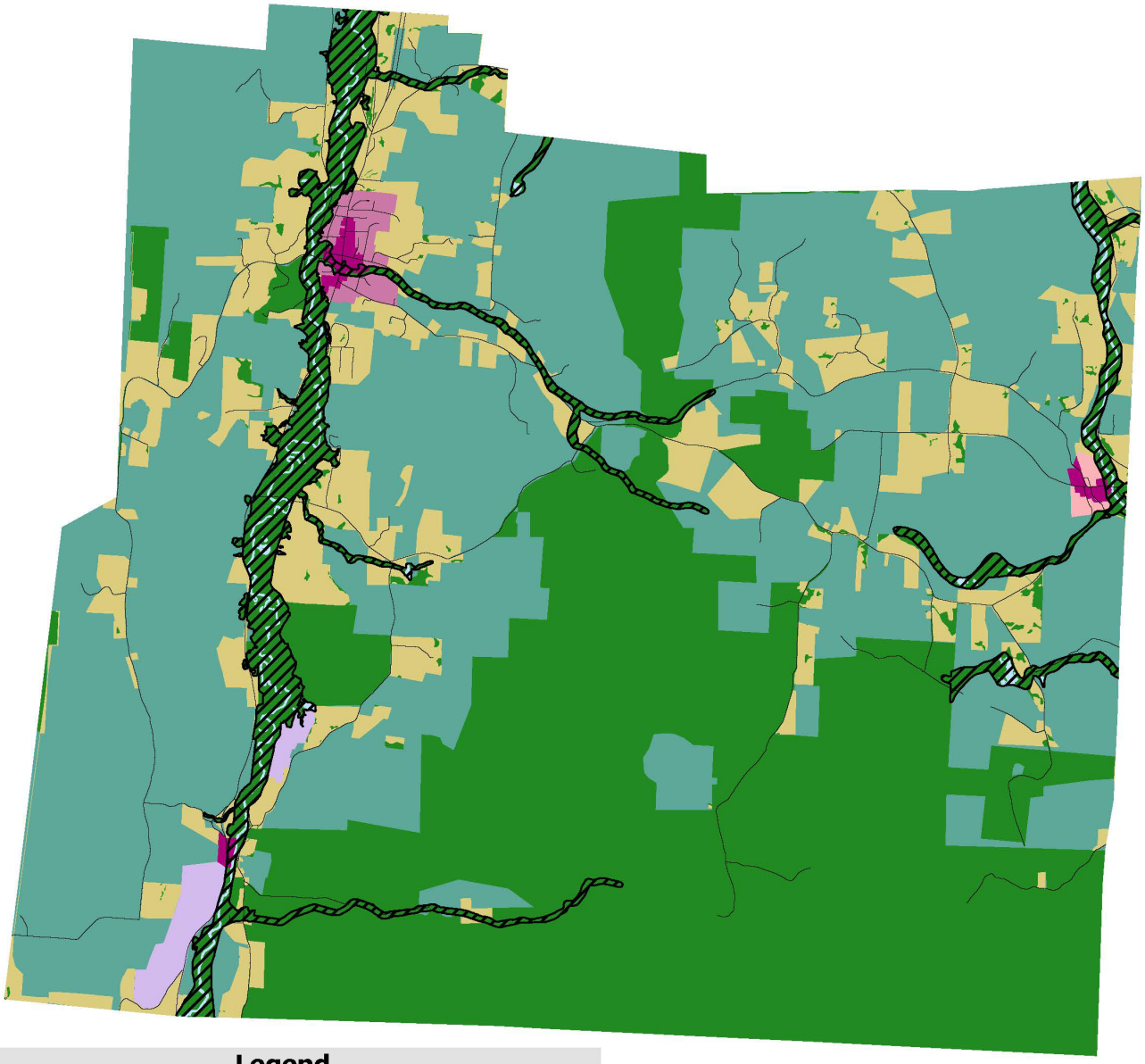
Since 2021, accelerating climate change has increased the frequency, duration, and intensity of storms, floods, fires, and extreme temperatures in Vermont. Local communities are already feeling the impacts of climate change, and these multi-hazard trends are expected to continue to intensify over the next century. [2] As a result, Wallingford considered how future conditions, such as climate change and potential development, will affect the types, locations, and intensity ranges of identified hazards when conducting the risk assessment and selecting mitigation actions for the 2026 Plan.

The 2026 risk assessment is presented in **Table 5**. The Town once again identified flooding and fluvial erosion, strong winds, and extreme cold/snow/ice as highest-risk hazards. Flash flooding and fluvial erosion, in particular, have a higher risk score (13.00 in 2026 versus 11.00 in 2021), likely because of the recent and significant infrastructure damage caused by the 2023 floods. Extreme cold, snow, and ice also saw a drastic increase in risk scores (11.00 in 2026 versus 7.5 in 2021), likely due to more mixed precipitation events and freeze-thaw cycles that threaten automobile drivers, pedestrians, maple sugaring, and forests.

[1] As defined by 24 V.S.A.§4348a(12)(A-D)
[2] FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance Program and Policy Guide, March 23, 2023

TOWN OF WALLINGFORD

2026 RUTLAND REGIONAL PLAN
FUTURE LAND USE MAP



Legend

- High Flood Risk Overlay
- Future Land Use Areas
  - Downtown Center
  - Enterprise
  - Hamlet
  - Planned Growth Area
  - Rural Ag or Forestry
  - Resource Based Recreation
  - Rural Conservation
  - Rural General
  - Special Use
  - Surface Water
  - Transition or Infill
  - Village Area
  - Village Center
  - Hamlets
  - Roads

0 0.38 0.75 1.5 2.25 3 Miles

N W E S

RUTLAND REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

The 2026 Plan expanded the list of assessed hazards to include invasive species and infectious disease, as identified in the 2023 State Hazard Mitigation Plan. Invasive species, specifically emerald ash borer (EAB), ultimately scored as a higher-risk hazard for the Town, given its recent detection near the Timber Hill Estates in 2025. The potential for Japanese Knotweed to amplify flood damage to stream banks and roadways is also given due consideration in this Plan at the recommendation of the Wallingford Conservation Commission; see the flooding and invasive species profiles in Section 5.

Since 2021, the Town's hazard mitigation strategy has evolved in response to more frequent and severe hazard events, which threaten both existing and potential future assets. *This has led to a shift in Wallingford's mitigation goals and strategy.*

Drought is also a new addition to the list of highest-risk hazards. Recent hot summers, warmer-than-normal winters, and the record-breaking 2025 drought, coupled with extensive publicity regarding climate change, have brought this natural hazard to the forefront of the public mind. For a heavily forested community like Wallingford, this issue is further compounded by the fact that drought increases the probability of wildfires.

Fire Statistics for 2025 from the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation reported that the number of acres burned during July and August was 12x higher than the typical average for these months over the past two decades. Further, wildfires occurred 6x more often on average[3]. One of those fires occurred in the western half of Rutland County, burning an estimated 10-12 acres in Fair Haven. Therefore, it is reasonable to believe that an event of equal or greater magnitude could occur in a heavily forested community like Wallingford under the right conditions, especially if droughts become more common. For these reasons, and the fact that 1/3 of Wallingford's land is Green Mountain National Forest, the Planning Team decided to include wildfires as a high-risk hazard for the Town.

Finally, to better address the needs of Wallingford's at-risk populations, actions that directly benefit these populations were ranked first priority for implementation in 2026 - see page 44 and Table 8.



The White Rocks overview from the Ice Bed Trail demonstrates an extent of Green Mountain National Forest that may be vulnerable to wildfires if current climate trends continue. Photo credit: TheOutbound.

[3] https://fpr.vermont.gov/sites/fpr/files/documents/Fire%20Statistics%20for%202025.pdf

5 HAZARD IDENTIFICATION AND RISK ASSESSMENT

Local Vulnerabilities and Risk Assessment

The Planning Team completed a risk assessment for a broad range of natural hazards, consistent with those in the 2023 State Hazard Mitigation Plan. Hazards were ranked based on 1) probability of occurrence and 2) potential impact on community assets—people, infrastructure, the environment, and the local economy. The assessment considered the effects of future conditions, such as climate change or potential future development, on the types, locations, and intensity ranges of identified hazards.

The Planning Team's ranking process, presented in **Table 5** on the following page, reflects the highest-risk hazards to which the Town believes it is most vulnerable. The **highest-risk hazards** are those with a higher probability of occurrence and/or more severe or extensive impacts on community assets.

Each of the **highest-risk hazards** is profiled in this section. **Lower risk hazards do not justify mitigation due to a lower probability of occurrence and/or negligible impacts and are not profiled in this Plan**. Refer to the State Hazard Mitigation Plan for additional information on lower-risk hazards.

In this Plan, natural hazards are defined as:

- Geological hazards including landslides and earthquakes.
- Environmental and climatic hazards including flooding, wind, hail, snow and ice storms, extreme temperatures, drought, wildfire, and invasive species.
- Biological hazards including infectious disease that may become epidemics or pandemics.

A summary of the risk assessment, including input from Phase 1 engagement activities, is provided here: **See Appendix C for more details about public engagement methodology and results.**

Table 4: Phase 1 Public Input: Survey & Pop-Up Results

Hazard	Risk Score	Phase 1 Engagement Input
Flooding/Fluvial Erosion	**13.00 & 8.00**	71% of survey respondents have experienced flooding; ranked #3 with extreme cold/snow/ice for hazards most likely to occur in the next 5 years
Extreme Cold/Snow/Ice	**11.00**	75% of survey respondents have experienced severe winter storms; 52% believe this hazard is likely to occur in the next 5 years
Strong Winds	**7.00**	78% of survey respondents have experienced strong wind; ranked #2 of hazards most likely to occur in the next 5 years
Extreme Heat	**7.00**	57% of survey respondents have experienced extreme heat events
Wildfires	**6.75**	1 in 5 pop-up event participants flagged wildfires as a "hazard of most concern."
Invasive Species	**6.00**	Not surveyed; see Appendix C (page A-22) for more details
Drought	**6.00**	72% of survey respondents have experienced drought; ranked as the #1 hazard most likely to occur in the next 5 years

Infectious Disease

This Plan must assess the risks posed by all hazards identified in the 2023 State Hazard Mitigation Plan, including infectious diseases. This hazard is unique and diverse. While the probability of occurrence in Wallingford may be high, the potential impacts will depend heavily on the specific infectious agent.

During the risk assessment, the Planning Team assumed an endemic level of infectious disease spread. They concluded that the Vermont Department of Health (VDH), located in nearby Rutland City, is better equipped to mitigate any outbreaks; therefore, the team did not consider this hazard for inclusion in the Plan.

Given the diverse nature of this hazard, this Plan cannot fully explore it. Readers should look to VDH for more information on infectious diseases.

Table 5: Community Hazard and Risk Assessment (Planning Team Rankings)

Hazards	Probability	Potential Impact					Risk Score*
		People	Infrastructure	Environment	Economy	Average	
Flash Floods/ Fluvial Erosion	**4**	**3**	**3**	**3**	**4**	**3.25**	**13.00**
Extreme Cold/ Snow/Ice	**4**	**3**	**3**	**2**	**3**	**2.75**	**11.00**
Inundation Floods	**4**	**2**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**2.00**	**8.00**
Strong Winds	**4**	**2**	**2**	**1**	**2**	**1.75**	**7.00**
Extreme Heat	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**1.75**	**7.00**
Wildfires	**3**	**3**	**2**	**2**	**2**	**2.25**	**6.75**
Invasive Species	**4**	**2**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**1.50**	**6.00**
Drought	**3**	**2**	**2**	**2**	**2**	**2.00**	**6.00**
Infectious Disease	4	2	1	1	1	1.25	5.00
Hail	2	2	1	1	2	1.50	3.00
Landslide	1	1	1	1	1	1.00	1.00
Earthquake	1	1	1	1	1	1.00	1.00

*Score = Probability x Average Potential Impact

	Frequency of Occurrence: Probability of a plausibly significant event	**Potential Impact:** Severity and extent of damage and disruption to population, property, environment, and the economy
1	**Unlikely:** <1% probability of occurrence per year	**Negligible:** isolated occurrences of minor property and environmental damage, potential for minor injuries, no to minimal economic disruption
2	**Occasionally:** 1–10% probability of occurrence per year, or at least one chance in next 100 years	**Minor:** isolated occurrences of moderate to severe property and environmental damage, potential for injuries, minor economic disruption
3	**Likely:** >10% but <75% probability per year, at least 1 chance in next 10 years	**Moderate:** severe property and environmental damage on a community scale, injuries or fatalities, short-term economic impact
4	**Highly Likely:** >75% probability in a year	**Major:** severe property and environmental damage on a community or regional scale, multiple injuries or fatalities, significant economic impact

Invasive Species

This Plan must assess the risks posed by all hazards identified in the 2023 State Hazard Mitigation Plan, including invasive species. This hazard is unique and diverse. While the probability of occurrence in Wallingford may be high, potential impacts will depend heavily on the specific invasive species.

For invasive species, the team focused on a specific forest pest of high concern, the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), due to recently confirmed detections in Wallingford and nearby Clarendon, Danby, and Tinmouth. They concluded that EAB infestation is highly likely and that minor-to-moderate impacts justify mitigation.

Given the diverse nature of this hazard, this Plan cannot fully explore it. Readers should consult the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources for more information on invasive species, including terrestrial and aquatic invasives and forest pests.

Highest Risk Hazard Profiles

Floods

Flood events can damage or destroy property, disable utilities, render roads and bridges impassable, destroy crops and agricultural land, disrupt emergency services, and cause fatalities. People may be stranded in their homes without power, heat, or communication, or be unreachable. Long-term collateral dangers include disease outbreaks, livestock losses, septic system washouts (which can pollute the water supply), downed power lines, fuel storage tank leaks, fires, and the release of hazardous materials.



Hartsboro Road was completely submerged during Irene (DR4022): note the pick-up truck in the red circle

As noted in the 2023 State Hazard Mitigation Plan and 2021 Vermont Climate Assessment, the most common recurring hazard event impacting Vermont communities is flooding. There are two types of flooding: inundation and flash flooding. Inundation flooding is the often gradual rise of water onto low-lying land. Flash flooding is a more sudden, violent flood that often involves streambank erosion (i.e., fluvial erosion).

While inundation-related flood loss can be a significant component of flood disasters, the more common mode of damage in Vermont is fluvial erosion, often associated with physical adjustment of stream channel dimensions and location during flood events. These dynamic and often catastrophic adjustments are due to bed and bank erosion of naturally unstable stream banks, debris and ice jams, or the structural failure of human-made structures, including flow diversion caused by such structures.

Several major flood events have recently affected Rutland County, resulting in multiple Disaster Declarations. Between 2001 and 2010, the county incurred approximately $2.6 million in property damage resulting from flood events. The worst flood came in August 2011 from Tropical Storm Irene (DR4022), which dropped 7-8 inches of rain. Irene caused 2 deaths, $55 million in property damage, and $2.5 million in crop damage in Rutland County.

Although Irene was technically a tropical storm, its effects are included in this flooding section because the storm brought mainly heavy rainfall and flooding to the Town, rather than the strong winds usually associated with tropical storms. This caused most streams and rivers to flood, along with widespread and severe fluvial erosion.

From 2012 to 2020, Rutland County experienced approximately $3.6 million in property and crop damage and three Disaster Declarations: $420,000 in June & July 2013 (DR4140), $2 million in July 2017 (DR4330), and $1 million in April 2019 (DR4445). Of these events, Wallingford saw the most destruction during DR4330, with nearly $172,000 in damages.

According to the NOAA Storm Events database, Rutland County experienced approximately $200,000 in property damage in July 2023 (DR4720). However, FEMA's Public Assistance Project Summary indicates that this number could reach $4.4 million, with Wallingford's damages exceeding $115,650.

In Rutland County, seven towns suffered more than $1 million in damage due to Tropical Storm Irene. ***Wallingford alone incurred about $1.1 million in damages****, with $274,952 from Public Assistance, $196,928 from Individual Assistance, and $604,334 from NFIP Claims. Its NFIP claims were the second highest in the Region after Rutland City/Town.*

The only other instance of significant flooding-related damage in Rutland County occurred in July 2024 (DR4762), resulting in approximately $50,000 in property damage.

90 properties (9% of community structures) are located within the Special Flood Hazard Area, including 16 in the floodway. *These are mainly residential structures (single- or multi-family homes and mobile homes), but also include accessory buildings, commercial and development sites, public parks, the IB Munson house B&B, Little Angels Preschool & Childcare Center, and critical facilities like the Town Garage, the sewer plant, the Wallingford Village Fire Station, and the East Wallingford Post Office.*

According to FEMA, 33% of these properties have flood insurance. In total, these 30 policies cover $7,431,000 in value. ***There is <u>one</u> repetitive loss property, classified only as "Other Residential."***

Wallingford has a history of inundation flooding along multiple stretches of Otter Creek. Within Wallingford Village, areas of impact include Florence Ave, Maple Street, Meadow Street, and Railroad Street. US-7/South Street is primarily vulnerable south of the Waldo Lane intersection. Other locations susceptible to inundation flooding include Creek Road and the western segment of Hartsboro Road (before Green Hill Lane). In East Wallingford, a Mill River tributary contributes to flooding on Earl Wade Road. These areas are shown on the following maps.

Damage from inundation flooding usually includes impacts to roads, culverts, bridges, and homes. The severity and extent of these impacts are typically minor; however, some critical facilities are located in the FEMA-mapped floodplain (see pages 17-18).

Unlike inundation floods, flash floods can occur whenever there is heavy rain. These flood events are inherently sudden and unpredictable and can impact areas outside of designated floodplains, also known as River Corridors. River Corridors encompass an area around and adjacent to the river where fluvial erosion is most likely to occur. The River Corridor map for Wallingford can be viewed on the Vermont Flood Ready Atlas and is also delineated on the following maps.

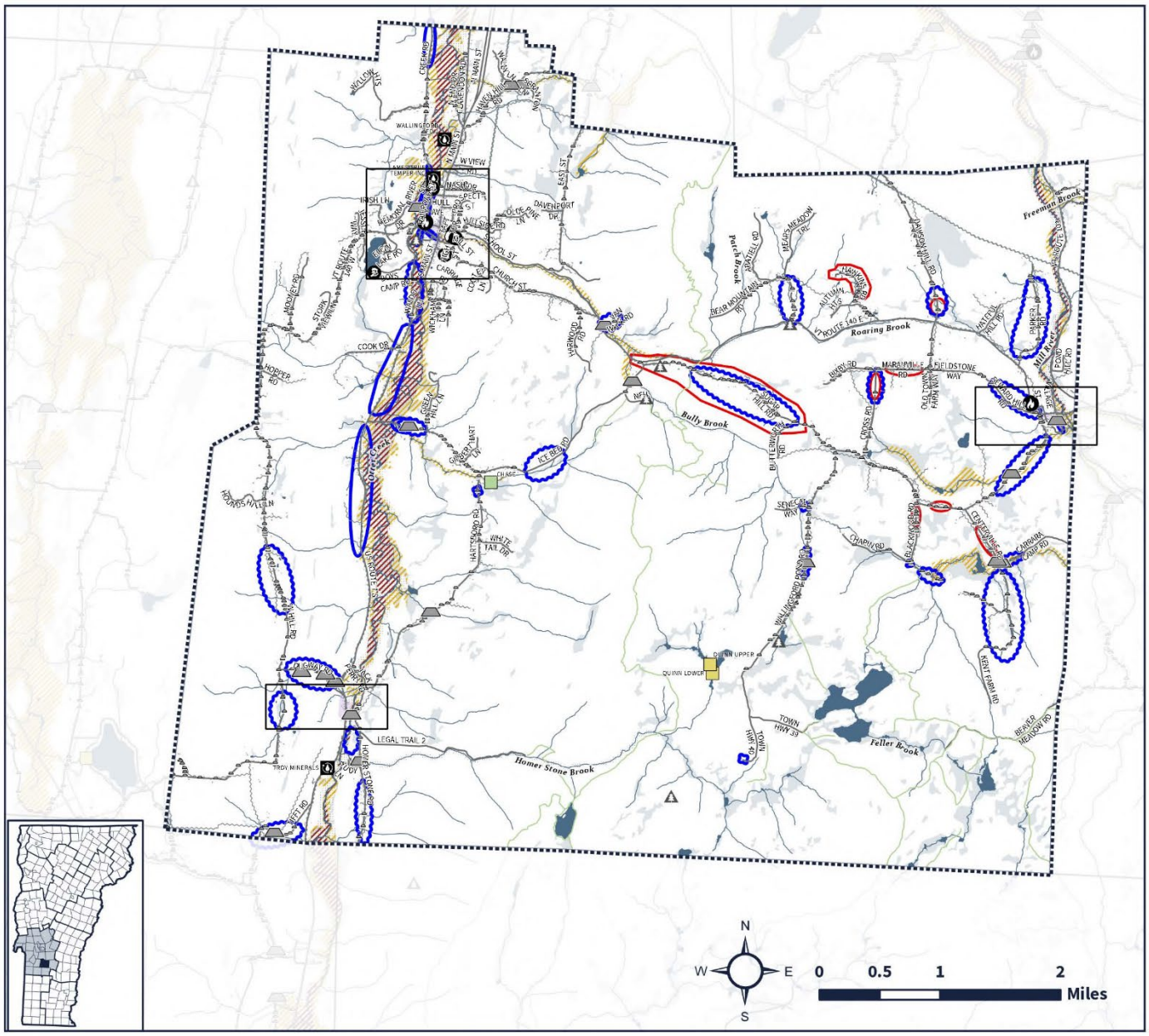
Flash flooding events periodically wash out sections of many roads in Wallingford; see the list below. There are 112 buildings in the State-mapped River Corridors- a mix of single and multi-family dwellings, mobile homes, commercial and development sites, camps, trailheads and access points, and the Transfer Station. Of these, around 40 properties overlap with the FEMA-mapped floodplain.. Areas of flash flood concern are shown on the following maps.

- East Wallingford Village: Earl Wade Road, Seward Hill Road.
- South Wallingford Village: Dugway Road/Dugway Road extension, US Route 7 S.
- Wallingford Village: Elm Street, Meadow Street, River Street.
- Elsewhere: Bear Mountain Road; Blackwood Road; Carrara Camp Road; Centerville Road; Chapin Road; Cross Road; Dawson Hill Road; Hartsboro Road; Homer Stone Road; Ice Bed Road; Kent Farm Road; Parker Road; Senecal Way; Sugar Hill Road; Tifft Road; Waldo Lane; Wallingford Pond Road; West Hill Road; and Van Wyck Road.



Major scouring on Sugar Hill Road in July 2023 (DR4720)

WALLINGFORD



- Designated Village
- Critical Asset
- Buildings
- Power Lines

Flood Area of Concern

- Flash Flood
- Inundation Flood

Winter Areas of Concern

- Extreme Cold/Snow/Ice
- Lakes & Ponds
- Rivers & Streams
- River Corridors

Wetlands

- Wetlands

FEMA Floodplain

- FEMA Floodplain
- FEMA Floodway
- School
- Emergency Operations Center
- Firehouse
- Parks
- Shelter
- Hospitals
- Culverts
- Bridges
- Roads
- Trails
- Transmission Lines
- Town Boundaries

Dams

- High Hazard Potential
- Significant Hazard Potential
- Low Hazard Potential
- Minimal Hazard Potential
- Waste Water Facilities
- Nursing Homes

Credits: Nic Stark for the Rutland Regional Planning Commission | Produced: 7/2/2026
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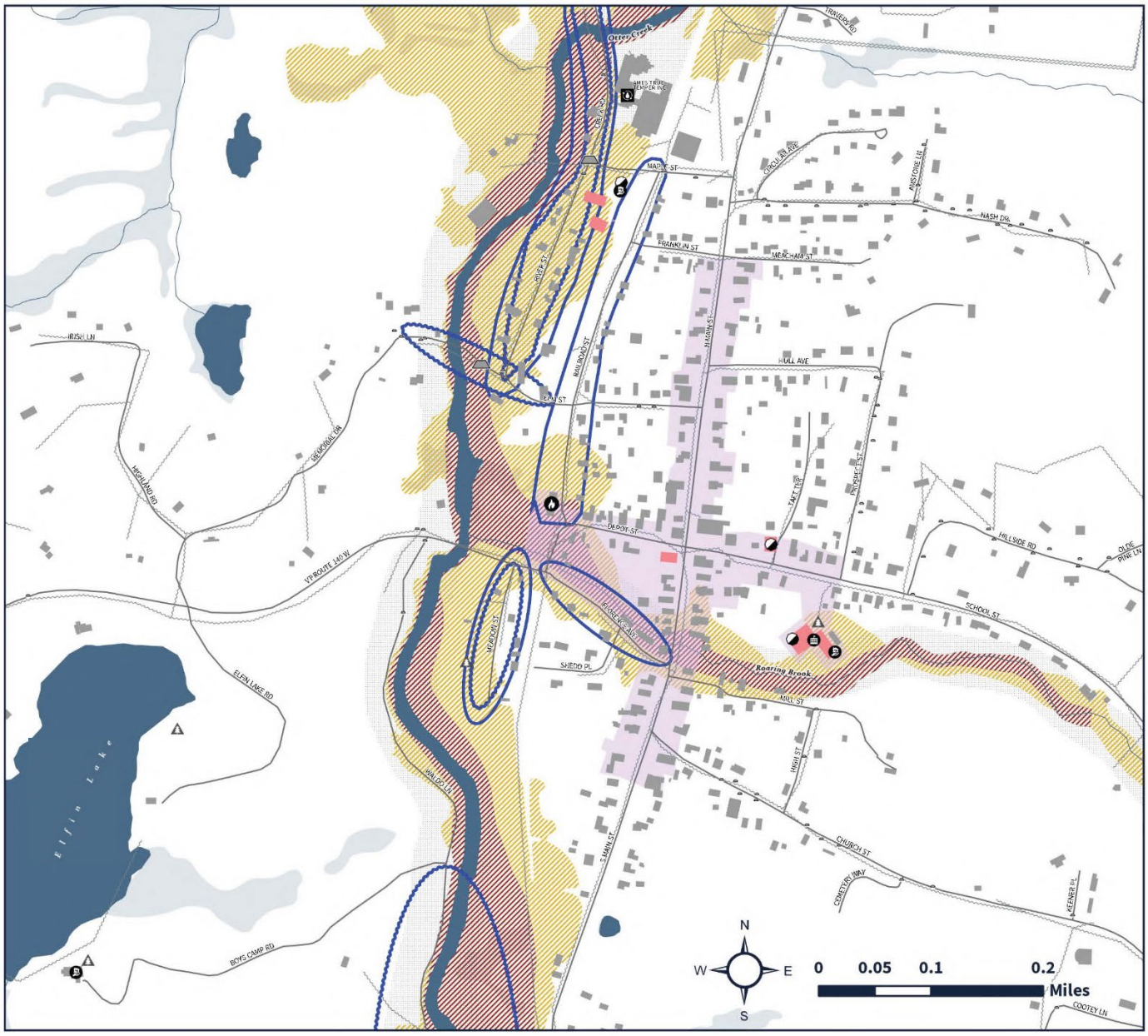
VCGI, E911, Local governments, RPCs (regional planning commissions), VT Lidar Program, VT Imagery Program, public domain., Green Mountain Power, See dataset specific metadata., Vermont River Corridor and Floodplain Protection Program
VT Dept of Environmental Conservation, ANR

WALLINGFORD VILLAGE



- Designated Village
- Critical Asset
- Buildings
- Power Lines

Flood Area of Concern

- Flash Flood
- Inundation Flood
- Lakes & Ponds
- Rivers & Streams
- River Corridors

Wetlands

- Wetlands

FEMA Floodplain

- FEMA Floodplain
- FEMA Floodway
- School
- Emergency Operations Center
- Firehouse
- Parks
- Shelter
- Hospitals
- Culverts
- Bridges
- Roads
- Transmission Lines

Dams

- High Hazard Potential
- Significant Hazard Potential
- Low Hazard Potential
- Minimal Hazard Potential
- Waste Water Facilities
- Nursing Homes

Credits: Nic Stark for the Rutland Regional Planning Commission | Produced: 7/2/2026
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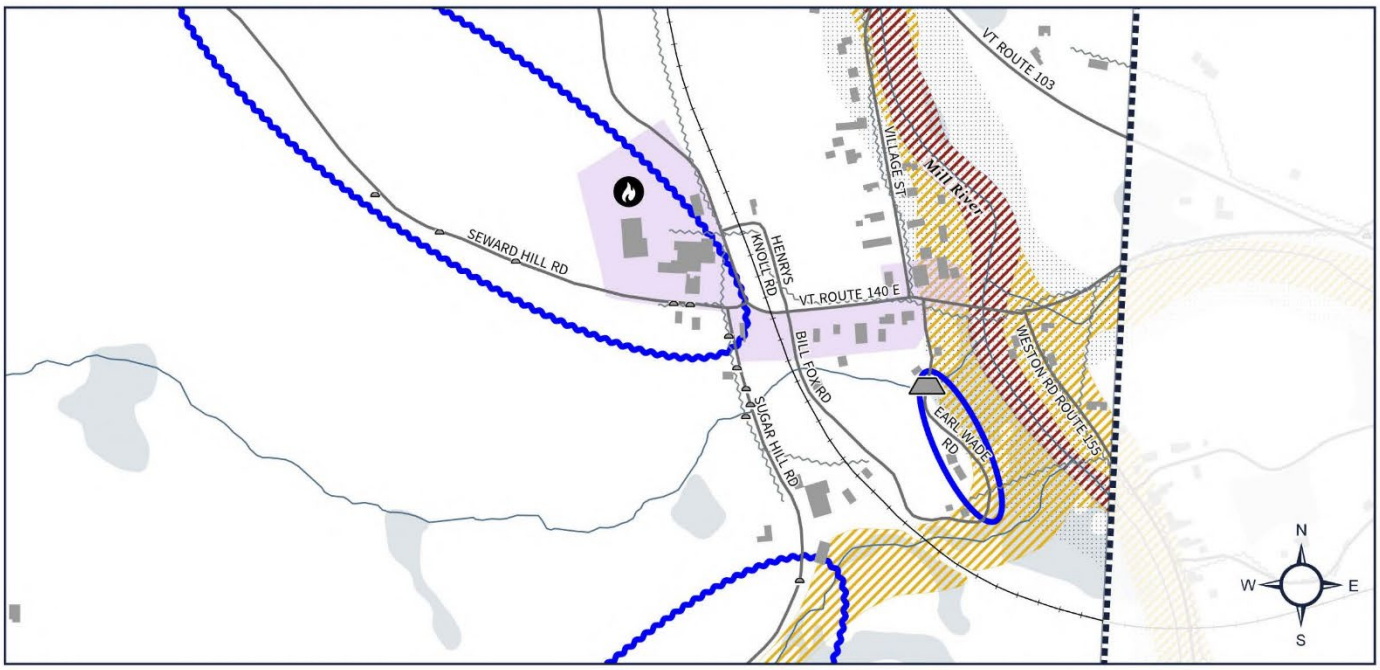
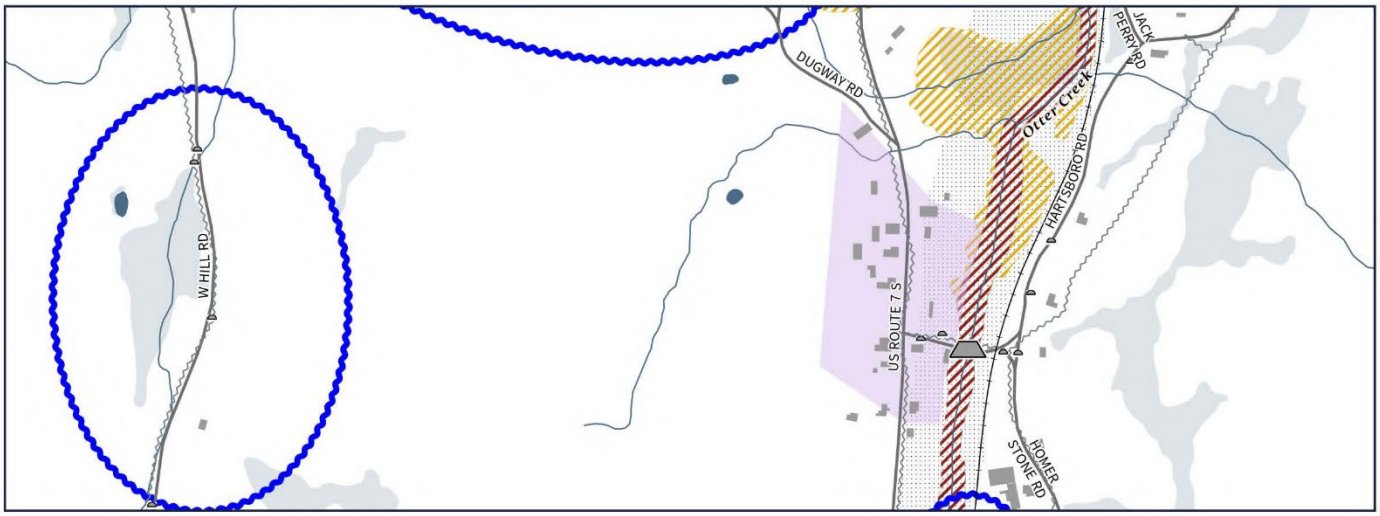
VCGI, E911, Local governments, RPCs (regional planning commissions), VT Lidar Program, VT Imagery Program, public domain., Green Mountain Power, See dataset specific metadata., Vermont River Corridor and Floodplain Protection Program
VT Dept of Environmental Conservation, ANR

EAST WALLINGFORD



SOUTH WALLINGFORD



0 0.05 0.1 0.2 Miles

- Designated Village
- Critical Asset
- Buildings
- Power Lines
- Rail Lines

Flood Area of Concern

- Flash Flood
- Inundation Flood
- Rivers & Streams
- River Corridors

Wetlands

- Wetlands

FEMA Floodplain

- FEMA Floodplain
- FEMA Floodway
- School
- Emergency Operations Center
- Firehouse
- Hospitals
- Culverts
- Bridges
- Roads
- Town Boundaries

Dams

- High Hazard Potential
- Significant Hazard Potential
- Low Hazard Potential
- Minimal Hazard Potential
- Waste Water Facilities
- Nursing Homes

Credits: Nic Stark for the Rutland Regional Planning Commission | Produced: 6/23/2026
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VCGI, E911, Local governments, RPCs (regional planning commissions), VT Lidar Program, VT Imagery Program, public domain., Green Mountain Power, See dataset specific metadata., Vermont River Corridor and Floodplain Protection Program
VT Dept of Environmental Conservation, ANR

71% of survey respondents have experienced floods. According to the National Weather Service, floods kill more people than any other weather-related hazard, except for extreme heat. Most flood-related deaths occur while driving a vehicle into flood waters.

For those sheltering in place, the greatest hazard beyond the floodwaters themselves is the risk of isolation. The rapid and erosive destruction of nearby infrastructure may render flooded areas inaccessible. The result is people becoming trapped and requiring swift-water rescues, or critical assets, such as medical services, becoming unavailable. This is especially problematic if the emergency response services themselves are located in flood-prone areas (e.g., both Wallingford Fire Department buildings), although the Wallingford Rescue Squad was constructed above two feet above base flood elevation. This reduced its vulnerability during Irene, when floodwaters came 6 inches short of inundating the property.

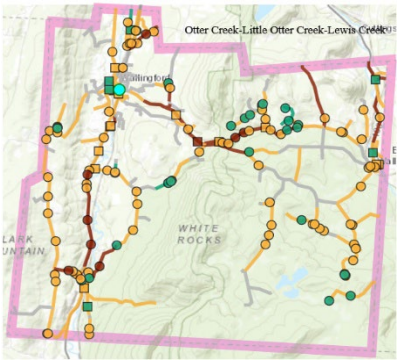
Wallingford's older and younger populations, people with pre-existing health conditions and limited range of motion, outdoor workers, and those living in substandard housing are at greatest risk of isolation. One survey respondent stressed the significance of "*having safe places with generators and storage for food & water located in several areas. It's also important to have the flexibility to answer unexpected situations.*"

Inundation floods have cascading impacts on infectious disease risk. Mosquitoes, for example, breed in standing water, and as their population increases, so does the risk of the diseases they transmit, such as West Nile Virus and Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE). Another survey respondent expressed concern about the potential for E. coli contamination from livestock runoff on Centerville Road, a risk that would be exacerbated by more frequent flood events.

The most common type of flash flood damage is road washouts. When runoff volumes exceed the capacity of the stormwater drainage system (i.e., ditching and culverts), washouts can occur. The Town's structures and road erosion inventories, ANR's Municipal Vulnerability Indicators Tool, and VTrans Transportation Resilience Planning Tool (TRPT) were used to help identify locations and assets at risk from flash flooding.

Road segments, culverts, and bridges that exhibit high flood risk according to the TRPT are shown in **red** on the graphic to the right:

- Road segments (▬): Dawson Hill Road, Dugway Road, East Street, Elm Street, Hartsboro Road, Haven Hill Road, Old Turnpike Road, School Street, South Main Street/US Route 7 S, VT Route 103 S, VT Route 140 E
- Culverts (●): Dugway Road, Hartsboro Road, Haven Hill Road, US Route 7 S, VT 140E
- Bridges (■): VT Route 140 E (B3 over Roaring Brook)



VTrans TRPT Flood Risk Results for Wallingford

Except for East Street and Haven Hill Road, these align with the Planning Team's identified areas of flood concern. The Town also has a long-standing concern about a deteriorating bridge on Creek Road (B59) that lies within the FEMA floodway. In addition to being a repeatedly damaged asset, the bridge's failure during a flood event (especially one that cuts off access to Clarendon to the north) would completely isolate residents on Creek Road. Evacuation would become impossible, as would access by emergency medical services, posing substantial risks to life safety.

Culvert failures and road washouts can have a significant negative impact, especially if they occur on roads that are locally important for shortcuts, detours, and/or access to critical facilities. This can include railway intersections; for example, "*the road/train crossing on the north end of Hartsboro Road routinely sinks and becomes hazardous to vehicles due to poor footing or support for the cargo trains using the rail daily.*"

When roads are impacted by flooding, the Town coordinates with the Fire Department and State Dispatch to close roads and set up detours. Road closures can create longer commute times and longer emergency service response times.

Additional community assets survey respondents expressed concern about losing due to the impacts of flooding and other natural hazards*: True Temper sawmill, Thrive Holistic Health Center, Wallingford Rec Fields, Elfin Lake shoreline, Appalachian Trail Crossings, White Rocks picnic area, Stone Meadow Park, and the iconic "Boy with a Boot" statue.*

The Fire District #1 well is sited in the Otter Creek floodplain off Meadow Street. It is housed in a flood-proofed vault and therefore not compromised during a flood. However, the entire sewer treatment plant and several sewer manholes on Meadow Street, River Street, Creek Road, and Railroad Street are also within the Otter Creek floodplain and are susceptible to flooding. During Tropical Storm Irene, the plant was submerged in 4 feet of floodwater. Following Irene, all controls were relocated above base flood elevation; however, the back-up generator remains vulnerable to flooding.

Ice or debris jams, as well as dam failures, may also cause flash flooding. The Town does not have a high incidence or high probability of ice jams, except at the intersection of VT Route 140 W and Florence Avenue along Roaring Brook. When ice jams do occur in this location, they typically do not result in flooding or other infrastructure damage.

The Highway Department and several survey respondents noted that beaver dams are a recurring issue for Wallingford, specifically near VT Route 140 E (on Roaring Brook, near the Long Trail crossing), near Parker Road (on an unnamed tributary), and near Davenport Farm on East Street (on an unnamed tributary). During extreme precipitation events, nearby roads and properties are susceptible to major flooding if the beaver dams fail or are overtopped. The Town frequently monitors beaver dams in these areas and clears them as needed when they interfere with a culvert in the municipal road right-of-way.

There are three (3) dams in Wallingford listed in the Vermont Dam Inventory, a database managed by the VT Dam Safety Program. None of these are high hazard potential dams, nor does the Town own any such dams outside its borders:

1) Chase Dam is located on an unnamed tributary of the Otter Creek, southeast of the triangular intersection of Hartsboro and Ice Bed Roads. It is privately owned and classified as a minimal hazard potential dam. Its condition rating and latest year of inspection are unknown.
2) Quinn Upper Dam is located on Homer Stone Brook, west of the southern terminus of Wallingford Pond Road. It is privately owned and classified as a low hazard potential dam. Last inspected in 2023, its condition is poor.
3) Quinn Lower Dam is located on Homer Stone Brook, west of the southern terminus of Wallingford Pond Road. It is privately owned and classified as a low-hazard-potential dam. It breached during the July 2023 floods. Removal and replacement with an upsized culvert are underway, with completion anticipated by December 2026.



As mentioned previously, flash floods often involve streambank or fluvial erosion. Excessive erosion can trigger land or mudslides. [4] It may also result in heightened turbidity, increased phosphorus transport, or the release of legacy pollutants. Additionally, sediment mobilized by fluvial erosion can contribute to aggradation (i.e., a rise in the channel level) and to dammed streams.

[4] DR4720 damages in Vermont include those caused by landslides and mudslides. These hazards did not manifest in Wallingford and are therefore omitted from this Plan due to a lack of recently available data.

The Nexus Between Japanese Knotweed and Fluvial Erosion

Invasive species are often not just a nuisance; they can amplify the impacts of natural hazards and interrupt the stability of the natural and built environments. In this vein, the Chair of the Wallingford Conservation Commission highlights the concerning cascading effects posed by the weed Japanese Knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*):

"In the context of hazard mitigation, Japanese knotweed acts as a dangerous hazard multiplier that directly drives fluvial erosion across our critical watersheds. [It] possesses a highly aggressive, destructive root and rhizome architecture capable of expanding through minute structural vulnerabilities. Infestations along municipal right-of-ways actively exploit cracks in asphalt, compromise road foundations, undermine concrete retaining walls, and breach stormwater drainage joints. This physical displacement accelerates the mechanical weathering and premature failure of public infrastructure, inflating long-term capital maintenance costs and compromising asset integrity during emergency responses.



"It aggressively outcompetes the deep-rooted native trees and shrubs that naturally anchor our river banks. Every winter, this plant dies back completely. This leaves hundreds of feet of the banks along our waterways entirely bare, exposed, and vulnerable to being scoured away by seasonal high flows. This creates two critical vulnerabilities for our local infrastructure:

- "First, it accelerates stream bank failure, which dumps massive amounts of sediment and brittle debris downstream into our main channels.
- "Second, this debris collects at our critical choke points—specifically our culverts, bridges, and drainage networks—creating artificial dams that turn minor high-water events into severe, localized flash flooding."

While invasive species are virtually impossible to eradicate once they are established, attempts made to control or limit their spread are valuable; otherwise, "we are leaving our transportation lifelines and earthen flood defenses along these waterways vulnerable to predictable failures."



Photo Credit: TP Knotweed Solutions

Fluvial erosion in Wallingford is most prevalent along the Mill River and Otter Creek and their associated (unnamed) tributaries, as well as portions of Bully, Feller, Homer Stone, and Roaring Brooks. Many of these brooks are within Green Mountain National Forest, and any potential impacts would be addressed by the U.S. Forest Service. Existing studies helped identify other locations and assets at risk from fluvial erosion. These include Stream Geomorphic Assessments (Phase 1 and Phase 2), River Corridor Plans, and Stormwater Management Plans.

Stream Geomorphic Assessments (SGAs) and River Corridor Plans provide information about the physical condition of streams and factors that influence their stability. For Wallingford, these include:

- 2005 Upper Otter Creek Phase 1 SGA
- 2007 Mill River Phase 1 SGA
- 2007 Mill River Phase 2 SGA
- 2009 Mill River Corridor Management Plan
- 2009 Roaring & Baker Brook Phase 1 SGA
- 2009 Upper Otter Creek Phase 2 SGA

***As weather patterns shift and we see larger storms and more frequent freeze-thaw cycles**, the Town will monitor for signs that rivers that have historically been stable are becoming less stable, with increased erosion, widening, trees falling in from their banks, etc.*

These reports identify priority locations for projects related to river corridor protection and restoring floodplain access. Identified potential projects in Wallingford include wetland restoration, planting stream buffers, removing berms, removing or replacing human-placed structures, and restoring incision areas (i.e., deeply undercut river valleys). There are 11 potential projects identified in Wallingford, though the current progress towards implementing them is unknown. No stream stabilization projects were proposed.

Stormwater Master Planning (SWMP) involves identifying stormwater, sediment, nutrient, and septic inputs to waterways and designing projects to mitigate those inputs, either by eliminating them at the source through green stormwater infrastructure, septic system improvements, and back road projects, or by improving floodplain access within the stream network to increase sediment attenuation. The stormwater reports for Wallingford Village (2012), East Wallingford (2017), and the Wallingford Stormwater Master Plan (2019) recommended a total of 12 projects designed to reduce stormwater flows and increase flood resiliency. These include installing subsurface chambers, bioretention areas, infiltration swales, and rain gardens, as well as addressing road erosion issues under the Municipal Roads General Permit (e.g., re-crowning and grader berm removal).



Environmental impacts from flooding may cut off access to recreation areas, which in turn adversely affect local tourism. Flood events, along with associated road closures, will also have a short-term impact on the local economy due to fewer shopping trips and commuter delays. Additionally, flooding may negatively affect maple syrup production by damaging trees and disrupting sap collection.

The Town has recently experienced multi-year delays in receiving reimbursement after declared disasters. This, combined with Individual Assistance denials, has significantly affected both municipal and personal budgets and deficits.



The aftermath of the July 2017 floods on West Hill Road (DR 4330)

Floods Hazard History

These are the most recent significant events impacting Wallingford. This hazard history is limited to the past **20 years**, except for federal Rutland County Disaster Declarations, which are shown in **bold**. All damages are to property unless otherwise noted.

7/11/2023: DR4720 4-5" rain: $115,652 local damage; $4.4 mil regional damage

6/20/2019: 6" rain; no reported local damage

4/15/2019: DR4445 1-2" rain with significant snowmelt: no reported local damage; $1.0 mil regional damage

7/1/2017: DR4330 3-4" rain the previous 3-4 days with flash flooding on 7/1/17: $171,927 local damage; $1.9 mil regional damage

1/12/2014: 1-2" rain with significant snowmelt: $10,000 local damage

6/25-7/11/2013: DR4140 heavy rain over multiple days: $100,000 local damage; $420,000 regional damage

8/28/2011: DR4022 Tropical Storm Irene with +5" rain: $1.1 mil local damage; $55.0 mil regional property damage, $2.5 million regional crop damage

3/23/2010: 1-2" rain with significant snowmelt: $10,000 local damage

6/12/2007: Unknown amount of rainfall: $20,000 local damage to logging road

12/16/2000: DR1358 2-4" rain: $13,125 local damage; $100,000 regional damage

7/16/2000: DR1336 heavy rain: $2,391 local damage; $200,000 regional damage

9/16-9/21/1999: DR1307 Tropical Storm Floyd with 5-6" rain and 44 mph winds: $6,205 local damage; $100,000 regional damage



Extreme Cold, Snow, and Ice

These events typically occur between December and March in the Rutland Region. They can include snow, sleet, freezing rain, or a mix of these wintry forms of precipitation. Events may also be associated with Strong Wind or Floods, increasing the potential hazard impacts. The costs of these storms include power outages due to heavy snow or ice, damaged trees, school closures, and traffic accidents. Extreme cold—typically defined as temperatures and/or wind chills below zero during winter and below freezing in spring and summer—poses risks to human health and safety, damages water systems by freezing pipes, and harms garden plants and agricultural crops.

From 2001 to 2010, Rutland County experienced $2.27 million in property damage and $100,000 in crop damage from severe winter storms, including Disaster Declarations DR1367 in 2001 and DR1698 in 2007.

From 2011 to 2020, Rutland County experienced $1.4 million in property damage and $100,000 in crop damage from severe winter storms, with $465,000 in property damage due to a 10" - 20" heavy, wet snowfall across the County on December 9, 2014 (DR4207).

From 2021 to May 2026, Rutland County experienced $110,000 million in property damage and $1.02 million in crop damage, the latter due to a hard freeze in May 2023 (S5470).



Extreme cold/snow/ice, tied with flash flooding and fluvial erosion, ranks #3 among the top three hazards likely to occur in the next five years. Severe winter storms increase the risk of car accidents, and extreme cold increases the risk of hypothermia and frostbite. This threat is amplified if extreme temperatures coincide with power outages, which can cut off heat and communications. See the Strong Wind profile for more information about the Town's vulnerability to power outages.

75% of survey participants have experienced severe winter storms. ***The impacts of greatest concern*** *are loss of road access and extended periods of extreme cold, coupled with a long-duration power outage.*

The impacts of extreme cold and severe winter storms are hardest felt by Wallingford's at-risk populations— the elderly, the youth, the disabled, outdoor workers, and those living in substandard housing. About 25% of Wallingford residents are over the age of 65; 9% are under the age of 5; 12% are considered disabled; 40% have below-average incomes; and 92% of houses were built before 2000.

The Town has particular concern for the more isolated residents in highly rural areas without reliable communications, mainly in East and South Wallingford. Within the Wallingford Village area, a survey respondent expressed concern about the number of people walking on roads rather than sidewalks due to the prevalence of "glare ice" (i.e., extremely smooth, reflective ice). Sidewalk clearing is typically handled by Wallingford Fire District #1.

The Town does not have a system for monitoring the needs of at-risk populations before or during a severe winter storm. However, it provides aid upon request and can set up temporary warming shelters at Wallingford Elementary School, Wallingford Lodge, and/or the Wallingford Rescue Squad, if needed.

Car accidents are a leading cause of death and injury during winter storms. To lessen roadway impacts, the Town maintains a fleet of equipment, including two tandem dump trucks equipped with two plows, one ton truck with a plow, one medium wheel loader, one grader, one backhoe loader, and one excavator. Overhead utility lines covered in ice or wet snow pose the greatest risk to infrastructure.

As shown on the previous map (page 16), roads prone to drifting include Blackwood, Centerville, Cross, Hawkins, Maranville, and Sugar Hill Roads. Notably, these are all areas that run up or down the hills of the Green Mountain region. These roads are maintained accordingly, and snow accumulation and ice events typically do not result in a long-term loss of road accessibility. Roads adjacent to critical facilities (Town Garage, Town Office, Elementary School, Fire Stations, sewer plant, etc.) are also well maintained.



Fallen trees near Dugway Rd in December 2014 (DR 4207)

There is potential for "mud season" to worsen in Wallingford. Mud season usually starts in late March or early April, when snow melts and the ground thaws, only to refreeze, creating mud on gravel roads. As hard winter freezes become less frequent, Wallingford is experiencing thaw-freeze cycles earlier in the season. This will make plowing its non-paved roads more challenging. Sugar Hill Road is a frequent problem spot for the Town during mud season.

The primary environmental concern is tree damage. Trees provide many environmental services and benefits, including stormwater management, improved air quality, carbon storage, shade, wildlife habitat, noise reduction, and aesthetic value.

Wallingford's vulnerability lies with roadside trees falling into the road and/or onto utility lines due to the weight of ice or wet snow accumulation. The resulting impacts include tree loss, utility disruptions, and road debris requiring clearing.

Given the Town's predominantly rural nature, farming and maple sugaring industries are primarily vulnerable. Local businesses are also at risk in the short term. Potential impacts include school and daycare closures, inaccessibility for employees and customers, and commute delays.

One town-wide risk that is difficult to predict in terms of location is the freezing and breaking of drinking water pipes, although it has occurred on Depot Street in the past.

Extreme Cold, Snow, and Ice Hazard History

These are the most recent significant events impacting Wallingford. Hazard histories are limited to the past **10 years**, except for federal Rutland County Disaster Declarations, which are depicted in **bold**. All damages are to property unless otherwise noted.

1/30/2026: sub-zero temps (5 to 10 below) with windchills of 25 to 35 below; no reported damages
3/23/2024: 30"snow; no reported damages
5/18/2023: S5470 record low in the 20s: $1.02 mil regional crop damage
2/3/2023: record low of 15 to 30 below zero with windchills of 30-45 below; no reported damages
4/19/2022: 3-5" wet snow: $20,000 regional damage
2/3/2022: 8-12" snow, mixed with sleet and ice: $50,000 regional damage
1/16/2022: 6-10" wet snow with 50+ mph winds: $50,000 regional damage
4/15/2021: 7" of snow; $10,000 regional damage
1/16/2021: 8-18" wet snow; $60,000 regional damage
2/7/2020: 8-12" snow; ¼" ice: $35,000 regional damage
3/22/2019: 6-20" wet snow with 15-25 mph winds; $30,000 regional damage
1/19/2019: 10-18" snow, 10 to 20 below 0°F with 30+ mph winds creating windchills colder than 20-40 below 0°F: $25,000 regional damage
3/7/2018: 20" snow: $40,000 regional damage
3/14/2017: 12-22" snow with 35 mph wind creating whiteout conditions: $50,000 regional damage
11/29/2016: freezing rain with 1/10" ice: $20,000 regional damage
2/1/2015: Record cold month with 15-20+ days below zero and 6" snow: $25,000 regional damage
12/9/2014: DR4207 10-20" snow: $13,789 local damage; $300,000 regional damage
3/5/2001: DR3167 20-30" snow: $4,454 local damage; $130,300 regional damage



Strong Wind

As defined by FEMA's National Risk Index, strong winds are those exceeding 58 mph and can be particularly damaging. It can occur alone, such as during straight-line or downdraft wind events (known as microbursts), or can accompany other natural hazards, including severe thunder and/or winter storms. Thunderstorm winds can cause power and communication outages, transportation and economic disruptions, and significant property damage, and pose a high risk of injuries and loss of life.

From 2001 to 2010, Rutland County incurred nearly $7.9 million in property damage, with the most significant damage amounting to $4.5 million from the "'Noricane" event on April 16, 2007 (DR1698).

***78% of survey respondents have experienced a strong wind event**. Many storms with high winds can result in downed trees and damage to phone and power lines, buildings, and other property. Wallingford is susceptible to winds town-wide, especially along the western Green Mountain slopes.*

From 2011 to 2020, Rutland County experienced over $2.4 million in property damage, with the most significant incident resulting in $500,000 in damage on May 5, 2017. On September 8, 2012, winds over 70 mph toppled trees onto houses, camps, and vehicles in Wallingford and nearby Clarendon. Three years later, on October 28, 2015, widespread outages occurred in Wallingford and other communities along the western slopes of the Green Mountains due to downed trees on powerlines. Both events caused $50,000 in damages each.

From 2021 to May 2026, wind events caused over $1.3 million in property damage in Rutland County. On August 26, 2022, a microburst with winds over 65 mph caused an estimated $500,000 in property damage and $100,000 in agricultural damage, including the collapse of a barn in nearby Clarendon.

Strong wind ranked #2 of the top three hazards experienced by residents. It threatens lives, property, and vital utilities, primarily through flying debris, fallen trees, and downed power lines. Wallingford is susceptible to high-directional winds townwide, especially in East Wallingford and along the western slopes of the Green Mountains more generally, posing a potentially significant risk to many residents. Roads called out as areas of concern by the Planning Team and survey respondents include Dawson Hill, Dugway, Hartsboro, Hawkins, Homer Stone, Sugar Hill, and West Hill Roads.

Those relying on electric-powered medical devices are especially at risk during power outages. Also, outside the service areas of the Fire District or South Wallingford Cooperative public water systems, those relying on private wells lose access to water. Without a backup power supply, people need to be prepared to withstand potentially 24 hours or more without power or to seek alternative accommodations. As noted in the Community Profile, the longest outages in the Town occurred in 2022, lasting over 57 hours during two separate events in December.

*One resident described how the wind "**comes up like a freight train**" on Parker Road; another stated, "In the past nine years, we have submitted **multiple catastrophic insurance claims** for wind damage to buildings and trees on our property."*

Downed trees within the road right-of-way are a significant cause of power outages. Roads passing through dense wooded areas (i.e., most of Town) are especially vulnerable, as fallen trees can bring down utility lines for power and telecommunications. Power outages are the main cause of disruptions to communications, which are crucial in times of crisis.

The loss of phone service is especially concerning for Wallingford's more remote homes and at-risk populations. Landline phones, which have been upgraded from copper wiring to fiber, rely on an in-home battery backup that typically lasts less than eight hours, regardless of phone use. Notably, all municipal buildings – and most Town residents - have recently transitioned to fiber phone lines.



Due to Wallingford's natural terrain, many areas lack reliable cell phone service, particularly in East and South Wallingford. Therefore, during a power outage lasting more than eight hours, many will be unable to contact emergency response services. This is of concern given Wallingford's aging demographics and the prevalence of remote and isolated homes. Recent and upcoming installations of communications towers in Mount Holly and on Seward Hill in East Wallingford will help significantly improve cellular service for most Wallingford residents.

Telecommunications are essential for disaster warning systems and for response and recovery efforts. During an emergency, the Wallingford Town Hall's local Emergency Operations Center (EOC) manages municipal communications, including phone calls, internet access, and two-way radios. However, it does not have backup generator power, nor does the alternate EOC/primary shelter location (Wallingford Elementary School) or the alternate shelter location (Wallingford Lodge).

The only critical facilities with backup power are Fire District #1's sewer treatment plant and the Wallingford Volunteer Fire Department. This does not include the Fire District #1 well; however, in situations where Wallingford loses all power, there are four to five days' worth of water in the storage tank. A secondary emergency source would be one manual hydrant. Similarly, although there is no backup power at the sewer air ejector station on US Route 7 S, the system has storage capacity for approximately 2 days.

In addition to utility outages, fallen trees can damage buildings and block road access. When fallen trees become entangled in utility lines, clearing debris from the roadway becomes more difficult, and restoring access can take longer.



Like severe winter storms, the primary environmental impact of concern is tree damage. Damage or loss to them detracts from the quality of the ecological services they provide; see the extreme cold/snow/ice profile.

Unique to strong winds is the damage caused by wind shear, which results from differences in wind speed or direction over a short distance, either horizontally or vertically in the atmosphere. Wind shear can cause branches to fail and uproot even the strongest and healthiest trees. Its impacts are especially pronounced in forested, mountainous communities like Wallingford.



Strong winds, with associated power outages, can have a short-term impact on the local economy by causing business closures or blocking commutes due to downed trees or power lines. Since strong wind events rarely become federally declared disasters, the financial burden of response and recovery often falls on the Town and its local businesses

Strong Wind Hazard History

These are the most recent significant events impacting Wallingford. Hazard histories are limited to the past **10 years**, except for federal Rutland County Disaster Declarations, which are depicted in **bold**. All damages are to property unless otherwise noted.

2/17/2025: 52 mph winds; no reported damages
4/3/2024: 52 mph winds: $100,000 regional damage
2/28/2024: 40-50 mph winds: $50,000 regional damage
1/10/2024: 50 mph winds: $50,000 regional damage
8/4/2023: "wet microburst" with 55 mph winds and flash flooding: $20,000 local damage
12/23/2022: 48 mph winds: $175,000 regional damage
8/26/2022: 65 mph winds: $500,000 local property damage, $100,000 agricultural damage
12/11/2021: 45 mph winds: $35,000 regional damage
11/12/2021: 35 mph winds: $15,000 regional damage
3/1/2021: 46 mph winds: $55,000 regional damage
12/25/2020: 43 mph wind: $25,000 regional damage
8/4/2020: 45 mph winds: $60,000 regional damage
2/24/2019: 48 mph winds: $50,000 regional damage
7/10/2018: 55 mph wind: $20,000 local damage
4/1/2018: 56 mph winds: $100,000 regional damage
10/30/2017: 40-50 mph winds: $200,000 regional damage
5/5/2017: 55 mph winds: $525,000 local damage
2/29/2016:35-45 mph winds: $20,000 regional damage
8/28/2011: DR4022 Tropical Storm Irene: 48 mph winds: $100,000 regional damage
4/15-16/2007: DR1698 "Nor'icane": 3" snow/rain, 60-80 mph wind: $9,673 local damage; $4.5 mil regional damage

Extreme Heat

Rising temperatures are an emerging concern for communities accustomed to cooler climates. Excessive heat events involve a combination of significantly high temperatures and high humidity. Heat waves are defined as periods of at least three consecutive days with maximum temperatures exceeding 90°F. Vermont's "heat season" typically lasts from May to September, although abnormally hot days are occurring more frequently in April, October, and even November. The latter is particularly dangerous as the human body may not be properly acclimated to extreme heat outside of the expected heat season.

***Excessive temperatures have and will continue to impact Wallingford**. 57% of survey respondents reported experiencing extreme heat events. The VDH Heat Vulnerability Index further indicates that Wallingford is **0.5-1.5x more likely to develop heat illness** compared to most other municipalities in Rutland County.*

From 2001-2010, Rutland County experienced one heat wave in August 2006, with no reported damage.

From 2011 to 2020, Rutland County experienced five heat waves, four of which occurred during the Vermont heat season. The fifth, which occurred in March 2012, resulted in $650,000 in damage to the regional maple sugaring industry.

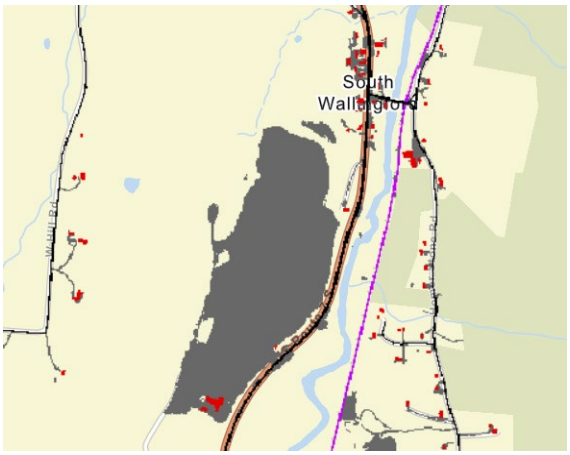
From 2021 to May 2026, several short-lived heat outbreaks occurred, but these were too brief to be formally defined as heatwaves. This includes the June 2025 heat outbreak, which had apparent temperatures of 100-110°F for only two days.

Vermont Department of Health (VDH) data indicates that state residents experience heat-related illnesses at around 87°F. While everyone is affected by hot weather, the risk of heat illness is greater for at-risk populations, including youth, the elderly, and the homeless. Other at-risk indicators include living alone, having limited transportation options, and lacking access to air conditioning or other cooling options. People with pre-existing health conditions, outdoor workers, and those living in older houses without central air or air conditioning are especially at risk from the impacts of extreme heat.

Wallingford is one of two communities in the Region to have an Extreme Heat response plan. This plan outlines communication and emergency response mobilization strategies and designates locations for cooling sites. Wallingford Rescue Squad, Gilbert Hart Library, and the Town Hall have been opened as cooling centers in recent years, although residents have yet to utilize these resources.

The materials used in transportation infrastructure exhibit a limited range of heat tolerance. Asphalt can melt and crack upon cooling, while concrete can buckle due to limited room for the slab to expand. Thermal expansion may cause bridge connections to swell and collapse, railway tracks to buckle, overhead lines to sag, and rails to bend.

The Town has a high percentage of unpaved roads and thus perceives a lower susceptibility of its highway infrastructure to damage, specifically from asphalt cracking. For residents who rely on drilled wells, increased evaporation rates may hinder access to potable water. Increased electrical loads from multiple cooling systems operating simultaneously may trigger a blackout, which further increases heat-related risks if residents rely on these systems as their primary cooling source.



The impervious surface of Wallingford Crushed Stone likely contributes to greater heat radiance. Source: VT Municipal Vulnerability Indicators Tool

A gradually warming climate will increase soil drying rates, contributing to drought-like conditions. Heat-stressed trees are more likely to succumb to disease or pest invasions. Conversely, warmer air can hold more water vapor, which in turn influences the frequency and magnitude of extreme precipitation events, weakening tree integrity.

Higher temperatures, especially if accompanied by drought, can significantly impact crops and other agricultural operations. Additionally, the potential for harmful algal blooms in water bodies increases, which may negatively affect recreation and local tourism

Extreme Heat Hazard History

These are the most recent significant events impacting Wallingford. Hazard histories are limited to the **past 20 years.** All damages are to property unless otherwise noted.

6/30/2026: Apparent temps of 90-110°F for four days; damages unknown
6/10/2026: Apparent temps of 90-95°F for three days; damages unknown
6/22/2025: Apparent temps of 100-110°F for two days; no reported damages
7/7/2020: Apparent temps of 95-100°F for four days; no reported damages
6/18/2020: Apparent temps of 95-100°F for six days; no reported damages
7/1/2018: Apparent temps of 95-110°F for six days; no reported damages
3/17/2012: 70 and 80°F temps, with maximums 30-40°F above normal for four days; $650,000 regional damage to maple sugaring industry
7/21/2011: Apparent temps of 100-108°F for four days; no reported damages
8/1/2006: Apparent temps of 100-105°F for two days; no reported damages

Wildfires

This hazard is specific to uncontrolled, unsupervised, and/or unprescribed outdoor fires. Wildfire probability depends on local weather conditions (lightning, drought, extreme heat), outdoor activities (camping, debris burning), topography and slope, and the amount of "fuel" present in the environment. Once a wildfire threatens a community, it is often too late to protect nearby structures, and populations must be evacuated for their own safety. These fires could damage structures and utilities, as well as hundreds of acres of woodlands.

The 2017 Vermont Wildland Fire Program Annual Report notes that most fires in the state are caused by burning debris. To date, Vermont has not experienced any federally declared wildfire disasters. The climate, vegetation type, and landscape discourage major wildfires, and historically, the risk has remained low. However, climate change may heighten this threat due to more frequent extreme heat events and drought-like conditions, particularly for predominantly forested communities in the Green Mountains.

Wallingford reported ±12 wildfires to the State from 1998 to 2025. Causes include lightning strikes, debris burning, campfires, matches, and even locomotive exhaust. The worst-reported fire during this period occurred in December 1998 and burned 20 acres. See the Wildfire Hazard History for a summary of wildfire events in Wallingford.

"Given the extensive forests in the area, a period of drought followed by a fire could result in significant damage to natural resources as well as private and public resources. ***The entire character of the area could be significantly damaged****." -Anonymous Survey Respondent*

Wildfires that are not extinguished can trap residents in their homes if evacuation routes are blocked. Emergency vehicles may be unable to reach isolated populations due to damage blocking transportation routes. This risk is especially pronounced for Wallingford's more remote homes and at-risk populations.

*Wallingford believes **there is an appreciable wildfire risk town-wide** due to changing climate conditions and the fact that **one-third of its land is in the Green Mountain National Forest**. One in five pop-up event participants flagged wildfires as a hazard of greatest concern.*

During and after a wildfire, air quality in the surrounding area is compromised by the release of toxic pollutants. In large concentrations, the lingering toxins can cause cardiorespiratory illness in individuals who were previously healthy. Those with pre-existing cardiovascular and respiratory conditions may experience life-threatening symptoms due to smoke exposure. Outdoor workers and firefighters also face higher health and safety risks related to wildfires.

Even if a wildfire is occurring well outside Town boundaries, air quality may be compromised by drifting smoke, as seen during the Canadian wildfires of 2023 and 2025.

Wildfire vulnerability is considered higher in the wildland-urban interface. In this area, infrastructure intersects undeveloped land, creating the potential for fire to spread from forested areas to residential development.

The burning of buildings and infrastructure is an apparent impact. Scorch damage to electrical lines, pipelines, and roads can shut down key community services that support human health and safety, such as transportation, electricity, and public utilities.

Wildfires may burn both flora and fauna, damaging habitat and causing injury or loss of life. Trees and other vegetation are particularly prone to burning during drought and extreme heat events. Depending on the scale of the wildfire, fallen timber may be so abundant as to pose a significant hazard. Wildfires also negatively impact water quality. Ash and particulate matter can travel to nearby water sources via runoff, carrying contaminants and toxic metals that poison both humans and aquatic life.

Wildfires can be particularly disruptive to the economy if they spread to farms and forests designated for timber harvesting. Fields used for important crops, including maple trees, may be destroyed, and livestock could suffer injury or death depending on the amount of smoke they are exposed to. Damage to trail systems, along with the adverse effects on water quality, could make engaging in outdoor recreation activities – mainly swimming and fishing – unsafe, thus hindering local tourism.

Wildfire Hazard History

These are the most recent significant events impacting Wallingford. Hazard histories are limited to the **past 20 years**. As there are no FEMA-declared wildfire disasters in Vermont, this information is provided by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, with supplemental data from the Town. **Some information, including locations and damages, is unavailable for these events.**

8/25/2025: 0.1 acres burned due to unknown causes in Green Mountain National Forest (43°25'54.5"N, 72°56'31.9"W); no reported damages

5/10/2023: 0.1 acres burned due to debris burning near 141 West Hill Road (43°27'05.5"N 73°00'20.0"W**);** no reported damages

5/9/2023: 0.1 acres burned due to debris burning near 231 Mill Street (43°28'07.0"N, 72°58'21.7"W); no reported damages

10/31/2022: <0.1 acres burned due to debris burning in Green Mountain National Forest (exact lat/long unknown); no reported damages

8/19-20/2022: 0.1 acres burned due to unknown causes near 613 Wallingford Pond Road (exact lat/long unknown); no reported damages

5/16/2021: 3.5 acres burned due to lightning strike near 1950 West Hill Road (43°25'34.9"N, 73°00'20.2"W); no reported damages

10/10/2020: 0.7 acres burned due to "other causes" near 1598 US-7 (43°27'13.6"N, 72°59'40.8"W); no reported damages

9/23/2017: 0.5 acres burned due to campfire (43°27'01.3"N, 72°58'06.2"W); no reported damages

Invasive Species

Invasive species are typically introduced to non-native ecosystems by human activity, both intentional and accidental. Not every non-native species is invasive; to qualify, the organism must be capable of causing harm to the environment, the economy, or human health. The exact nature of these harms varies by species, but commonalities include reductions in native species compositions, disruptions of natural ecosystem functions, and millions of dollars spent annually on control and prevention measures.

Though many aquatic and terrestrial invasives currently inhabit Vermont, forest pests are most relevant given their impacts on local trees. Examples include Asian long-horned beetle, oak wilt, and spotted lanternfly. Given the data available, this Plan examines the impacts posed by the emerald ash borer (*Agrilus planipennis*), an exotic beetle.

Emerald ash borer (EAB) was first identified in Rutland County in October 2020 and has since become well established in the Region. As of June 2026, 20 out of 28 municipalities in the County have confirmed EAB infestations, including nearby towns such as Clarendon, Danby, Mt. Tabor, and Tinmouth. In 2025, EAB was detected for the first time in Wallingford, west of the Timber Hill Estates near Mooney Road.

EAB larvae burrow through the inner layer of the ash tree's bark, impeding the tree's ability to conduct water and nutrients throughout the tree. Lacking sufficient water and nutrients, healthy ash trees can die within 1-4 years of exhibiting the first signs of invasion.

Those working to remove an infested tree are at the greatest risk of injury. Once infested, the tree becomes brittle, significantly increasing the risk and complexity of its removal. Otherwise, injury is most likely to occur if the infested tree falls directly on a property or a densely wooded road. A resident also flagged poison parsnip (*Pastinaca sativa*) as a concern to human health due to its ability to cause photochemical burns.

Infested trees along roads become hazards as they die, pulling down powerlines or falling into the roadway. During high-precipitation events, they also contribute to riverine debris. The Town lacks an ash tree roadside inventory, although the Tree Warden is in the early stages of starting one. Until the inventory is complete, it remains unknown how many ash trees are within the road right-of-way in Wallingford.

Beyond EAB, Japanese Knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*) is a terrestrial plant species of particular concern given its potential to exacerbate flooding. As noted by the Wallingford Conservation Commission, "*Japanese Knotweed debris can clog drainage areas and culverts, and its aggressive rhizomes can infiltrate concrete cracks and asphalt, causing damage and structural degradation to roads, culverts and bridges.*" See page 21 for more details.

The current location and number of ash trees at risk in Wallingford are unknown. Due to their shade tolerance, areas potentially at risk include village centers, Stone Meadow Park, White Rocks Picnic Area, and the Green Mountain National Forest. Other forest pests, specifically hemlock woolly adelgid (*Adelges tsugae*) and elongate hemlock scale (*Fiorinia externa*), have also been observed in Wallingford near Elfin Lake, VT 140 E, and the White Rocks Picnic Area.

EAB has serious financial implications for forest landowners and municipalities, including losses of productive timber and costs of removing ash trees along roadsides. Assigning financial losses specifically to Rutland County would be challenging, so this information is not included.

Emerald Ash Borer Hazard History

Because invasive species often spread over a long period, identifying a hazard event involving them is difficult. FEMA also does not declare federal disasters for invasive species outbreaks.

Drought

This natural hazard is characterized by a period of below-average precipitation, leading to water shortages. It is typically a slow-onset natural hazard that can last months or even years. Higher temperatures, water demands exceeding availability, low winter snowpack, and insufficient rainfall are all factors that can lead to significant drought.

Drought is a natural part of the climate cycle and can occur anywhere, at any time. It is a complex phenomenon that is difficult to monitor and assess because it develops slowly and covers extensive areas. This hazard is therefore unique compared with other disasters with rapid onset and apparent destruction. Refer to the 2023 State Hazard Mitigation Plan for a complete discussion of how drought differs from other natural hazards and how it relates to extreme heat trends in Vermont.

The USDA rates droughts from D0-D4, depending on the severity of the drought, the amount of time it will take for vegetation to return to normal levels, and the possible effects of the drought on the vegetation and water supply:

Table 6: USDA Drought Category Descriptions

Category	Description	Possible Impacts
D0	Abnormally dry	Short-term dryness is slowing the planting/growing of crops or pastures.
D1	Moderate Drought	Some damage to crops and pastures. Streams, reservoirs, or wells are low; some water shortages are developing or imminent. Voluntary water restrictions are requested.
D2	Severe Drought	Crop or pasture loss is likely. Water shortages are common; water restrictions are imposed.
D3	Extreme Drought	Major crop/pasture losses; widespread water shortages or restrictions.
D4	Exceptional Drought	Exceptional and widespread crop/pasture losses; shortages of water in reservoirs, streams, and wells, creating water emergencies.

For the purposes of this Plan, all moderate drought events (i.e., in which any percentage of the cumulative percent of land area is classified as D1 for at least four weeks) and above are featured in this hazard profile. For a history of abnormally dry events in Rutland County, see the U.S. Drought Monitor.

From 2001-2010, Rutland County experienced a moderate drought from August 2001 – March 2002. Severe drought (D2) occurred over a small area (≤1%) in November and December 2001.

From 2011-2020, Rutland County experienced periods of moderate drought from May-June 2015, June-August 2016, September 2016–April 2017, June–September 2018, and Jun 2020–Dec 2020. Severe drought occurred in a majority of the county from October-November 2016 (~63% of cumulative land area) and a small portion of the county in September-October 2020 (~5% of cumulative land area).

From January 2021–May 2026, Rutland County experienced a moderate drought during the following periods: Jan – July 2021, July-September 2022, November 2024-March 2025, and August-November 2025. From September-October 2025, much of the County experienced at least a severe drought (≥88% cumulative land area), with extreme drought affecting 75% of the Region. Drought conditions improved from December 2025-May 2026, but over 50% of the cumulative land area remained abnormally dry.

Drought ranked#1 of the top three hazards likely to occur in the next five years. It can lead to low or dry water levels in drinking water wells. In addition to the obvious impacts on water quantity, water quality suffers due to increased concentrations of contaminants such as lead. In conjunction with extreme temperatures, drought can compromise food and nutrition and increase incidents of illness and disease.

72% of survey respondents have experienced drought. During the past 20 years, Rutland County has seen several instances of moderate drought (D1) and severe drought (D2). ***Extreme drought (D3) made its first appearance since the 20th century in September 2025****.*

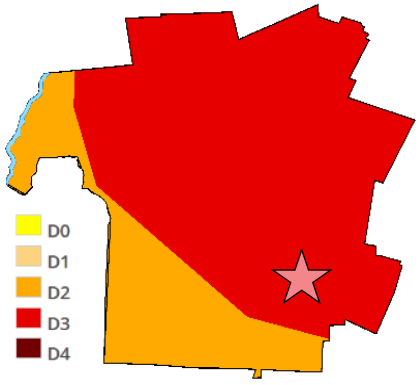
Because drought is strongly correlated with extreme heat, there is overlap with the populations at higher risk- mainly the youth, the elderly, outdoor workers, and those with pre-existing health conditions.

Structural impacts of drought are uncommon, making the risk to municipal buildings, facilities, infrastructure, or governmental functions low. If a drought is severe enough in its frequency, duration, and/or intensity, it may require constructing new community water supplies with improved storage capacity. However, this is unlikely in Wallingford, given that much of the Town resides on hills or higher elevations.

Water for residents served by Wallingford Fire District No. 1 is withdrawn from an aquifer located near the Town ball fields. The 2009 Roaring Brook Phase 1 Stream Geomorphic Assessment additionally notes a few small withdrawals on the mainstem of Roaring Brook along VT Route 140E. It once served as an emergency water supply for the Town but has been abandoned for some decades.

Elfin Lake and Wallingford Pond, two of Wallingford's larger water bodies, are primarily used for recreation. Otherwise, there are few ponds of substantial size to provide drinking water beyond a small-scale, individual basis, though this is not usually how residents obtain water. Residents are more likely to drill new, deeper wells on their properties if their current sources run dry, as was the case in 2025.

The impacts of drought on the natural environment can be extensive. Primarily, water availability becomes severely constrained for both cultivated and wild plants and animals. During droughts, deciduous trees in Vermont have experienced leaf scorch, leaf yellowing, and early leaf color change, all of which are indicators of poor leaf health.



Wallingford is marked with a star on this USDA drought monitor map from October 7, 2025.

As water levels in underground aquifers fall, the ground runs the risk of subsidence. Subsidence is the sinking of the ground, which can impact roads and buildings and can lead to the formation of sinkholes. Historic drought events suggest this is not likely in Wallingford, especially given the prevalence of ledges and steep slopes in the eastern portion of the Town.

Drought-like conditions can also increase the potential for brush fires. Brush fire probability depends on local weather conditions (lightning, drought, extreme heat); outdoor activities (camping, debris burning); and the amount of "fuel" present in the environment. While Wallingford has not experienced a notable brush fire in recent years, other nearby municipalities in Rutland County have, such as Chittenden and Killington. The Town believes wildfires may become more likely as drought periods become more common and prolonged. See the Wildfire profile for more details.

There may be situations in which water-intensive industries and agricultural production shift to other locations due to water scarcity. Other industries directly affected include energy, tourism, and fisheries. Generally speaking, the wide-ranging impacts of drought can consist of job losses, business failures, and lost investments. In Wallingford, where industry is minimal, the greatest threat is posed to farmers, particularly those focused on livestock, vegetable crops, and hay. Local water bodies used for recreation may also be affected by lower water levels and poor water quality.

Drought Hazard History

These are the most recent significant events impacting Wallingford. Hazard histories are limited to 20 years in the past, except for federal Rutland County Disaster Declarations, which are depicted in **bold**. All damages are to property unless otherwise noted.

9/30/2025: **USDA Disaster S6088 2025 Crop Year**
September-October 2025: D2 drought in 88-100% of county; D3 drought in 75% of county
August 2025 – November 2025: D1 drought in 90-100% of county
November 2024 – March 2025: D1 drought in 15-50% of county
July-September 2022: D1 drought in 5-33% of county
11/25/2020: USDA Disaster S4887 2020 Crop Year
June 2020 – July 2021: Multiple periods of D1 drought in county; D1 drought in 100% of county in Jul-Aug 2020 and Mar-Apr 2021; D2 drought in 5% of county in Sept-Oct 2020
June - September 2018: D1 drought in 40-100% of county
February – April 2017: D1 drought in 5-20% of county
September 2016 – February 2017: D1 drought in 97%-100% of county; D2 drought in 65% of county from Oct-Nov 2016
June – August 2016: D1 drought in 5-15% of county
9/9/2015: USDA Disaster S3887 2015 Crop Year
May-June 2015: D1 drought in 5-50% of county



Above: Wallingford Pond. Credit: Jamie Dickinson

Survey Respondents Said….

Natural hazard impacts they are concerned about:

#1 Damage or loss of roads, bridges, public utilities

#2 Loss of life or injuries, especially among vulnerable populations

#3 Loss or damage to agricultural operations



Right: The Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment is the foundation for the Mitigation Strategy

Vulnerability Summary

Floods

Vulnerable Assets people (especially at-risk populations: the elderly, the youth, the disabled, outdoor workers, and those living in sub-standard housing); single/multi-family dwellings; mobile and seasonal homes; accessory buildings; access points; camps; commercial (standalone, farm, other); communications box; development site; trailhead; water tank; East Wallingford Post Office; IB Munson House B&B; Little Angels Preschool & Childcare; Rec Fields; Sewer Plant and manholes; Town Garage; Transfer Station; Wallingford Fire District Well; Wallingford & East Wallingford Fire Stations; Wallingford Rescue; highway infrastructure (roads, bridges, culverts, sidewalks); dams; rivers and streams; local businesses

Location *Inundation:* along Otter Creek: Creek Rd; East St, Florence Ave; Hartsboro Rd; Haven Hill Rd; Maple St; Meadow St; Old Turnpike Rd; Railroad St; River St; School St; US-7 S; VT-103 S
Flash: Bear Mountain Rd; Blackwood Rd; Carrara Camp Rd; Centerville Rd; Chapin Rd; Cross Rd; Dawson Hill Rd; Dugway Rd; Dugway Rd Ext; Earl Wade Rd; Elm St; Hartsboro Rd; Ice Bed Rd; Kent Farm Rd; Meadow St; Parker Rd; River St; Senecal Way; Seward Hill Rd; S Main St, Sugar Hill Rd, Tifft Rd; Wallingford Pond Rd; West Hill Rd; Van Wyck Rd; VT-140 E; Waldo Ln
Fluvial Erosion: Mill River; Otter Creek; Bully Brook; Feller Brook; Homer Stone Brook; Roaring Brook

Extent ±5” rain; extent data for fluvial erosion is unavailable

Past Occurrence $1.1 mill local property damage; $55 mill regional property damage; $2.5 mill regional crop damage

Future Probability Highly likely, >75% probability in a year

Outlook Poses ongoing risks to existing and future assets without targeted mitigation measures

Extreme Cold, Snow, and Ice

Vulnerable Assets people (especially at-risk populations: the elderly, the youth, the disabled, outdoor workers, and those living in sub-standard housing); highway infrastructure (roads, bridges, culverts, sidewalks); power lines; telecommunications systems; trees; building plumbing and service lines; schools and daycares; local businesses

Location Town-wide: snow drifts on Blackwood Rd; Centerville Rd; Cross Rd; Hawkins Rd; Maranville Rd; Sugar Hill Rd

Extent 15-20+ days below zero; windchills down to -45°F; up to 30” snow; up to ½” ice/freezing rain/sleet

Past Occurrence $13,789 local property damage; $300,000 regional property damage; $1.03 mill regional crop damage

Future Probability Highly likely, >75% probability in a year

Outlook Poses ongoing risks to existing and future assets without targeted mitigation measures

Strong Wind

Vulnerable Assets people (especially at-risk populations: the elderly, the youth, the disabled, outdoor workers, and those living in sub-standard housing); Town Garage; Town Hall; Wallingford Lodge; highway infrastructure (roads, bridges); power lines; telecommunications systems; sewer and water systems; trees; schools and daycares; local businesses

Location Town-wide, especially East Wallingford and western Green Mountain slopes; Dawson Hill Rd; Dugway Rd; Hartsboro Rd; Hawkins Rd; Homer Stone Rd; Sugar Hill Rd; West Hill Rd

Extent 60-80 mph wind

Past Occurrence $525,000 local property damage; $100,000 local agricultural damage; $4.5 mill regional property damage; one fatality (regional)

Future Probability Highly likely, >75% probability in a year

Outlook Poses ongoing risks to existing and future assets without targeted mitigation measures

Vulnerability Summary, Continued

Extreme Heat

Vulnerable Assets people (especially at-risk populations: the elderly, the youth; the disabled, outdoor workers, and those living in sub-standard housing); highway infrastructure (roads, bridges, sidewalks); railway infrastructure (overhead lines, tracks, rails); drilled wells; crops/agricultural products; trees; Elfin Lake; Wallingford Pond

Location Town-wide

Extent Apparent temperatures up to 110°F for six days

Past Occurrence $650k regional damage to maple sugaring industry

Future Probability Highly likely, >75% probability in a year

Outlook Poses ongoing risks to existing and future assets without targeted mitigation measures

Wildfires

Vulnerable Assets people (especially at-risk populations: the elderly, the youth; the disabled, outdoor workers, and those living in sub-standard housing); highway infrastructure (roads, bridges, culverts, sidewalks); power lines; telecommunications systems; sewer and public water systems; crops/agricultural products; trees; local businesses; Elfin Lake; Wallingford Pond; Appalachian Trail; Stone Meadow Park; White Rocks Picnic Area; Green Mountain National Forest

Location Town-wide, especially Green Mountain National Forest

Extent 20 acres burned

Past Occurrence Past occurrence data (in dollars) is unavailable

Future Probability Likely, at least 1 chance in the next ten years

Outlook Poses ongoing risks to existing and future assets without targeted mitigation measures

Invasive Species (EAB)

Vulnerable Assets people (especially outdoor workers); highway infrastructure (roads, bridges, sidewalks); power lines; telecommunications systems; trees; Elfin Lake shoreline, White Rocks Picnic Area, Green Mountain National Forest

Location EAB: unknown; first sighted in 2025 west of Timber Hill Estates. Japanese Knotweed: along Otter Creek and Roaring Brook.

Extent Unknown

Past Occurrence Past occurrence data (in dollars) is unavailable

Future Probability Highly likely, >75% probability in a year

Outlook Poses ongoing risks to existing and future assets without targeted mitigation measures

Drought

Vulnerable Assets people (especially at-risk populations: the elderly, the youth; the disabled, outdoor workers, and those living in sub-standard housing); highway infrastructure (roads, bridges, sidewalks); drilled wells; crops/agricultural products; trees; Elfin Lake; Wallingford Pond, Green Mountain National Forest

Location Townwide

Extent D3 drought in 75% of county for one month

Past Occurrence Past occurrence data (in dollars) is unavailable

Future Probability Likely, at least 1 chance in the next ten years

Outlook Poses ongoing risks to existing and future assets without targeted mitigation measures

6 HAZARD MITIGATION STRATEGY

The highest-risk natural hazards and vulnerabilities identified in the previous section of this Plan directly inform the hazard mitigation strategy, which is the core of the mitigation plan. The mitigation strategy has four main components: goals, community capabilities, action evaluation, and an action plan with the most appropriate activities for the Town to undertake to reduce future risk from potential hazards.



Mitigation Goal

Mitigation investments will ultimately benefit:

- *People, homes, and neighborhoods*
- *The local economy*
- *Cultural and historic resources*
- *Ecosystems and natural resources*
- *Community Lifelines such as transportation, energy, and communications*

The community's mitigation goal, which was supported by 71% of survey respondents, is to **increase Wallingford's resilience to natural hazards by advancing mitigation investments.** These investments will ultimately reduce or avoid long-term risks to the assets listed to the left. See results in **Appendix C** for which assets engagement respondents thought were most important to protect against potential future extreme weather impacts.

Community Lifelines

Community Lifelines enable the continuous operation of critical government and business functions and are essential to human health and safety or economic security. The goal of the lifeline concept is to focus response efforts on stabilizing or re-establishing these most fundamental services during and after a disaster. Mitigating lifelines should reduce cascading impacts across government and business functions and lessen system-wide damage. Community Lifelines are organized into eight categories:



Safety and Security	Food, Water, Shelter	Health and Medical	Energy (Power & Fuel)	Communications	Transportation	Hazardous Materials	Water Systems
Law Enforcement	Food	Medical Care	Power Grid	Infrastructure	Highway/ Road	HAZMAT Facilities	Drinking Water
Fire Service	Water	Public Health	Fuel	Responder Communication	Mass Transit	Pollutants & Contaminants	Wastewater
Search & Rescue	Shelter	Patient Movement		Alerts, Warnings, & Messages	Railway		
Government Service	Agriculture	Medical Supply Chain		Finance	Maritime		
Community Safety		Fatality Management		911 & Dispatch	Aviation		

Community Capabilities

Each community has unique capabilities, including authorities, programs, staff, funding, and other resources available to mitigate and reduce long-term vulnerability. Wallingford's mitigation capabilities that reduce hazard impacts or that could be used to implement hazard mitigation activities are listed below.

Administrative & Technical

This capability refers to the Town's staff, their skills, and the tools they can use for mitigation planning and implementing actions. Municipal staff that can be used for mitigation planning and to implement specific mitigation actions include: a full-time Town Administrator, a full-time Town Clerk/Treasurer, a part-time Assistant Town Clerk/Treasurer, a part-time Zoning Administrator, a full-time Road Foreman, a part-time Road Commissioner, and two (2) full-time highway department employees. Wallingford Fire District #1's staffing resources include a 3-member Prudential Committee, a full-time Clerk/Treasurer, a full-time waste/wastewater superintendent, and a part-time Fire Chief (who also serves as the Fire Warden per Act 162, effective July 1, 2026).

In addition to paid staff, there is a 5-member Selectboard, a 5-member Planning Commission, a 6-member Conservation Commission, a 5-member Energy Committee, a 6-member Development Review Board, a Health Officer, a Tree Warden, and a Deputy Fire Warden.

To augment local resources, the Town has formal mutual aid agreements for emergency response – fire and public works. Technical support is available through the RRPC in the areas of land use planning, emergency management, transportation, GIS mapping, and grant writing. Technical support is available through the State ANR for floodplain bylaw administration and VTrans for hydraulic analyses.

Strengths: Staff are well-trained and have experience with hazards and mitigation • High-functioning local emergency management team that demonstrates a keen ability to identify and secure resources in times of need • Proactive in securing grants for public infrastructure improvements • Excellent record keeping systems • Strong working relationship with State ANR and VTrans • Strong working relationships with neighboring communities to augment local resources (e.g., shared services agreement with the Town of Clarendon and Rutland County Sherrif's Department) • Strong levels of local participation - volunteers tend to be knowledgeable with significant experience • Community with a family atmosphere.

Areas for Improvement: Maintenance programs could be more robust to reduce risks, particularly stormwater collection system maintenance and tree trimming within road ROW • More communication and coordination/cooperation between Town entities, and Fire District No. 1 • Few staff perform multiple functions, making the town's administrative and technical capabilities vulnerable • Periodic tabletop and field exercises to test and strengthen operational coordination • Highway Department staff could benefit from training in online mapping and asset management resources – ANR Atlas, VTCulverts, MRGP REI Portal • Additional Training related to NFIP and Special Flood Hazard Areas for local officials and staff • Limited law enforcement coverage results in drastically delayed response times.

Planning & Regulatory

These are the plans, policies, codes, and ordinances that prevent and reduce the impacts of hazards. Examples of planning capabilities that can either enable or inhibit mitigation include land use plans, capital improvement programs, transportation plans, stormwater management plans, disaster recovery and reconstruction plans, and emergency preparedness and response plans. Examples of regulatory capabilities include the enforcement of zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations, and building codes that regulate how and where land is developed and structures are built.

Town Plan (August 2026)
Description: A framework and guide for how future growth and development should proceed.
Relationship to Natural Hazard Mitigation Planning: Includes goals and policies related to flood resilience and land use.

Land Use Development Regulations (Various)
Description: Provides for orderly community growth promoting the health, safety, and general welfare of the community. In Wallingford, these include zoning regulations (August 2024), subdivision regulations (June 2009), and flood hazard area regulations (September 2011).
Relationship to Natural Hazard Mitigation Planning: Establish site plan review requirements and zoning districts, including Flood Hazard Area Overlay Districts, with specific standards for proposed development. Requirements are designed to prevent overdevelopment; to mitigate negative impacts to the natural and human environment; minimize effects to the historical and aesthetic character of the community; and ensure design and construction of development in flood and other hazard areas are accomplished in a manner that minimizes or eliminates the potential for flood loss or damage to life and property.

The Town does not have any local building codes. Vermont has adopted statewide codes for commercial building fire safety and energy standards. The energy code also applies to residential buildings. Codes enforced by Vermont's Division of Fire Safety are the 2015 National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1 Fire Code; 2015 NFPA 101 Life Safety Code; the 2015 International Building Code (IBC); 2017 NFPA 70 National Electrical Code; 2021 International Code Council (ICC) International Plumbing Code; and the 2015 National Board Inspection Code from the National Board of Boiler and Pressure Vessel Inspectors.

Road and Bridge Standards (February 2026)
Description: Provide minimum codes and standards for the construction, repair, and maintenance of town roads and bridges.
Relationship to Natural Hazard Mitigation Planning: Standards include management practices and are designed to ensure travel safety, minimize damage to road infrastructure during flood events, and enhance water quality protections.

Road Stormwater Master Plan (December 2019)
Description: Prioritizes those infrastructure projects necessary to improve transportation network resiliency and water quality. Includes the **Road Erosion Inventory Report (2026)** and **Structures Inventory (2026).**
Relationship to Natural Hazard Mitigation Planning: Improvements are designed to minimize or eliminate flood impacts on hydrologically connected road segments.

Stormwater Infrastructure Mapping Studies and Associated Reports (Various)
Description: Developed up-to-date municipal drainage system maps and established locations for BMP stormwater retrofit sites. Includes the **Wallingford Stormwater Infrastructure Mapping Study (August 2012), East Wallingford Stormwater Infrastructure Mapping Study (March 2017), Wallingford Stormwater Master Plan (February 2019),** and **Wallingford Elementary School Stormwater Retrofit Final Design Report (March 2022).**
Relationship to Natural Hazard Mitigation Planning: Identifies several structural projects to improve the capacity of the stormwater drainage system.

Local Emergency Management Plan (April 2026)
Description: Establishes lines of responsibility and procedures to be implemented during a disaster and identifies high-risk populations, hazard sites, and available resources.
Relationship to Natural Hazard Mitigation Planning: Includes actions for tracking events and response actions, including damage reports, to facilitate funding requests during recovery. This type of information can be essential to preparing hazard mitigation project applications for FEMA funding.

Fire Department Insurance Services Office (ISO) Rating (2026)

Description: The Wallingford Volunteer Fire Department's ISO Rating is 5; the East Wallingford Volunteer Fire Department's ISO Rating is currently unknown. This rating is a score from 1 to 10 that indicates how well-protected the community is by the local fire department.

Relationship to Natural Hazard Mitigation Planning: Everyone wants to keep family, home, and business safe from fires. The ISO rating is a measure of the effectiveness of a community's fire services.

Strengths: Existing Flood Hazard Area regulations are effective at reducing hazard impacts and are adequately administered and enforced • Codes and standards are adequately administered and enforced • Stormwater Master Planning • Formalized capital planning for equipment replacement and infrastructure improvements • Planning Commission administrative staff engaged in securing funding for the development of plans

Areas for Improvement: Protect river corridors from new encroachment (River Corridor Bylaws) • Elements of Hazard Mitigation are included in other plans • Follow through on strategies, actions, and goals between adoption of a plan and readoption or update • Continuity of Operations Planning.

Financial

These capabilities are the resources that a community has access to or is eligible to use to fund mitigation actions. Wallingford's 2026-2027 town operating budget is $1,609,903.00, with a Highway Department operating budget of $435,915.00. Although the Town has not done so in the past, it is eligible to incur debt through general obligation bonds to fund mitigation actions.

Wallingford Fire District #1's annual budget includes $515,740.35 for the water and sanitary sewer utilities, $91,170.00 for the general fund, and $188,967.75 for the Fire Department.



Left: The Wallingford Volunteer Fire Department is supported by the annual budget of Wallingford Fire District #1. Since 1958, the Department has operated out of the former train station on Railroad Street.

Photo Credit: Alps' Roads

Strengths: Maximizes grant opportunities (FEMA, VTrans, other State funding programs) • Capital improvement planning and budgeting for reserve funds • Dedicated reserve funds for equipment replacement • Equipment reserve funds • Tax revenues are sufficient for annual operation and maintenance needs • Community support for municipal budgets.

Areas for Improvement: Dedicated reserve funds that can be used to fund mitigation actions • Contingency funds to finance unexpected repairs • Be proactive in informing elected state officials of the impact unfunded mandates have on Towns.

Education and Outreach

Wallingford has several education and outreach opportunities that could be used to implement mitigation activities and communicate hazard-related information. Community organizations include the Wallingford Historical Society; Wallingford Elementary School (including a weekly newsletter); Gilbert Hart Library; Wallingford Rotary Club, Wallingford and East Wallingford Fire Departments, Wallingford Conservation Commission, Wallingford Energy Committee, Wallingford Recreation Committee, Wallingford Thrift Store, Rutland Natural Resources Conservation District; and Mill River Unified Union School District. The Town also has various Facebook pages and websites (Town, Library, Historical Society), a Front Porch Forum account, and the *Wallingford Standard* monthly newsletter.

Strengths: Multiple programs/organizations are already in place in the community • Strong social media presence • Monthly Town newsletter

Areas for Improvement: Better coordination is needed to help implement future mitigation activities.

National Flood Insurance Program Compliance

The Town joined the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) in 1981. The effective date of the current adopted Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) and Flood Insurance Study is August 28, 2008. The Wallingford Administrative Officer (i.e., the Zoning Administrator), in conjunction with the Development Review Board (i.e., the Board of Adjustment), enforces NFIP compliance through permit review requirements in the Town's Flood Hazard Area regulations.

Wallingford's Flood Hazard Area regulations meet or exceed the NFIP requirements. They outline detailed minimum standards for development in flood hazard areas defined as FEMA Special Flood Hazard Areas and Floodway Areas. The regulations also require administering Substantial Improvement and Substantial Damage (SI/SD) requirements in accordance with FEMA P-758 SI/SD Desk Reference, May 2010. See below for a summarized description of articles demonstrating NFIP compliance:

- Article 310.4 of the regulations requires any substantial improvement to any existing structure (as well as new structures) to receive conditional use approval from the Wallingford Board of Adjustment before the Administrative Officer may issue a permit.
- The Board reviews the standards outlined in Article 310.7, which meet or exceed NFIP requirements.
- Article 310.5 outlines procedures for submitting an application, referrals, and permit validity. [5]
- Article 310.8 outlines procedures for properly filing and maintaining records.
- Article 310.13 outlines procedures for enforcement if a violation exists and establishes the duty of the Administrative Officer to enforce the provisions of the regulations.
- Article 310.14 defines SI/SD the same as found in 44 CFR Part 59; as noted in federal code: "'substantial improvement' includes structures which have incurred 'substantial damage', regardless of the actual repair work performed.'"

The Town discussed the following as possible actions to continue NFIP compliance:

1) Prepare, distribute, or make available NFIP insurance explanatory pamphlets or booklets at the Town Office.
2) Participate in NFIP training offered by the State and/or FEMA.
3) Work with the ANR Regional Floodplain Manager to address the administration of the NFIP following a major storm.

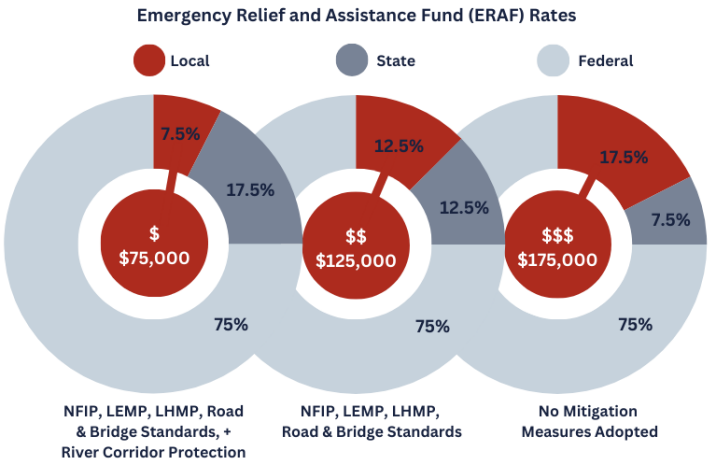
[5] Article VI of the Zoning Bylaws outlines procedures for hearings, decisions, and appeals for all zoning permits, including those in a Special Flood Hazard Area.

State Incentives for Flood Mitigation

Vermont's Emergency Relief Assistance Funding (ERAF) provides state funding to match FEMA Public Assistance after federally declared disasters. Eligible public costs are generally reimbursed by FEMA at 75%, with a default State match of 7.5%.

The State will increase its match to 12.5% funding for communities that 1) participate in the NFIP; 2) adopt current Town Road and Bridge Standards (refer to VTrans 2019 model standards); 3) have adopted a current Local Emergency Management Plan; AND 4) have adopted a current Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. The match is further increased to 17.5% for communities that also participate in FEMA's Community Rating System, OR adopt a Fluvial Erosion Hazard or other river corridor protection bylaw that meets or exceeds the Vermont ANR model regulations.

Wallingford will regain its 12.5% ERAF rate upon adoption of the 2026 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. To increase their ERAF rate to 17.5% the Town would have to adopt River Corridor Bylaws.



In the event of a $1,000,000 recovery project, the dollar value shown would be the municipality's responsibility.

Mitigation Action Identification

The Hazard Mitigation Planning Team discussed the mitigation strategy, reviewed projects from the 2021 Plan, and identified possible new actions in the following categories for each of the highest-risk natural hazards identified in Section 5.

Local Plans & Regulations

These actions include government authorities, policies, and codes that influence how land and buildings are developed and built.

Structure & Infrastructure Projects

These actions involve modifying existing structures and infrastructure to protect them from a hazard or remove them from a hazard area. This applies to public or private structures as well as critical facilities.

Natural Systems Protection

These actions help minimize damage and losses and preserve or restore the functions of natural systems.

Outreach & Education Programs

These actions educate the public about hazards and mitigation. While less directly impactful than structural projects or regulation, they provide an important foundation. Increased awareness can lead to greater community support for direct actions.

Examples for each of these action categories, as they relate to Wallingford's identified **highest-risk hazards**, are listed on the following pages.

Local Plans & Regulations Examples

Integrate Mitigation into Capital Improvement Programs: Incorporate risk assessment and hazard mitigation principles into capital planning.

Reduce Impacts to Roadways: The leading cause of death and injury during winter storms is automobile accidents, so it is important to plan for and maintain adequate road-clearing and debris-clearing capabilities.

Develop a Road Right-of-Way Vegetation Management Plan: Identify community priorities and plan of action for site-specific tree and roadside forest management to increase roadside resilience.

Improve Flood Resilience with a Flood Study: The aim of a flood study is to define existing flood behavior for a particular catchment, river, or creek. The study helps inform building, land use planning, community awareness, and disaster management.

Improve Extreme Temperature Resilience with an Extreme Heat/Cold Response Plan: This plan describes key actions to take during an extreme heat/cold event, outlines thresholds to trigger these actions, and assigns responsibility for tasks such as public outreach and warning, activating cooling/warming sites, and emergency personnel mobilization for access and functional needs populations.

Improve Stormwater Management Planning: Rain and snowmelt can cause flooding and erosion in developed areas. A community-wide stormwater management plan can address flooding caused by stormwater runoff.

Manage Development in Erosion Hazard Areas: The intent of River Corridor Bylaws is to allow the wise use of property within river corridors while minimizing potential damage to existing structures and development from flood-related erosion.

Map and Assess Vulnerability to Wildfire and/or Extreme Heat: Identify wildfire hazard areas and areas of excessive heat radiance and assess the community's overall vulnerability.

Develop a Wildland-Urban Interface Code: Develop specific design guidelines and development review procedures for new construction, replacement, relocation, and substantial improvement in wildfire hazard areas.

Develop a Community Wildfire Protection Plan: A CWPP 1) identifies and prioritizes areas for hazardous fuel reduction, 2) recommends treatments that will protect an at-risk community and essential infrastructure, 3) recommends measures to reduce structural ignitability. A CWPP may address issues such as wildfire response, community preparedness, and structure protection.

Manage the Impacts of Drought: Limit the impacts of water scarcity by 1) defining strategies to monitor the progression of a drought through a Drought Contingency Plan, or 2) developing an ordinance to prioritize water use for emergency situations such as firefighting.

Structure & Infrastructure Project Examples

Protect Power Lines: Protect power lines by 1) inspecting and maintaining hazardous trees in the road right-of-way, and 2) burying power lines.

Protect Critical Roadways: Maintain accessibility of critical roadways by 1) using snow fences or living snow fences (e.g., rows of trees) to limit blowing and drifting of snow, and 2) improving sub-surface drainage under gravel roads to limit the impacts of mud season.

Retrofit Critical Facilities: Critical facilities can be protected from the impacts of high winds and winter storms by 1) retrofitting them to strengthen structural frames to withstand wind and snow loads; 2) anchoring roof-mounted mechanical equipment; and 3) installing back-up generators or quick-connect wiring for a portable generator.

Remove Existing Structures from Flood Hazard Areas: FEMA policy encourages the removal of structures from flood-prone areas to minimize future flood losses.

Improve Stormwater Drainage Capacity: Minimize flooding and fluvial erosion by 1) increasing drainage/absorption capacities with green stormwater management practices; 2) increasing dimensions of undersized drainage culverts in flood-prone areas; 3) stabilizing outfalls with riprap and other slope stabilization techniques; and 4) re-establishing roadside ditches.

Conduct Regular Maintenance for Drainage Systems: Help drainage systems and flood control structures function properly with 1) routine cleaning and repair; 2) cleaning debris from support bracing underneath low-lying bridges; and 3) inspecting bridges and identifying if any repairs are needed to maintain integrity and prevent scour.

Protect Infrastructure and Critical Facilities: Minimize infrastructure losses and protect critical facilities from flooding by 1) elevating roads above base flood elevation to maintain dry access; 2) armoring streambanks near roadways to prevent washouts; and 3) floodproofing facilities.

Reduce Extreme Heat Risk: Plant additional trees to provide shade for heat sinks and/or generally warmer areas (e.g., parking lots) can help promote cooling and provide those spending time outside with an area of respite out of direct sunlight.

Reduce Ignition Risk: Protect existing structures and infrastructure in wildfire hazard areas by 1) retrofitting at-risk structures with non-combustible materials and technologies, and 2) implementing defensible space programs.

Invest in Infrastructure to Expand Water Supplies: Improve water supply and delivery systems to ensure adequate supply for fire suppression during times of drought.



Natural Systems Protection Examples

Protect and Restore Natural Flood Mitigation Features: Natural conditions can provide floodplain protection, riparian buffers, groundwater infiltration, and other ecosystem services that mitigate flooding. Preserving such functionality is not only important for the ecosystem but also for protecting public safety and infrastructure. Examples include 1) adding riparian buffers; 2) stabilizing stream banks; 3) removing berms; 4) minimizing impervious area development; 5) restoring floodplains; and 6) restoring incision areas.

Implement a Fuels Management Program: To reduce hazardous vegetation fuels on public lands, near essential infrastructure, or on private lands by working with landowners. The program can include 1) performing fuel management techniques; 2) using prescribed burns to reduce fuel loads; and 3) sponsoring local “slash and clean-up days” to reduce fuel loads along the wildland-urban interface.



Outreach & Education Program Examples

Educate Residents about Extreme Temperatures: The impacts of extreme temperatures (cold and hot) on public health can be lessened if residents know how to prepare and protect themselves.

Educate Residents about Flood Insurance: Flood insurance is available to anyone living in Wallingford as the municipality participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Residents can better protect their assets from flood damage if they are insured and know what steps to take to protect their homes when flooding is predicted.

Educate Residents about Invasive Species: Using apps such as iNaturalist, residents can play an active role in identifying and reporting sightings of invasive species and their impacts, particularly that of Emerald Ash Borer and Japanese Knotweed, to the relevant authorities.

Educate Residents on Drought-related Hazards and Water-Saving Techniques: Increase awareness of drought-related hazards, such as brush fires and diminished water quality and quantity. Encourage residents to take water-saving measures, such as 1) installing low-flow water-saving showerheads and toilets; 2) checking for leaks in plumbing or dripping faucets; and 3) installing rain-capturing devices for irrigation.

Increase Wildfire Awareness: Target citizens and businesses to increase awareness of wildfire risk and strategies for protecting homes and infrastructure. Consider 1) offering online GIS hazard mapping; 2) working with Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation to provide wildfire safety information to residents.

Mitigation Action Evaluation

As described in **Appendix C**, the Planning Team invited several subject matter experts with local knowledge to participate in a mitigation action evaluation workshop. For each mitigation action, workshop participants evaluated its potential benefits and/or likelihood of successful implementation. Actions were evaluated against a range of criteria, including a planning level assessment of whether the costs are reasonable compared to the probable benefits. Results of this evaluation are presented in **Table 7**.

Mitigation Action Plan for Implementation

After careful evaluation, the Planning Team agreed on a list of actions that support the mitigation goals of this Plan and are acceptable and practical for the community to implement. A community survey was then conducted to measure public response to the proposed mitigation goal and actions - see **Appendix C**.

Actions were not selected for implementation if they lacked overall public support/political will, or if their costs were not reasonable compared to probable benefits.

For proposed actions, the Planning Team then: 1) assigned a responsible party to lead the completion of each action; 2) identified potential funding; 3) defined a timeframe for implementation; and 4) ranked each action's priority (first, second).

Natural hazards pose a unique threat to the Town's at-risk populations. Data has shown that underserved and marginalized populations tend to live in at-risk hazard-prone areas or in homes with substandard construction. The data also suggests that this segment of the community is less likely to fully recover after a disaster. [6] When ranking an action's priority, those that directly benefit an at-risk population were ranked first priority.

Proposed actions also ranked first priority if they 1) represented routine activities critical to Wallingford's ability to limit the impacts of natural hazards, or 2) addressed an ongoing need that would provide significant benefit to the Town if pursued sooner rather than later. The action plan is presented in **Table 8**.

[6] FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance Program and Policy Guide, March 23, 2023

Table 7 Evaluation Criteria

Life Safety –Will the action be effective at protecting lives and preventing injuries?
Property Protection –Will the action be effective at eliminating or reducing damage to structures and infrastructure?
Technical – Is the action a long-term, technically feasible solution?
Political – Is there overall public support or political will for the action?
Administrative – Does the community have the administrative capacity to implement the action?
Other Community Objectives – Does the action advance other community objectives, such as capital improvements, economic development, benefit an at-risk population, environmental quality, or open space preservation?

Rank each of the above criteria in Table 7 with a -1, 0, or 1 using the following table:
1 = Highly effective or feasible
0 = Neutral
-1 = Ineffective or not feasible

Estimated Cost – 1 = less than $50,000; 2 = $50,000 to $100,000; 3 = more than $100,000
C/B – Are the costs reasonable compared to the probable benefits? Yes or No

Table 7: Mitigation Action Evaluation and Prioritization

Mitigation Action	Life Safety	Prop Protect	Tech	Political	Admin	Other Obj	Benefit Score	Est Cost	C/B
Local Plans & Regulations									
Recommended for Implementation									
Integrate Mitigation into Capital Improvement Programs and Planning*	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	1	Yes
Plan for and Maintain Adequate Road and Debris Clearing Capabilities	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	1	Yes
Inspect Town Short Structures and Review VTrans Bridge Inspection Reports for Town Long Structures and Plan for Repairs	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	1	Yes
Review the 2019 Stormwater Master Plan to Determine Feasibility of Identified Projects	1	1	1	1	0	1	5	1	Yes
Map and Assess Vulnerability to Wildfires	1	1	1	1	0	1	5	1	Yes
Improve Extreme Temperature Resilience with a Cold Weather Response Plan [7]	1	1	1	1	0	1	5	1	Yes
Update Road Erosion and Culvert Inventories	0	1	1	1	1	1	5	1	Yes
Update Personnel Policy to Recommend Vaccinations*	0	1	1	1	1	1	5	1	Yes
Plan for Road ROW Vegetation Management, Including an Ash Tree Inventory	0	1	1	1	1	1	5	1	Yes
Not Recommended for Implementation									
Map Heat Islands to Identify Vulnerable Neighborhoods	1	1	1	0	0	1	4	1	No
	The Planning Team agreed that Wallingford lacks sufficient blacktop or impervious surfaces to justify the costs and that political will would be insufficient given the Town's remaining unmet needs for flood recovery and mitigation.								

*These actions are not listed in Table 8 but serve as examples of how mitigation actions will be integrated into other plans and procedures – see pg. 59.

[7] Wallingford already has a Hot Weather Response Plan, so this action is focused solely on extreme cold/snow/ice.

Mitigation Action	Life Safety	Prop Protect	Tech	Political	Admin	Other Obj	Benefit Score	Est Cost	C/B
Develop a Community Wildfire Protection Plan	1	1	1	0	0	0	3	3	No
	Not recommended for implementation because the Planning Team believes the costs outweigh the benefits, based on limited historical occurrence and perceived future probability of wildfires.								
Develop a Drought Contingency Plan	1	1	0	-1	0	1	2	1	No
	Not recommended for implementation because the State of Vermont is primarily responsible for monitoring water supplies and addressing possible shortages, and the Planning Team does not anticipate sufficient political will to implement this action.								
Improve Flood Resilience with a Flood Study – Roaring Brook Confluence	1	1	0	-1	0	1	2	2-3	No
	A flood study determines whether implementing certain natural systems protection actions in a certain area can reduce infrastructure risks. The DEC River Scientist for SW Vermont previously identified a segment of Roaring Brook within Wallingford Village as an area that would benefit from berm removal and river corridor protections. The Planning Team believes the costs of conducting a flood study in this location would outweigh the perceived benefits, especially knowing that the landowner of the property in question is unlikely to support the recommended outcomes.								
Adopt River Corridor Bylaws	1	1	1	0	0	1	4	1	No
	While there appears to be greater political will for this action than in 2021, the Planning Team believes the costs outweigh the perceived benefits, especially with State permits required for all development in river corridor areas beginning in 2028.								
Develop a Wildland-Urban Interface Code	1	1	0	-1	0	1	2	1	No
	Not recommended for implementation because the Planning Team believes the costs outweigh the perceived benefits and does not anticipate sufficient political will to implement this action.								
Develop an Ordinance to Prioritize or Control Water Use	1	1	1	0	0	1	4	1	No
	The Wallingford Fire District #1 and the S. Wallingford Cooperative together serve <20% of the Wallingford population, so the Planning Team believes the costs would not outweigh the benefits. Such an ordinance would also fall under the Fire District's jurisdiction, not the Town's.								
Adopt Local Building Codes for Structural Wind and Snow Loads	Not evaluated because the Town relies on statewide codes – see page 39 for more information.								
Update Land Use Bylaws to Require New Development to Bury Power Lines	Not evaluated because Green Mountain Power has authority over the power lines, and the Town has little say over whether the lines are buried.								
Structure & Infrastructure Projects									
Recommended for Implementation									
Protect Power Lines by Inspecting and Removing Hazard Trees in Road ROW	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	1	Yes
Install Battery Storage, Backup Generators, or Quick Connect Wiring at Critical Facilities	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	1	Yes
Insulate Shallow Buried Utility Mains/Services	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	3	Yes
Install/Re-establish Roadside Ditches	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	1	Yes
Routinely Clean and Repair Stormwater Infrastructure	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	1	Yes
Stabilize Critical Outfalls	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	1	Yes
Increase Dimension of Drainage Culverts in Flood-Prone Areas	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	1	Yes
Plant Trees to Provide More Shade for Cooling	1	0	1	1	1	1	5	1	Yes

Mitigation Action	Life Safety	Prop Protect	Tech	Political	Admin	Other Obj	Benefit Score	Est Cost	C/B
Invest in Infrastructure to Expand Water Supplies	1	1	0	1	-1	1	3	1	Yes
Create Defensible Space Around Structures and Infrastructure*	1	1	1	0	0	0	3	1	Yes
Not Recommended for Implementation									
Use Snow Fence on Critical Roads Prone to Drifting	1	1	1	-1	0	1	3	2	No
	Not recommended for implementation because there are not enough snow drift-prone areas to justify the costs, and the Planning Team does not anticipate sufficient political will to implement this action.								
Increase Drainage/Absorption Capacities with Green Stormwater Management Practices – Wallingford Elementary School	1	1	1	0	0	1	4	3	No
	Not recommended for implementation, as the costs of the underground stormwater infiltration chambers are too high for the school to justify (almost $300,000).								
Routinely Clear Debris from Support Bracing Underneath Low-lying Bridges	1	1	1	-1	1	1	4	1	No
	Not recommended for implementation because the Planning Team does not anticipate sufficient political will to implement this action.								
Elevate Roads Above Base Flood Elevation to Maintain Dry Access	1	1	0	-1	1	1	3	3	No
	A low-lying section of Hartsboro Road from the bridge (B22) to VT Route 7 is vulnerable to inundation flooding. However, engineers have previously confirmed that the hydrological constraints imposed by raising the road several feet would make this action prohibitively expensive, if not completely infeasible.								
Floodproof Critical Facilities	1	1	1	0	0	1	4	2	No
	No municipal critical facilities have estimated floodproofing costs that are reasonable compared to the perceived benefits, but this may not be the case for Fire District #1. Therefore, it is worth noting in this Plan that Fire District #1 may consider floodproofing the generator at the sewer treatment plant and one or more of the flood-prone sewer manholes.								
Remove Existing Structures from Flood-Prone Areas	1	1	0	-1	0	1	2	1	Yes
	Not recommended for implementation; while Wallingford recently had a property buyout following the July 2023 floods (DR4720), local political will is lacking to investigate potentially eligible properties and solicit buyouts.								
Retrofit At-Risk Structures with Ignition-Resistant Materials	1	1	0	-1	0	1	2	3	No
	Not recommended for implementation because the costs outweigh the perceived benefits, based on limited historical occurrence and perceived future probability of wildfires. In addition, the Planning Team does not anticipate sufficient political will to implement this action.								
Bury Power Lines	Not evaluated because Green Mountain Power has authority over the power lines, and the Town has little say over whether the lines are buried.								
Retrofit Critical Facilities to Current Structural Wind and Snow Loads	Not evaluated because there are no critical municipal facilities that require retrofitting.								
Anchor Roof-Mounted Mechanical Equipment on Critical Facilities	Not evaluated because there are no critical municipal facilities with roof-mounted mechanical equipment.								

*These actions are not listed in Table 8 but serve as examples of how mitigation actions will be integrated into other plans and procedures – see pg. 59.

Mitigation Action	Life Safety	Prop Protect	Tech	Political	Admin	Other Obj	Benefit Score	Est Cost	C/B
Natural Systems Protection									
Recommended for Implementation									
Identify Potential Natural System Protection Projects and Investigate Their Feasibility	1	1	1	1	0	1	5	1	Yes
	Such potential project types include, but are not limited to, stabilizing streambanks, removing berms and/or accumulated debris from streams to restore flood capacity, establishing vegetative buffers in riparian areas, restoring floodplains or floodplain access, and restoring incision areas in streams. See page 57 in Table 8 for more information.								
Not Recommended for Implementation									
Implement a Fuels Management Program	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	2	No
	Given the varied scoring of the previous mitigation action items that would fall under a fuels management program, the Planning Team does not believe a municipally led program would be practical or cost-effective. Instead, the Planning Team expressed Outreach and Education programs as their preferred vehicle to encourage wildfire mitigation measures on private property.								
Remove Significant Hazard Potential Dams	Not evaluated because there are no significant hazard potential dams in Wallingford.								
Outreach & Education Programs									
Recommended for Implementation									
Keep the Ditches Clean/National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Campaign	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	1	Yes
Educate the Public on How to Prepare for Extreme Hot/Cold Temperatures	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	1	Yes
Increase Wildfire Risk Awareness and Educate the Public on Best Practices for Fuels Management	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	1	Yes
Educate the Public on Drought-related Hazards and Water Saving Techniques	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	1	Yes
Educate the Public on How to Identify and Report Invasive Species	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	1	Yes
Increase Infectious Disease Outbreak and Prevention Awareness	1	0	1	1	1	1	5	1	Yes
Not Recommended for Implementation									
Participate in Firewise Program	1	1	0	0	0	1	3	1	No
	While the costs of participating in the Firewise Program are minimal, the Planning Team saw little benefit in formally participating in this program. Instead, the Planning Team expressed a preference for local Outreach and Education programs to encourage wildfire mitigation measures on private property.								

Navigating Table 8

Each implementation action in Table 8 contains the following elements. Actions are sequenced first by their priority level (first or second), then by their Benefit Score (highest to lowest):

Mitigation Action Description: Explains the action's relevance to Wallingford and whether it was previously listed in the 2021 Plan or another plan with ties to hazard mitigation.
Addressed Hazard: Indicates the type of highest risk hazard the action addresses.
Type of Project: Indicates the project type category to which the action belongs (see page 42).
Community Lifelines Targeted: Indicates which critical government and business functions responsible for preserving human health and safety or economic security will benefit from this action (see page 37).
Area of Impact: Indicates the location where the action will be implemented and the spatial extent of the action's outcomes. "Town-wide" is used for actions that apply throughout the municipality.
Lead Party: Identifies who is responsible for administering each action.
Funding Sources: Identifies a potential funding source to implement the action. Where the funding source is "not applicable", work is completed by town officials who volunteer their time.
Partnerships: Lists individuals, agencies, or resources that may be able to help identify funding sources, complete grant applications, and/or implement the action.
Project Timeframe: Provides the expected schedule for completion based on available time and resources.
Prioritization: Indicates the relative importance of each action based on a set of criteria (see page 45).

Table 8: Mitigation Action Plan

Plan for and Maintain Adequate Road and Debris Clearing Capabilities: Automobile accidents are a leading cause of death and injury during winter storms, so it is important to plan for and maintain adequate road and debris-clearing capabilities. This includes capital planning and annual funding to support facilities (highway garage and equipment) and the appropriate number of staff and/or contracted services needed to maintain Wallingford's transportation network.

Project Type

Local Plans & Regulations

Community Lifelines Targeted

Transportation (primary)
Safety & Security

Addressed Hazards

Extreme Cold, Snow, and Ice (primary)
Strong Wind

Area of Impact
Town-wide (road network)

Lead Party
Selectboard

Funding Sources
Town Highway Budget

Partnerships
Road Commissioner, Town Administrator

Project Timeframe
November-December, annually

Prioritization
First

Improve Extreme Temperature Resilience with Cold Weather Response LEMP Annex: To supplement Wallingford's sheltering plan in the local emergency management plan and the existing extreme heat response plan, the Town will prepare an annex focused on extreme-cold sheltering procedures to better support extreme temperature resilience in the community.

Project Type

Local Plans & Regulations

Community Lifelines Targeted

Safety & Security

Addressed Hazards

Extreme Cold, Snow, and Ice

Area of Impact
Town-wide

Lead Party
Emergency Management Director & Coordinator

Funding Sources
Not applicable

Partnerships
Selectboard; Town Administrator; RRPC; VT Department of Health

Project Timeframe
Develop: August-December 2027
Adopt with LEMP: March-June 2028

Prioritization
First

Road ROW Vegetation Management Plan: Hazard trees in the road ROW can contribute to power and communication outages as well as debris in the roadway during winter storms and wind events. This hazard is exacerbated by the possibility of Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) infestation. Wallingford will develop a plan to 1) identify community priorities and 2) define a plan of action for site-specific tree and roadside forest management, including poison parsnip. The Plan will also include an inventory of ash trees to assess the scope of EAB impact and, if warranted, prioritize trees for treatment and removal.

Project Type



Local Plans & Regulations

Area of Impact

Town-wide (road network)

Partnerships

Selectboard; Tree Warden; VT Urban and Community Forestry; VT Department of Forests, Parks, & Rec

Community Lifelines Targeted



Energy (primary); Communications; Transportation

Lead Party

Road Commissioner

Project Timeframe

Spring 2029

Addressed Hazards



Extreme Cold, Snow, & Ice (primary); Strong Wind; Invasive Species

Funding Sources

Communities Caring for Canopies Grant

Prioritization

First

Update Road Erosion and Culvert Inventories: These inventories, both completed in 2026, serve as the basis for asset management. Inventories should be kept up to date annually, with a full reassessment every 5 years.

Project Type



Local Plans & Regulations

Area of Impact

Town-wide (road network, culverts)

Partnerships

RRPC; ANR Municipal Roads

Community Lifelines Targeted



Transportation (primary)
Safety & Security

Lead Party

Road Commissioner

Project Timeframe

REI & culverts: Full reassessments in 2031 construction season

Addressed Hazards



Floods

Funding Sources

VTrans Grant Programs [8]

Prioritization

First

Stormwater Management Planning: Rain and snowmelt can cause flooding and erosion in developed areas. A stormwater master plan (SWMP) can address stormwater-related flooding and improve water quality. Wallingford completed a SWMP in 2019 and obtained a Final Design Report for the Wallingford Elementary School Stormwater Retrofit in 2022. The Town will revisit the 2019 SWMP to assess the feasibility of the projects identified below.

Project Type



Local Plans & Regulations

Area of Impact

1. Family Dollar yard (34 Maple St)
2. North Main St ROW B & C
3. Elm St ROW A
4. Railroad St.

Partnerships

Selectboard, Road Commissioner, Rutland NRCD, VTrans District 3

Community Lifelines Targeted



Transportation (primary)
Safety & Security

Lead Party

Town Administrator

Project Timeframe

Assemble investigative committee: January 2027
Deliver recommendations to Selectboard: December 2027

Addressed Hazards



Floods

Funding Sources

Not applicable

Prioritization

Second

[8] See the Vermont Agency of Transportation's "Show Me the Money" Guidance for a complete list of potential funding sources.

Plan for Bridge Repairs: The Town will inspect short structures and review long-structure VTrans inspection reports (completed once every two years) and support VTrans in planning flood-related bridge repairs, such as scour and channel maintenance, as needed, based on inspection results. [9]

Project Type



Local Plans & Regulations

Area of Impact

13 short structures; see 2026 structures inventory for a complete list

7 long structures: B47 & B51 (Hartsboro Rd); B7W & B54 (VT-140 W); B59 (Creek Rd); B50 (Elm St); B48 (Homer Stone Rd)

Partnerships

Selectboard, Town Administrator, VTrans District 3

Community Lifelines Targeted



Transportation (primary)
Safety & Security

Lead Party

Road Commissioner

Project Timeframe

Short structures: June, annually

Long structures: 2027, 2029, 2031 construction seasons (B59 only); 2028, 2030 construction seasons

Addressed Hazards



Floods

Funding Sources

Town Highway Budget

Prioritization

Second

Map and Assess Vulnerability to Wildfire: The first step in local planning is to identify wildfire hazard areas and assess overall community vulnerability. Wallingford will develop a GIS-based map of wildfire hazard areas to facilitate analysis and planning decisions through comparison with existing development and future land use maps.

Project Type



Local Plans & Regulations

Area of Impact

Town-wide

Partnerships

Selectboard; Fire Warden; Deputy Fire Warden; Tree Warden; Wallingford Vol Fire Dept; RRPC; US Forest Service; ANR Wildlands Fire Specialist

Community Lifelines Targeted



Safety & Security

Lead Party

Town Administrator

Project Timeframe

Solicit services: January 2028

Produce final map: December 2028

Addressed Hazards



Wildfire

Funding Sources

Community Wildfire Defense Grant *(*funds previously appropriated to ANR)*

Prioritization

Second

[9] B15 on Village Street, a State-owned short structure, has been closed since January 2023 due to major structural deficiencies. VTrans entered the design phase for B15 in 2026 but does not anticipate being ready to act until 2032. The Wallingford community has repeatedly expressed its desire to see the structure replaced for vehicular access, given existing traffic conditions on VT-103 and the potential for isolation during a major flood event. While the ultimate decision rests with the State, the Town will continue to provide this public input to VTrans as appropriate throughout the design process.

Remove Hazard Trees in Road ROW: Wallingford will remove hazard trees within their road ROW and/or request removal by Green Mountain Power if also within the power line ROW, in accordance with their Road ROW Vegetation Management Plan.

Project Type



Structures & Infrastructure

Area of Impact

Town-wide (road network)

Partnerships

Tree Warden, Green Mountain Power

Community Lifelines Targeted



Energy (primary); Communications; Transportation

Lead Party

Road Commissioner

Project Timeframe

See Road ROW Vegetation Management Plan, when complete

Addressed Hazards



Extreme Cold, Snow, & Ice (primary); Strong Wind; Invasive Species

Funding Sources

Rural Roadside Ash Tree Removal Grant, Town Highway Budget

Prioritization

First

Install Back-up Power at Critical Facilities: Battery storage cells and generators (standby or portable) are emergency equipment that provide a secondary power source for a facility. The Town has identified the following critical facilities that require dedicated backup power. This action was listed in the 2021 Wallingford Local Hazard Mitigation Plan and remains a priority.

Project Type



Structures & Infrastructure

Area of Impact

1. Town Hall (EOC)
2. Wallingford Elementary School (EOC, shelter)
3. Wallingford Lodge (shelter)

Partnerships

Selectboard; Energy Committee; Wallingford Elementary School; Wallingford Fire District #1

Community Lifelines Targeted



Energy (primary); Food, Water, Shelter; Public Safety

Lead Party

Town Administrator

Project Timeframe

Acquire by December 2031, as funding allows

Addressed Hazards



All Hazards

Funding Sources

Annual appropriation, FEMA/VEM Hazard Mitigation grants

Prioritization

First

Insulate Shallow Buried Utility Mains/Services: Shallow water lines located above the frost level are prone to freezing, and ice buildup can damage pipes and restrict or completely block water flow. Insulation is one of the most effective and least cost-prohibitive ways to reduce heat loss and prevent water from freezing even at sub-zero temperatures. Although Wallingford Fire District #1 owns and maintains Wallingford Village's public water system, this action is included in this Plan in the event Fire District #1 would like to partner with the Town to complete it.

Project Type



Structures & Infrastructure

Area of Impact

1. Depot St
2. Prospect St
3. School St (near VT-140)
4. See 2027 Galvanized Pipe Inventory, when complete

Partnerships

Selectboard, Wallingford Fire District #1

Community Lifelines Targeted



Water Systems (primary)
Food, Water, Shelter

Lead Party

Town Administrator

Project Timeframe

2031 construction season, as funding allows

Addressed Hazards



Extreme Cold, Snow, & Ice

Funding Sources

FEMA/VEM Hazard Mitigation grants, Drinking Water State Revolving Fund

Prioritization

First

Install/Re-work Roadside Ditches: Properly installed and stabilized roadside ditches are critical to protect the integrity of the road. As of September 2026, Wallingford has 9 road segments (1 segment = 328 ft) with ditches that must be improved to current municipal road standards. Of these, 6 are ranked as high priority and 3 as very high priority by the MRGP database.

Project Type



Structures & Infrastructure

Area of Impact

1. Kent Farm Rd
2. Bear Mountain Rd
3. Sugar Hill Rd
4. West Hill Rd
5. Hartsboro Rd
6. See MRGP Road Erosion Inventory

Partnerships

ANR Municipal Roads Program

Community Lifelines Targeted



Transportation (primary)
Safety & Security

Lead Party

Road Commissioner

Project Timeframe

See MRGP Improvement Schedule

Addressed Hazards



Floods

Funding Sources

VTrans Grant Programs[8]

Prioritization

First

Routinely Clean and Repair Stormwater Infrastructure: Regular maintenance is one of the most effective ways to mitigate flood impacts. The Highway Department will clean and repair catch basins, ditches, and culverts according to its maintenance schedule and the Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP).

Project Type



Structures & Infrastructure

Area of Impact

Town-wide (road network)

Partnerships

ANR Stormwater Program

Community Lifelines Targeted



Transportation (primary)
Safety & Security

Lead Party

Road Commissioner

Project Timeframe

See Highway Department's Maintenance Schedule, MRGP

Addressed Hazards



Floods

Funding Sources

Town Highway Budget

Prioritization

First

Stabilize Culvert Outfalls: Erosion at culvert outlets is common and can cause structural failure with serious downstream consequences. Properly stabilized outfalls protect channel bank stability and reduce erosion. Wallingford has identified the following locations where culvert outlet stabilization is needed. This action was listed in the 2021 Wallingford Local Hazard Mitigation Plan and remains a priority.

Project Type



Structures & Infrastructure

Area of Impact

1. Kent Farm Rd
2. Bear Mountain Rd
3. Sugar Hill Rd
4. West Hill Rd
5. Hartsboro Rd
6. See MRGP Road Erosion Inventory

Partnerships

ANR Stream Engineer; US Army Corps of Engineers

Community Lifelines Targeted



Transportation (primary)
Safety & Security

Lead Party

Road Commissioner

Project Timeframe

See MRGP Improvement Schedule

Addressed Hazards



Floods

Funding Sources

VTrans Grant Programs[8]; Town Highway Budget; FEMA HMGP

Prioritization

First

Adequately Size Culverts in Flood-Prone Areas: Undersized culverts can lead to road washouts and floods. Wallingford has identified the following locations where upsized culverts are needed. This action was listed in the 2021 Wallingford Local Hazard Mitigation Plan and remains a priority.

Project Type



Structures & Infrastructure

Area of Impact

1) Hartsboro Rd (C34-5)
2) Blackwood Rd (C42-18 and C42-19)
3) Chapin Rd (C43-1 and C43-3)
4) Sugar Hill Rd (C6-39)
5) Haven Hill (C8-3)
6) Mooney Rd (C12-1)
7) Maranville Rd (C28-15)
8) Others as required by MRGP

Partnerships

Selectboard; ANR Municipal Roads Program; ANR River Engineer; VTrans District 3

Community Lifelines Targeted



Transportation (primary)
Safety & Security

Lead Party

Road Commissioner

Project Timeframe

1) 2027 Construction Season
2) 2031 construction season, or as funding allows
3) 2031 construction season, or as funding allows
4) 2031 construction season, or as funding allows
5) 2031 construction season, or as funding allows
6) 2031 construction season, or as funding allows
7) 2031 construction season, or as funding allows
8) See MRGP schedule

Addressed Hazards



Floods

Funding Sources

VTrans Grant Programs[8], FEMA/VEM Hazard Mitigation

Prioritization

First

Plant Trees for Cooling: Developed areas tend to be hotter than nearby rural areas because they tend to have a higher concentration of impervious surfaces. Adding trees can help reduce the urban heat island effect on hot days by providing shade and cooling through evaporation and transpiration.

Project Type



Structures & Infrastructure

Area of Impact

Within Wallingford Village Center

Partnerships

Selectboard; Town Administrator; Wallingford Conservation Commission; VT Urban & Community Forestry

Community Lifelines Targeted



Public Health

Lead Party

Tree Warden

Project Timeframe

During construction season, annually

Addressed Hazards



Extreme Heat

Funding Sources

Communities Caring for Canopies Grant

Prioritization

Second

Expand Water Supplies for Fire Suppression: During periods of extreme heat/drought, relied-upon surface water sources could become compromised. Assessing the functionality of all existing dry hydrants and exploring potential locations for additional hydrants is a recommended strategy for expanding access to water supplies for fire suppression. The existing dry hydrant infrastructure belongs to Wallingford Fire Districts 1 & 2; however, the Planning Team is including this action in this Plan in the event one or both Fire Districts would like to partner with the Town to complete it.

Project Type



Structures & Infrastructure

Area of Impact

Town-wide

Partnerships

Selectboard, Wallingford Fire Districts #1 and #2, VT Assoc. of Conservation Districts

Community Lifelines Targeted



Safety & Security

Lead Party

Town Administrator

Project Timeframe

At the discretion of the aforementioned partners

Addressed Hazards



Drought (primary)
Extreme Heat
Wildfires

Funding Sources

VT Rural Fire Protection Task Force

Prioritization

Second

Establish Vegetative Buffers in Riparian Areas, Stabilize Stream Banks, Restore Incised Reaches, Remove Berms and/or Accumulated Debris to Restore Flood Capacity: Wallingford will work with the Rutland Natural Resources Conservation District to identify areas for collaboration to pursue these actions, especially those in the 2009 Mill River Corridor Management Plan. This action was listed in the 2021 Wallingford Local Hazard Mitigation Plan and remains a priority.

Project Type



Natural Systems Protection

Area of Impact

1. Mill River Corridor
2. Roaring Brook at VT Railway crossing (near Fire Station)

Partnerships

Selectboard; Road Commissioner; Wallingford Conservation Commission; Rutland NRCD; ANR Stream Engineer, US Army Corps of Engineers

Community Lifelines Targeted



Safety & Security (Primary)
Transportation

Lead Party

Town Administrator

Project Timeframe

Assemble a Selectboard-appointed committee to identify areas for collaboration w/ Rutland NRCD in January 2028

Addressed Hazards



Floods

Funding Sources

Investigation: Not Applicable
Implementation: VTrans Grant Programs[8], Otter Creek CWSP, Trees for Streams

Prioritization

First

Educate the Public about All Hazards: Wallingford will undertake education and awareness efforts by publishing information on Facebook, Front Porch Forum, and the Town's annual report on ways to 1) prepare for severe winter related hazards; 2) prepare for extreme heat related hazards; 3) the importance of keeping roadside ditches and culverts clear of yard waste and other debris; 4) the availability of flood insurance through the NFIP and how to prepare for/recover from a flood event; 5) identifying, reporting invasive species such as EAB; 6) implementing water-saving measures during times of drought; and 7) controlling the spread of infectious diseases. Wallingford will also utilize the resources and guidance provided by the Firewise Program to share principles and best management practices for creating defensible spaces around homes and organizing community efforts to enhance wildfire resilience. Finally, the Wallingford Conservation Commission will continue to emphasize educating the public on the dangers posed by Japanese Knotweed and effective mitigation and/or eradication methods.

Project Type



Outreach & Education

Area of Impact

Town-wide

Partnerships

Selectboard; Town Tree Warden; Wallingford Fire District #1; Wallingford Vol. Fire Dept; Fire Warden; Deputy Fire Warden; Wallingford Conservation Commission; Town Clerk (*Wallingford Standard*); Wallingford Elementary School; VT Department of Health; VT Agency of Natural Resources; VT Urban & Community Forestry; ready.gov toolkits; floodsmart.gov toolkits, vtinvasives.org; Firewise Program

Community Lifelines Targeted



Public Health (primary)
Safety & Security

Lead Party

Various: EMD, EMC, Town Administrator

Project Timeframe

Spring-summer: Extreme Heat, Invasive Species, Flooding
Summer-fall: Drought, Wildfires
Fall-winter: Extreme Cold, Infectious Disease

**These are suggested timeframes. If an emerging hazard occurs at a different time of year, conducting the relevant outreach and education is encouraged.*

Addressed Hazards



All Hazards

Funding Sources

Not applicable

Prioritization

First

Section 406 – Public Assistance Program

Section 406 mitigation measures are funded under the FEMA Public Assistance Program. 406 funding provides discretionary authority to fund mitigation measures in conjunction with the repair of disaster-damaged facilities, so is limited to declared counties and eligible damaged facilities. Section 406 is applied on the parts of the facility that were damaged by the disaster and the mitigation measures directly reduce the potential of future, similar disaster damages to the facility.

Wallingford will make every effort to maximize use of future Public Assistance Section 406 Mitigation opportunities when available during federally declared disasters.

Integrating Into Existing Plans and Procedures

For Wallingford to succeed in reducing long-term risk to natural hazards, the goals, vulnerability information, and mitigation actions in this Plan will be integrated throughout government operations. When activities are connected, they not only reduce risk and increase resilience but also accomplish other objectives such as environmental protection, economic development, financial stability, and land use planning.

The Town can achieve integration into existing plans and procedures to support risk-informed community planning in the following ways:

- Funding for mitigation actions can be prioritized in capital planning for facilities and equipment and in the annual operating budget process. This is an action from the 2021 LHMP and remains a priority.
- To support workplace health and safety for employees, the Town's personnel policy may be updated to recommend vaccinations for municipal employees.
- The mitigation goal and risk information can inform the response and recovery procedures outlined in the Local Emergency Management Plan, especially by developing an Extreme Cold Response annex.
- The mitigation goal and risk information can help inform the next update of the Town Plan, particularly its flood resilience and land use policies and actions. These policies and actions support the goal of mitigating flood and fluvial erosion risks to public safety, critical infrastructure, historic structures, and municipal investments.
- Upon the evaluation and re-prioritization of priority projects, flood-related mitigation actions can be implemented under the 2019 Wallingford Stormwater Management Plan.
- Flood-related mitigation actions to increase road resiliency can be implemented under the Municipal Road General Permit to control stormwater discharges from town roads.
- During and after the development of a Wildfire Vulnerability map, the Town can investigate the feasibility of integrating and implementing wildfire-related mitigation actions, such as the creation of defensible space around structures and infrastructure.
- The mitigation goal and risk information for wildfires can be integrated into future collaboration opportunities with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). For example, Wallingford can coordinate with USFS to assess current wildfire response capabilities and opportunities to supplement or lend firefighting equipment, such as brush trucks, through shared services. Wallingford will also investigate leveraging existing firefighting equipment and resources available through the Rutland County Fire Mutual Aid Agreement.
- The mitigation goal and risk information can be integrated into the joint mission of the Rutland Regional Disaster Cooperative (RRDC) and the Rutland Regional Emergency Management Committee (REMC). This county-wide initiative is currently being developed through a joint effort by the RRPC and Vermont Department of Health and is supported by funding from the Vermont Land Access & Opportunity Board. The "sub-region" model being developed with input from municipalities and Whole Community sectors, will coordinate knowledge and resources to help those affected by natural hazards. By strengthening coordination and resource sharing, RRDC may play a crucial role in bolstering Rutland County municipalities' administrative, outreach, and education capabilities.

7 PLAN MAINTENANCE

This Plan is dynamic. To ensure it remains current and relevant, it should be evaluated and monitored annually and updated every five years, in accordance with FEMA guidelines in effect at the time.

Annual Evaluation and Monitoring

Within 12 months of FEMA Final Approval, the Plan will be evaluated and monitored annually as follows:



1. During the annual Local Emergency Management Plan update period (March to June), the Emergency Management Director (EMD), the Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC), and the Town Administrator will evaluate the effectiveness of the Plan in meeting the stated goals. Things to consider during this evaluation:

    - What disasters has the town (or region) experienced?
    - Should the list of highest risk natural hazard impacts be modified?
    - Are new data sources, maps, plans, or reports available? If so, what have they revealed, and should the information be incorporated into this plan?
    - Has development in the region occurred and could it create or reduce risk?
    - Has the town adopted new policies or regulations that could be incorporated into this plan?
    - Have elements of this plan been incorporated into new plans, reports, policies, or regulations?
    - Are there different or additional community capabilities available for mitigation implementation?

2. Next, the EMD, EMC, and Town Administrator will monitor mitigation action progress. Things to consider:

    - Is the mitigation strategy being implemented as anticipated?
    - Were the cost and timeline estimates accurate?
    - Should new mitigation actions be added?
    - Should proposed actions be revised or removed?
    - Are there new funding sources to consider?

    The status (e.g., in progress, complete) of each action should be recorded in **Table 9**. If the status is "in progress", note whether the action is on schedule. If the action is not on schedule, describe any problems, delays, or adverse conditions that will impair the ability to complete the action.

3. The EMD, EMC, and Town Administrator will seek public comment from the Whole Community on plan implementation. Things to consider:

    - Are there any new stakeholders to include?
    - What public outreach activities have occurred? At minimum, the Town will publicly post notice of meetings when the plan is being evaluated.
    - How can public involvement be improved?

4. Based on input received, the mitigation strategy and/or actions will be modified, if needed.

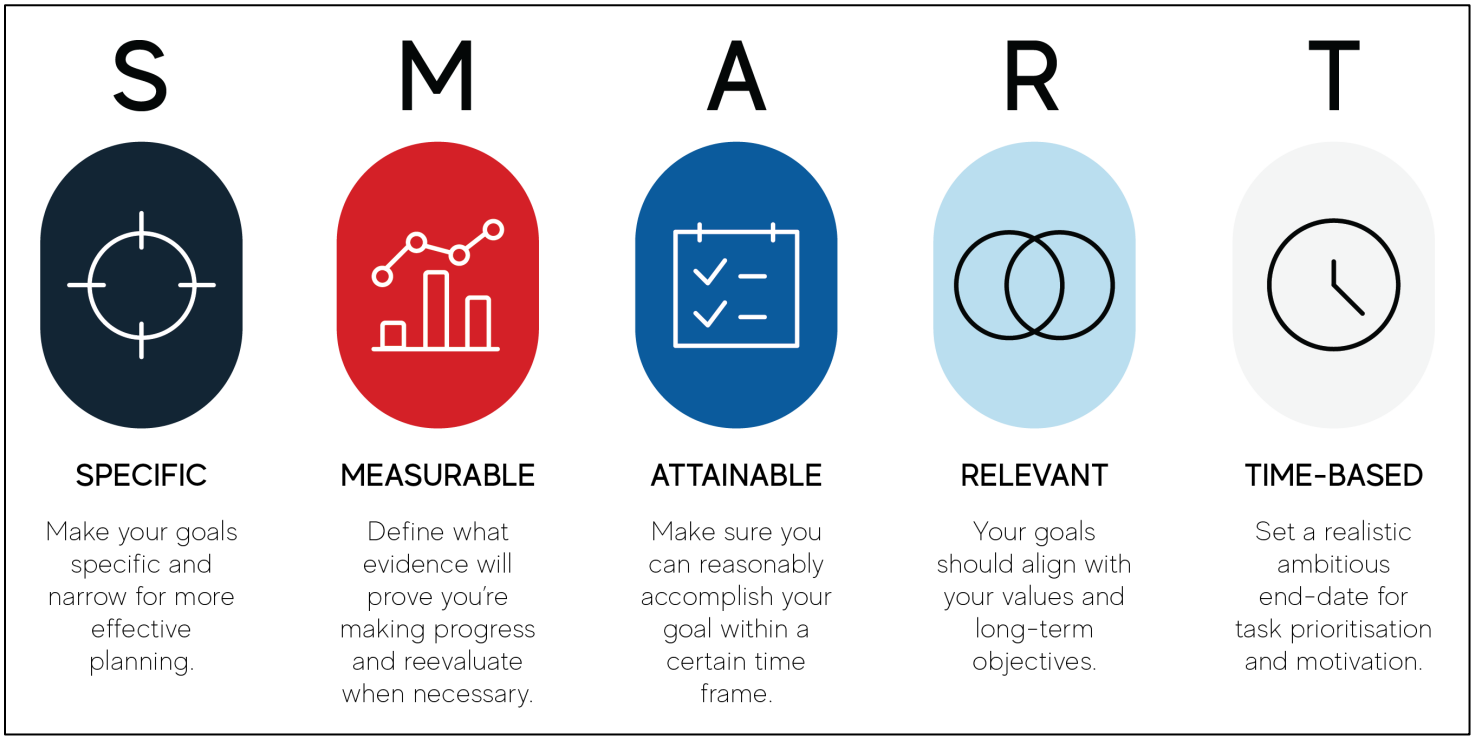
5. A report (or record in the form of meeting minutes) will be made available to the public.

Table 9: Mitigation Action Status

Mitigation Action	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031
Local Plans & Regulations					
Plan for and Maintain Adequate Road and Debris Clearing Capabilities PRIORITY: First LEAD PARTY: Selectboard TIMEFRAME: Nov-Dec, annually					
Improve Extreme Temperature Resilience with Cold/Hot Weather Response LEMP Annex PRIORITY: First LEAD PARTY: Emergency Management Director & Coordinator TIMEFRAME: Develop in 2027 for adoption in May 2028					
Right-of-Way Vegetation Management Plan PRIORITY: First LEAD PARTY: Road Commissioner TIMEFRAME: Complete by June 2029					
Update Road Erosion (REI) and Culvert Inventories PRIORITY: First LEAD PARTY: Road Commissioner TIMEFRAME: Full Inventory for REI & Culverts: 2031 construction season					
Review Stormwater Management Plan PRIORITY: Second LEAD PARTY: Town Administrator TIMEFRAME: Assemble committee in Jan 2027 and deliver recommendations in Dec 2027					
Plan for Bridge Repairs PRIORITY: Second LEAD PARTY: Road Commissioner TIMEFRAME: Short Structure Inspections: annually in June Long Structure Inspections: Even year construction seasons (except B59, which is odd year construction seasons)					
Map and Assess Vulnerability to Wildfire PRIORITY: Second LEAD PARTY: Town Administrator TIMEFRAME: Solicit services in Jan 2028 and produce final map by Dec 2028					
Structure & Infrastructure Projects					
Remove Hazard Trees in Road Right-of-Way PRIORITY: First LEAD PARTY: Road Commissioner TIMEFRAME: See ROW Vegetation Management Plan					
Install Back-up Power at Critical Facilities PRIORITY: First LEAD PARTY: Town Administrator (Fire Dist. Partnership) TIMEFRAME: 2031 construction season, as funding allows					

Mitigation Action	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031
Insulate Shallow Buried Utility Mains/Services PRIORITY: First LEAD PARTY: Town Administrator (Fire Dist. Partnership) TIMEFRAME: 2031 construction season, as funding allows					
Install/Rework Roadside Ditches PRIORITY: First LEAD PARTY: Road Commissioner TIMEFRAME: See MRGP Improvement Schedule					
Routinely Clean and Repair Stormwater Infrastructure PRIORITY: First LEAD PARTY: Road Commissioner TIMEFRAME: See Highway Department's Maintenance Schedule and MRGP					
Stabilize Culvert Outfalls PRIORITY: First LEAD PARTY: Road Commissioner TIMEFRAME: See MRGP Improvement Schedule					
Adequately Size Culverts in Flood-Prone Areas PRIORITY: First LEAD PARTY: Road Commissioner TIMEFRAME: 2027 construction season (Hartsboro Rd); all others 2031 construction season, as funding allows					
Plant Trees for Cooling PRIORITY: Second LEAD PARTY: Tree Warden TIMEFRAME: During construction season, annually					
Expand Water Supplies for Water Suppression PRIORITY: Second LEAD PARTY: Town Administrator (Fire Dist. Partnership) TIMEFRAME: See action summary, page 56					
Natural Systems Protection					
Investigate Feasibility of Natural System Protection Projects PRIORITY: First LEAD PARTY: Selectboard/Town Administrator TIMEFRAME: Assemble committee in Jan 2028					
Outreach & Education Programs					
Educate the Public about Severe Winter Weather-Related Hazards and Infectious Disease PRIORITY: First LEAD PARTY: EMD, EMC, Town Administrator TIMEFRAME: Fall and Winter annually					

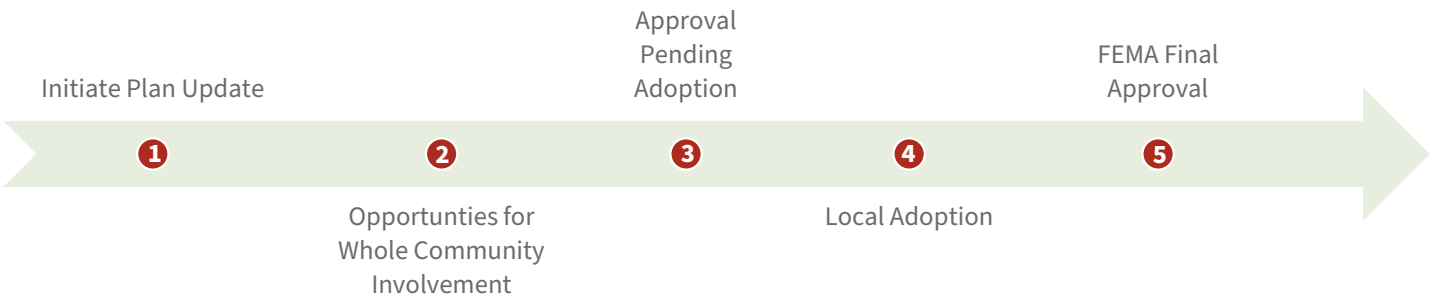
Mitigation Action	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031
Educate the Public Extreme Heat-Related Hazards, Flooding-Related Hazards, and Invasive Species PRIORITY: First LEAD PARTY: EMD, EMC, Town Administrator TIMEFRAME: Spring and Summer, annually					
Educate the Public about Drought and Wildfire-related Hazards PRIORITY: First LEAD PARTY: EMD, EMC, Town Administrator TIMEFRAME: Summer and Fall, annually					



Source: www.futurelearn.com

5-Year Updates

This Plan will be updated at a minimum every five (5) years as follows:



1. As of April 2025, BRIC funding is no longer available to assist municipalities in paying for planning services to update the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. If BRIC or a similar federal grant were to become available, the Wallingford Town Administrator should contact Vermont Emergency Management (VEM) to apply for funding in 2029 – approximately 2 years before the Plan expires. It is assumed that the Selectboard Chair will serve as the primary point of contact for the Plan update.

   Once funding is secured and the grant agreement between the Town and State is in place, the Selectboard can issue a request for proposals (RFP) to procure planning services in accordance with the grant agreement. The RFP should be issued approximately 14 months before the Plan expires.

   Once a consultant is procured, the Plan update can begin with a kick-off meeting including the consultant and local hazard mitigation planning team. The kick-off meeting should be scheduled approximately 12 months before the Plan expires. The Town should allot approximately 8 months for the Plan update process.

2. Opportunities for Whole Community involvement throughout the Plan update process need to be factored into the schedule. These opportunities may include community surveys, pop-up events, planning workshop, and public meetings at critical milestones agreed to at the project kick-off meeting.

3. Once the local hazard mitigation planning team has prepared a final draft, they can seek authorization from the Selectboard to submit the Plan for VEM/FEMA approval. Plan approval is accomplished in two steps – the first is Approval Pending Adoption. The Town should submit for Approval Pending Adoption approximately 4 months before the Plan expires to allow for time to respond to any review comments received from VEM/FEMA.

4. Once the Town receives Approval Pending Adoption, the Selectboard should adopt the Plan as soon as their next regular meeting.

5. Once adopted, the Town can submit the Plan for VEM/FEMA Final Approval. The Town should submit for Final Approval approximately 1 month before the Plan expires to ensure there is no gap in coverage between updates. The FEMA Final Approval date starts the clock on the effective dates of the 5-year Plan.

APPENDIX A: CERTIFICATE OF ADOPTION

Town of Wallingford, Vermont Selectboard

A Resolution Adopting the Wallingford, Vermont 2026 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

WHEREAS the Wallingford Selectboard recognizes the threat that natural hazards pose to people and property within the Town of Wallingford; and

WHEREAS the Wallingford Selectboard has prepared a natural hazard mitigation plan, hereby known as the Wallingford, Vermont 2026 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan in accordance with federal laws, including the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, as amended; the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, as amended; and the National Dam Safety Program Act, as amended; and

WHEREAS the Wallingford, Vermont 2026 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies mitigation goals and actions to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and property in the Town of Wallingford from the impacts of future hazards and disasters; and

WHEREAS adoption by the Wallingford Selectboard demonstrates its commitment to hazard mitigation and achieving the goals outlined in the Wallingford, Vermont 2026 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN OF WALLINGFORD, VERMONT, THAT:

Section 1. In accordance with 24 VSA §872, the Wallingford Selectboard adopts the Wallingford, Vermont 2026 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. While content related to the Town of Wallingford may require revisions to meet the plan approval requirements, changes occurring after adoption will not require the Town of Wallingford to re-adopt any further iterations of the plan. Subsequent plan updates following the approval period for this plan will require separate adoption resolutions.

ADOPTED by a vote of _____ in favor, ____ against, and ____ absent or abstaining, this __ day of _____ 2026.

By: _____ (signature)
Selectboard Chair

_____ (print name)
Selectboard Chair

ATTEST: By: _____ (print name)

APPENDIX B: MITIGATION ACTIONS FROM 2021 PLAN

Plan for and Maintain Adequate Road and Debris Clearing Capabilities: This includes capital planning and funding to support the appropriate number of staff and equipment needed to maintain the transportation network in Wallingford.

ADDRESSED HAZARDS

Winter Storm
Primary Hazard

High Winds

COMMUNITY LIFELINES TARGETED

Safety & Security

Transportation
Primary Lifeline

Area of Impact
Town-wide; ±50 mile road network

FUNDING SOURCES
- Local funding

PARTNERSHIPS
- Road Commissioner

BENEFIT SCORE = 6

PROJECT TIMELINE
To coincide with preparing the annual Town budget

Lead Party
Selectboard

2026 Status
Remains as an ongoing priority.

Update Road Erosion and Culvert Inventories: These inventories were completed in 2019 and serve as the basis for asset management and should be kept up-to-date annually, with a full re-assessment every 5 years.

ADDRESSED HAZARDS

Flooding

COMMUNITY LIFELINES TARGETED

Safety & Security

Transportation
Primary Lifeline

Area of Impact
Town-wide; ±32 miles of hydrologically-connected roads and ±520 culverts

FUNDING SOURCES
- Local funding
- VTrans Better Roads

PARTNERSHIPS
- Rutland Regional Planning Commission

BENEFIT SCORE = 6

PROJECT TIMELINE
Re-assessment during 2024 construction season

Lead Party
Road Commissioner

2026 Status
Both completed in 2026; achieved intended results. Remains as a priority for 2031.

Plan for Bridge Repairs: Every two years, VTrans inspects all town-owned bridges that are in the State's Town Highway Bridge Program. These inspection reports will be reviewed and used to plan for any identified flood-related bridge repairs.

ADDRESSED HAZARDS

Flooding

COMMUNITY LIFELINES TARGETED

Safety & Security

Transportation
Primary Lifeline

Area of Impact
Seven (7) town-owned bridges: B7W, B47, B48, B50, B51, B54, B59

FUNDING SOURCES
- Local funding

PARTNERSHIPS
- Selectboard
- VTrans

BENEFIT SCORE = 6

PROJECT TIMELINE
Review Reports in Nov 2020
Develop Plan for Repairs, if needed, by Jun 2021

Lead Party
Road Commissioner

2026 Status
Remains as an ongoing priority.

Manage Development in Erosion Hazard Areas with River Corridor Bylaws: River Corridor Bylaws can be used in conjunction with Flood Hazard Area Regulations to manage development in areas prone to flood impacts. Wallingford will explore the feasibility of adopting River Corridor Bylaws.

Addressed Hazards

Flooding

Lead Party

Planning Commission

2026 Status

Complete. It was determined that there was no political will for this action at that time. For the current status of this action's feasibility, see Table 7.

Community Lifelines Targeted

Safety & Security

Transportation
Primary Lifeline

Area of Impact

Town-wide

Funding Sources

- Local funding

Partnerships

- Selectboard
- Rutland Regional Planning Commission

Benefit Score = 5

Project Timeline

Gauge the public support/political will in Jul 2021
Submit recommendations to the Selectboard by Dec 2021

Stabilize Culvert Outfalls: Erosion at the outlet of culverts is common and can cause structural failure with serious downstream consequences. Properly stabilized outfalls protect channel bank stability and reduce erosion. Wallingford has identified the following locations where culvert outlet stabilization is needed.

Addressed Hazards

Flooding

Lead Party

Road Commissioner

2026 Status

Complete; achieved the intended results. Remains as a priority for other areas of impact; see Table 8.

Community Lifelines Targeted

Safety & Security

Transportation
Primary Lifeline

Area of Impact

1) Upper and lower Dugway Rd
2) Sugar Hill Rd

Funding Sources

- Local funding
- VTrans Better Roads
- Grants-In-Aid
- FEMA HMGP

Partnerships

- Selectboard
- ANR Stream Engineer
- US Army Corps of Engineers

Benefit Score = 6

Project Timeline

1) 2022 construction season
2) 2023 construction season

Re-work Roadside Ditches: Properly installed and stabilized roadside ditches are critical to protect the integrity of the road. Although Wallingford has an extensive network of ditches, the areas noted below either need new ditches or have ditches that need to be re-worked to bring them up to current municipal Road Standards.

Addressed Hazards



Flooding

Lead Party

Road Commissioner

2026 Status

Complete: Chapin Rd, Maranville Rd, Mooney Rd, White Rocks Picnic Rd
Partially complete: Sugar Hill Rd, West Hill Rd
Remains as an ongoing priority.

Community Lifelines Targeted



Safety & Security



Transportation
Primary Lifeline

Area of Impact

New: Chapin Rd and Maranville Rd
Rework: Sugar Hill Rd (just off 140), Mooney Rd, White Rocks Picnic Rd, West Hill Rd

Funding Sources

- Local funding
- VTrans Better Roads
- Grants-In-Aid

Partnerships

- Selectboard

Benefit Score = 6

Project Timeline

2021 – 2024 construction seasons

Remove Hazardous Trees in Road Right-of-Way: Hazardous trees in the road right-of-way can contribute to power and communication outages as well as debris in the roadway during winter storms and high wind events. Wallingford will remove hazardous trees within their road right-of-way as they are identified and/or request removal by Green Mountain Power if also within the power line right-of-way.

Addressed Hazards



Winter Storm



High Winds

Lead Party

Road Commissioner

2026 Status

Remains as an ongoing priority.

Community Lifelines Targeted



Energy
Primary Lifeline



Transportation



Communications

Area of Impact

Town-wide

Funding Sources

- Local funding

Partnerships

- Tree Warden
- Green Mountain Power
- Selectboard

Benefit Score = 6

Project Timeline

As needed
See Rural Road Resilient Right-of-Ways Vegetation Assessment

Install Green Stormwater Management Practices: Green infrastructure uses vegetation, soils, and other elements and practices to restore some of the natural processes required to manage stormwater runoff and control flooding. The 2019 Wallingford Stormwater Master Plan recommends installation of an infiltration swale in the road right-of-way on Florence Avenue to provide some measure of local flood control.

Addressed Hazards



Flooding

Lead Party

Road Commissioner

2026 Status

Incomplete; Florence Ave is no longer a priority because further inspection by engineers revealed the installation of a swale could contribute to backflow onto Florence Ave, an already flood-prone area.

Community Lifelines Targeted



Safety & Security



Transportation
Primary Lifeline

Area of Impact

Florence Avenue

Funding Sources

- Local funding

Partnerships

- Selectboard
- Vermont Youth Conservation Corp (VYCC)
- Rutland NRCD

Benefit Score = 6

Project Timeline

2024 construction season

Adequately Size Drainage and Perennial Stream Culverts in Flood-Prone Areas: Undersized culverts can lead to road washouts and flooding. Wallingford has identified several locations where upsized culverts are needed.

Addressed Hazards



Flooding

Lead Party

Road Commissioner

2026 Status

1) Incomplete; remains as an ongoing priority
2) Incomplete; remains as an ongoing priority
3) Incomplete; remains as an ongoing priority
4) Incomplete; remains as an ongoing priority
5) Complete as of October 2026; achieved the intended results
6) Incomplete; remains as an ongoing priority
7) Incomplete; remains as an ongoing priority
8) Remains as an ongoing priority

Community Lifelines Targeted



Safety & Security



Transportation
Primary Lifeline

Area of Impact

1) Blackwood Rd – (2) 36”
2) Chapin Rd – (2) 36”
3) Sugar Hill Rd – (1) 36”
4) Haven Hill – (1) 48”
5) West Hill Rd – (1) 24”
6) Mooney Rd – (1) 24”
7) Maranville Rd – (1) 24”
8) Others as required by MRGP

Funding Sources

- Local funding
- VTrans Better Roads
- VTrans Structures Grant
- Grants-In-Aid
- FEMA HMGP

Partnerships

- Selectboard
- ANR Stream Engineer
- US Army Corps of Engineers

Benefit Score = 6

Project Timeline

1) 2021 – 2024 construction seasons
2) See MRGP

Install Back-up Power at Critical Facilities: Generators are emergency equipment that provide a secondary source of power to a facility. Wallingford has identified two critical facilities in need of back-up power.

ADDRESSED HAZARDS

All Hazards

Lead Party

Selectboard – Town Office
Schoolboard – Elementary School

2026 Status

Incomplete; remains as ongoing priority.

COMMUNITY LIFELINES TARGETED

Energy
Primary Lifeline

Food, Water, Shelter

Area of Impact

1) Town Office (local emergency operations center)
2) Elementary School (local shelter)

FUNDING SOURCES

- Local funding
- FEMA HMGP

PARTNERSHIPS

- None

BENEFIT SCORE = 6

PROJECT TIMELINE

1) 2023 construction season
2) 2025 construction season

Routinely Clear Debris from Low-Lying Bridge Support Bracing: Regular maintenance will help structures continue to function properly and not create a hazard during a flood event. Wallingford has identified one (1) low-lying bridge.

ADDRESSED HAZARDS

Flooding

Lead Party

Road Commissioner

2026 Status

No longer a priority due to a lack of political will.

COMMUNITY LIFELINES TARGETED

Safety & Security

Transportation
Primary Lifeline

Area of Impact

Bridge (B59) on Creek Road – the center support collects debris

FUNDING SOURCES

- Local funding

PARTNERSHIPS

- Selectboard
- ANR Stream Engineer
- US Army Corps of Engineers

BENEFIT SCORE = 5

PROJECT TIMELINE

As needed

Establish Vegetative Buffers in Riparian Areas, Stabilize Stream Banks, Restore Incised Reaches, Remove Berms and/or Accumulated Debris to Restore Flood Capacity: Wallingford will work with the Rutland Natural Resources Conservation District to identify areas for collaboration to pursue these actions, especially those in the 2009 Mill River Corridor Management Plan.

ADDRESSED HAZARDS

Flooding

Lead Party

Selectboard

2026 Status

Incomplete; remains as an ongoing priority.

COMMUNITY LIFELINES TARGETED

Safety & Security
Primary Lifeline

Transportation

Area of Impact

1) Mill River Corridor
2) Roaring Brook at Vermont Railway crossing (near Fire Station)

FUNDING SOURCES

- Local funding
- VTrans Better Roads
- VANR Water Quality Grants

PARTNERSHIPS

- Road Commissioner
- Rutland NRCD
- ANR Stream Engineer

PROJECT TIMELINE

Assemble a Selectboard-appointed committee to identify areas for collaboration w/ Rutland NRCD in Jan 2021.

Educate Property Owners about Emerald Ash Borer and Keep the Ditches Clean Campaign: Wallingford will undertake education and awareness efforts on 1) the Emerald Ash Borer and the impacts of infestation and 2) the importance of keeping the municipal ditches free of yard waste and other debris.

Addressed Hazards

Flooding

Invasive Species

Community Lifelines Targeted

Safety & Security

Transportation
Primary Lifeline

Area of Impact
Town-wide

Lead Party
Selectboard

2026 Status
Remains as an ongoing priority.

Funding Sources
- Local funding

Partnerships
- Tree Warden

Benefit Score = 6

Project Timeline
Fall 2020 – Keep the Ditches Clean educational outreach in *Wallingford Standard*
Spring 2021 – Emerald Ash Borer educational outreach in *Wallingford Standard*



New plantings by the shore of Elfin Lake in May 2026, installed as part of an erosion reduction project.
Photo Credit: Sandi Switzer.

APPENDIX C: PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

Community Engagement Strategy

During the kick-off meeting, the Wallingford Hazard Mitigation Planning Team came to a consensus on a 3-phase Community Engagement Strategy – see **Appendix Table 2**. This Strategy was designed to ensure that at-risk populations had an opportunity for equitable involvement throughout the entirety of the plan development process (i.e., from kickoff to final draft).

This Strategy also ensured the involvement of the Whole Community. For the purposes of this plan, the Whole Community is comprised of 1) local and regional agencies involved in hazard mitigation; 2) entities with authority to regulate development; 3) neighboring towns; 4) representatives of business, schools or academia, and other private organizations that sustain community lifelines; and 5) representatives of community-serving nonprofit organizations that work directly with frontline populations.

> ***"A Whole Community approach attempts to engage the full capacity of the private and nonprofit sectors, including businesses, faith-based and disability organizations, and the general public, in conjunction with the participation of local, tribal, state, territorial, and Federal governmental partners."***
> ***-A Whole Community Approach to Emergency Management: Principles, Themes, and Pathways for Action (FEMA, 2011)***

A Goal Statement was developed to guide the planning team's public outreach throughout the planning process:

The Town of Wallingford will:

- ***Notify the Whole Community about the plan update at the kickoff, mid-point draft, and final draft;***
- ***Solicit feedback from the Whole Community about the frequency and impacts of various natural hazards, and strategies and mitigation methods that should be prioritized; and***
- ***Integrate from the Whole Community perspectives and information about hazard impacts and likelihoods, and priorities for potential mitigation actions.***

In addition, as part of the Vermont Climate Action Office's 2026 Municipal Climate Planning Guide Pilot Program, Wallingford sought direct engagement with at-risk populations using the framework provided by the draft Social Resilience Process Guide. See **Appendix Table 3** for more details.

Phase 1 Engagement Activities

Kick-off

To notify the Whole Community of the Plan Update, the Town conducted a robust advertising campaign. A landing page was created as a dedicated online resource for information on the planning process and opportunities for community engagement. The landing page url is: https://tinyurl.com/wallingford-lhmp26.

Physical flyers were posted at the Wallingford Town Hall, Wallingford Village Post Office, and East Wallingford Village Post Office. Online notices were posted on the Wallingford Town Website, the Wallingford Facebook Page, the RRPC website, and the RRPC Facebook Page. The kick-off launch occurred after the submission deadline for the April Wallingford Standard Newsletter; however, the Planning Team agreed to post press releases for all other Plan update milestones.

Appendix Table 1. Whole Community Contacts & Partners

Hazard Mitigation Agencies: DEC River Engineer for Southwest VT • DEC Western VT Floodplain Manager • Otter Creek Clean Water Service Provider (CWSP) • Rutland Natural Resources Conservation District • VDH Emergency Preparedness Specialist • VDH Rutland Office District Director • VTrans District 3 District Manager • VTrans District 3 Transportation Administrator • Wallingford Emergency Management Coordinator • Wallingford Emergency Management Director • Wallingford Fire Chief • Wallingford Fire District No. 1 • Wallingford Fire Warden • Wallingford Road Commissioner • Wallingford Road Foreman • Wallingford Tree Warden

Authorities Regulating Development & Other Local Officials: Wallingford Selectboard Chair • Wallingford Selectboard Members • Wallingford Planning Commission Chair • Wallingford Planning Commission Members • Wallingford Zoning Administrator • Wallingford Town Clerk/Treasurer • Wallingford Town Administrator • Wallingford Health Officer • Wallingford Conservation Commission Chair • Wallingford Energy Committee Chair

Neighboring Municipalities: Selectboard Chair, Planning Commission Chair, Town Clerk, and EMD/EMC for the Towns of Clarendon, Danby, and Tinmouth • Selectboard Chair, Planning Commission Chair, Town Clerk, Health Officer, and EMD/EMC for the Towns of Mount Holly and Shrewsbury • Selectboard Chair/EMD and Town Clerk for the Town of Mount Tabor (Note: Mount Tabor does not have a Planning Commission)

Business, Schools, & Private Orgs.: Council of Economic Development of the Rutland Region (CEDRR) • Marble Valley Regional Transit District • Mill River School District Superintendent • Wallingford Representatives for the Mill River School District Board • Wallingford Elementary School

Non-profit Organizations: Advocacy Resources Community Rutland • Bayada Home Health/Care • Bennington-Rutland Opportunity Council • Cornerstone Housing Partners • Gilbert Hart Library • Green Mountain Neighbors • Project VISION • Rutland County Health Partners • Rutland County Pride • Rutland Mental Health Services • Rutland Regional Medical Center • Serenity House • Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging • Turning Point Center • Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired • Vermont Center for Independent Living • Visiting Nurses Association & Hospice of Southwest Vermont • Wallingford Historical Society • Wallingford Rotary Club

Project communications were sent to segments of the Whole Community throughout the planning process; see **Appendix Table 1** for a complete list. Kick-off engagement materials can be seen starting on page A-14.

No inquiries or comments were received from Town officials or the public in response to project kick-off notices.

Gather Data & Assess Risk

To inform the Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment section of the plan, the Town employed five (5) engagement methods: survey, workshop, pop-ups, presentation to the Selectboard at a public meeting, and public comment period.

A survey was administered online and was open from April 29 – June 1, 2026. Physical surveys were also available at the Town Office and Gilbert Hart Library. Notice of the survey was included in the plan kick-off communications. **A total of 36 surveys were received.** A summary of the survey results is provided on page A-22.

The Town conducted a workshop on May 26, 2026, with the planning team and two subject matter experts to complete the community hazard risk assessment. Noah Hoffman, from the Agency of Natural Resources, and Eric Pulver, the Emergency Preparedness Specialist with the Vermont Department of Health, attended the workshop to assist with the risk assessments for Invasive Species and Infectious Disease, respectively. The results of the risk assessment are presented in **Table 5** of the Plan.

The Town conducted a "pop-up" event at the weekly Wallingford Village protest on Saturday, May 16, 2026. By "meeting people where they are", the Town collected additional input from demographics that may not have otherwise been engaged. At the pop-up, people placed dot stickers on the natural hazards of most concern and vulnerable assets. **This method captured a total of 110 responses**. A summary of pop-up feedback is provided on page A-29.

The draft Plan was provided to the Selectboard at their regular meeting on July 20, 2026, to encourage input from the local government and public on the Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment results. Input at this milestone is critical as feedback could affect the plan's conclusions and ensure that it integrates with other Town initiatives. The meeting was recorded, aired on PEG TV, and is available on both the Town's website and PEG TV's YouTube channel.

The draft Plan was posted for a 2-week public comment period from July 20 – August 3, 2026. It was available on the landing page and at the Town Office. The draft plan and the notice of the comment period were emailed directly to all five segments of the Whole Community. Notice of the comment period (as well as the July 20 presentation) was also posted in the Wallingford Standard Newsletter and on the Wallingford Town Website, the Wallingford Facebook Page, the RRPC website, and the RRPC Facebook Page. Physical flyers were posted at the Wallingford Town Hall, Wallingford Village Post Office, and East Wallingford Village Post Office. Notices included instructions to email comments to the Rutland Regional Planning Commission.

Review of the draft Plan by the Selectboard and public concluded on August 3, 2026. The Chair of the Wallingford Conservation Commission elaborated upon concerns related to Japanese Knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*), an invasive weed that has the potential to exacerbate flooding (see page A-30 for more details). The Selectboard briefly discussed engaging homeowners near Roaring Brook and other rivers to monitor knotweed populations as a potential mitigation strategy.

A selectboard member also commented upon Act 162, a new Vermont law that designated Fire Chiefs to serve as Fire Wardens. With extended drought conditions, more nations around the world are focusing on fire suppression rather than prevention, a trend that would explain the recent change in protocol from a municipally-designated Fire Warden. He suggested that the Town consider severely curtailing burn permits as both a mitigation action and a precautionary measure.

Positive reception from local officials. *Additional input received during the public comment period is summarized on page A-30.*

The Selectboard did not have any additional comments on the draft Plan. They authorized the Planning Team to proceed with developing the mitigation strategy at their August 3, 2026 meeting.

Phase 2 Engagement Activities

To inform the Mitigation Strategy section of the plan, the Town employed two (2) engagement methods: workshop and survey.

The Town conducted a workshop on September 2, 2026, with the Planning Team, the VDH Emergency Preparedness Specialist, the Rutland NRCD, and the ANR Wildland Fire Specialist to complete the mitigation action evaluation. The results of the evaluation are presented in **Table 7** of the Plan.

A survey to seek public reaction to the proposed mitigation goal and actions was administered online and open from September 4 – October 2, 2026. Notice of the survey was provided online via the landing page, the Wallingford Town Website, Wallingford Facebook Page, the *Wallingford Standard* newsletter, the RRPC website, and the RRPC Facebook Page. Notices were also sent by direct email to the segments of the Whole Community listed for Phase 1. Physical copies of the surveys were available at the Town Office and Gilbert Hart Library. **A total of 14 surveys were received.** The results can be seen on page A-35.

Phase 3 Engagement Activities

To help finalize the draft, the Plan was presented to the Selectboard at a public meeting and posted for a final public comment period. Online notices of the public presentation at the November 2, 2026, Wallingford Selectboard meeting were posted on the landing page, the Wallingford Town Website, Wallingford Facebook Page, the RRPC website, and the RRPC Facebook Page. The presentation and public comment period notice for the *Wallingford Standard* newsletter was submitted but unfortunately not published.

The final draft Plan was presented at the November 2, 2026, Selectboard meeting to solicit input from local government and the public on the mitigation strategy and final draft plan. Input at this milestone is critical, as it is the last opportunity to weigh in on the plan contents before submittal for Approval Pending Adoption. The meeting was recorded, aired on PEG TV, and is available on both the Town's website and PEG TV's YouTube channel.

The final draft Plan was posted for a 2-week public comment period from November 2 – November 16, 2026. It was available for viewing on the landing page, the Town Website, and Town Hall. Notice of the comment period was posted on the landing page, the Wallingford Town Website, Wallingford Facebook Page, the RRPC website, and the RRPC Facebook Page. The final draft plan and notice of the comment period were also directly emailed to all five segments of the Whole Community. Notices included instructions to email comments to the Rutland Regional Planning Commission or attend the November 16, 2026 Selectboard meeting to share input.

Review of the final draft Plan by the public concluded on November 16, 2026. The Selectboard did not have any comments on the final draft Plan. During the November 16, 2026 meeting, the Selectboard authorized to submit the final draft Plan to Vermont Emergency Management for Approval Pending Adoption.

Positive reception from local officials. *Additional input received during the public comment period is summarized on page A-44.*

Appendix Table 2. Wallingford Community Engagement Strategy

Engagement Phase	Project Milestone	Outreach Method	Purpose	Target Date
1	Kick-Off	Landing page, flyers, press release, social media, email blast	Notify (inform the Whole Community of the plan update)	4/29/2026
	Gather Data & Assess Risk	Survey	Solicit (feedback from Whole Community on potential natural hazard impacts)	4/29/2026 – 6/1/2026
		Pop-up Events	Solicit (feedback from Whole Community on potential natural hazard impacts)	5/16/2026
		Workshop	Integrate (evaluate broad range of risks)	5/26/2026
		Selectboard Presentation	Notify (inform local officials of plan progress)	7/20/2026
		Public Comment Period	Solicit (feedback from Whole Community on draft Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment)	7/20/2026– 8/3/2026
2	Develop Mitigation Strategy	Workshop(s)	Integrate (evaluate broad range of mitigation actions)	9/2/2026
		Survey	Solicit (reaction from Whole Community on mitigation strategy and actions)	9/4/2026 – 10/2/2026
3	Finalize Draft Plan	Selectboard Presentation	Notify (inform local officials of plan progress)	11/2/2026
		Public Comment Period	Solicit (feedback from Whole Community on final draft plan)	11/2/2026 – 11/16/2026

Appendix Table 3. Social Resilience Guide Pilot Program & Coalition Engagement

The Social Resilience Process Guide, developed by the Vermont Climate Action Office (CAO) in consultation with Siler Climate Consulting, is designed for Vermont municipalities and offers step-by-step guidance on working collaboratively with people most impacted by climate change due to systemic vulnerability. This guide is meant to support municipal governments in better understanding what social vulnerability looks like in their communities and in identifying climate resilience solutions that address the root causes of those vulnerabilities, thereby building social resilience. The goal is to leverage collective governance to better integrate social resilience goals and priorities into municipal planning and implementation. This process can be used independently or in conjunction with other planning efforts, such as a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan update.

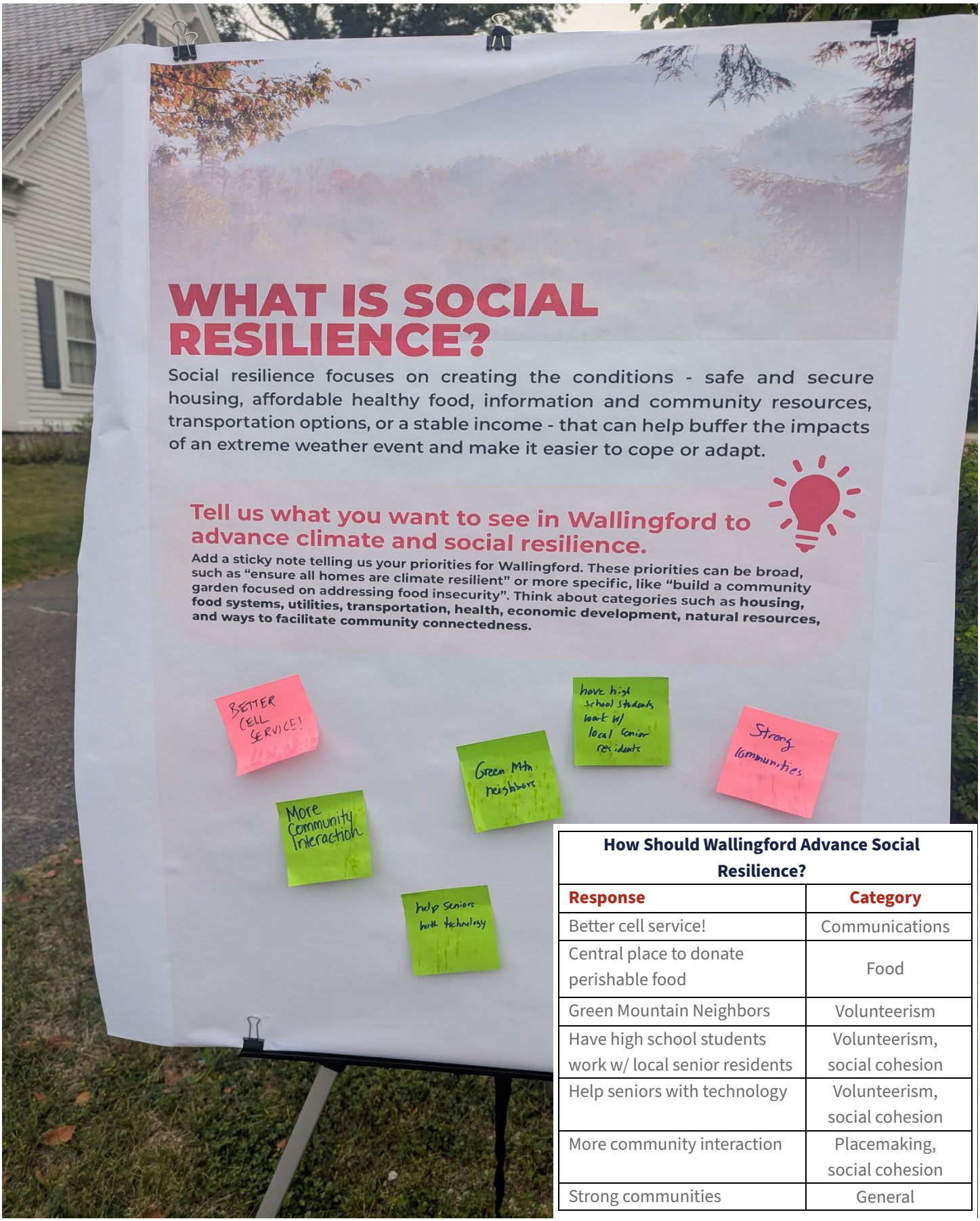
As part of a competitive Statewide Pilot Program, Vermont CAO chose Wallingford to pilot the use and implementation of the draft Social Resilience Guide in tandem with their LHMP update. Many of the "Core Team" members for the Pilot Program were also part of the LHMP Planning Team, including the Town Administrator, Selectboard Representative, and Energy Committee Chair. This aided cross-pollination between the "standard" public outreach engagement strategy and the potential to expand engagement by identifying and recruiting those with "lived expertise" in natural hazard impacts. The resulting "Coalition" group would follow an independent process based on the draft Social Resilience Guide while also periodically participating in joint meetings with the Planning Team to better incorporate challenges, concerns, priorities, and solutions into the Plan's Hazard Identification & Risk Assessment and Mitigation Strategy sections.

The Core Team utilized several methods to recruit members of the public to the Social Resilience Coalition. Outreach methods included flyer postings at Glibert Hart Library; online postings on the Town Website, Front Porch Forum, RRPC Website, and RRPC Facebook Page; newsletter and mass distribution postings through the Wallingford Standard Newsletter, the SVCOA Newsletter, and Project VISION Listserv; and direct outreach (phone, email, or in-person conversations) to residents in flood-prone areas and local and regional social service agencies and organizations (e.g., Wallingford Fire Department, Wallingford House, Wallingford Rotary Club, Green Mountain Neighbors, Bayada, SVCOA, BROC, Cornerstone Housing Partners, Rutland County Habitat for Humanity, and the Rutland County Housing Authority.) The Town also hosted a community dinner on June 3, 2026, to educate the public on the Social Resilience Guide and recruit individuals to the Coalition.

In practice, this strategy did not pan out as planned. While the June 3 community dinner drew modest attendance, it proved extremely difficult to secure dedicated commitment from the public, and the coalition ultimately did not form. This outcome can be linked to several factors, including volunteer burnout, core team members' time and capacity constraints, numerous other planning and construction projects underway in Wallingford at the time, and people going out of town or otherwise being busy with summer-season activities. Most notably, those in the most vulnerable situations (e.g., older people living alone, low-income populations, immigrants) faced inherent barriers to participating in this type of effort, which unfortunately prevented the inclusion of the voices of those most directly affected by natural hazard impacts.

The pilot program's community engagement efforts were ultimately limited to an additional pop-up event at Wallingford Day on July 18, 2026, asking members of the public to indicate their priorities for community resilience (see the following page). This collective engagement made it clear that Wallingford has several self-sustaining pockets of community initiative, involvement, and people passionate about what they do. However, this case study speaks volumes about the ongoing challenges of leading a formally structured community engagement effort in Vermont, a state with a declining, aging population base.

Wallingford Day Pop-Up for the Municipal Climate Planning Guide Pilot – July 18, 2026



How Should Wallingford Advance Social Resilience?	
Response	**Category**
Better cell service!	Communications
Central place to donate perishable food	Food
Green Mountain Neighbors	Volunteerism
Have high school students work w/ local senior residents	Volunteerism, social cohesion
Help seniors with technology	Volunteerism, social cohesion
More community interaction	Placemaking, social cohesion
Strong communities	General

Examples of Phase 1 Engagement Materials

Kick-off Flyer
Kick-off Social Media & Website posts
Social Resilience Pilot Guide Coalition Group Outreach
Draft Presentation & Public Comment Period Email Blasts
Draft Presentation & Public Comment Period Social Media & Website posts
Wallingford Standard Draft Presentation & Public Comment Period Notice
Hazard & Risks Survey with Results
Pop-up Posters with Results
Public Comments Summary

KICK-OFF FLYER

Wallingford

LOCAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLANNING





Plan Purpose

- **Increase Awareness**
- **Identify Actions**
- **Focus Resources**
- **Communicate Priorities**

The Local Hazard Mitigation Plan outlines our long-term strategy to reduce natural disaster losses and break the cycle of disaster damage, reconstruction, and repeated damage.

Take our online survey to share what natural hazards you are most concerned about:

HELP US

PREPARE FOR RESILIENCY!



Planning Schedule

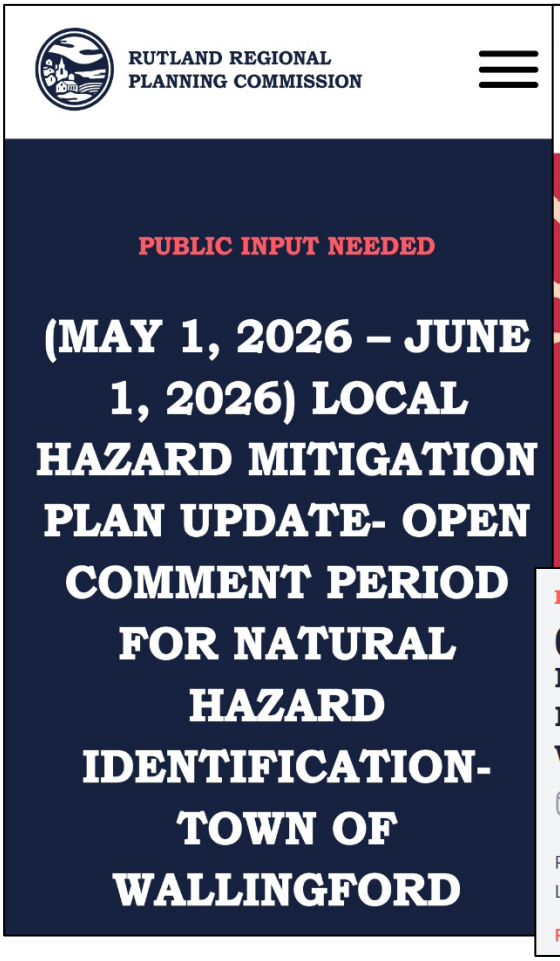
- April 2026: Plan Update Kick-off
- May–Jul 2026: Assess Risks & Identify Hazards
- Aug–Sep 2026: Develop Mitigation Strategy
- Oct–Nov 2026: Finalize Draft Plan
- Dec 2026 – Jan 2027: Adopt Plan

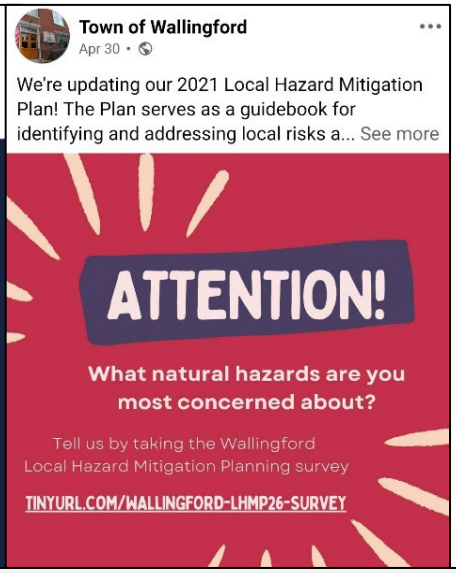
ACT NOW!

For More Information:

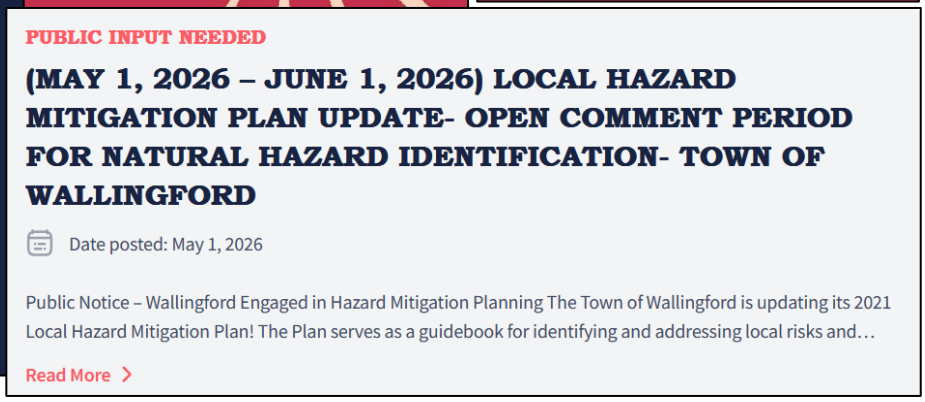
tinyurl.com/wallingford-lhmp26

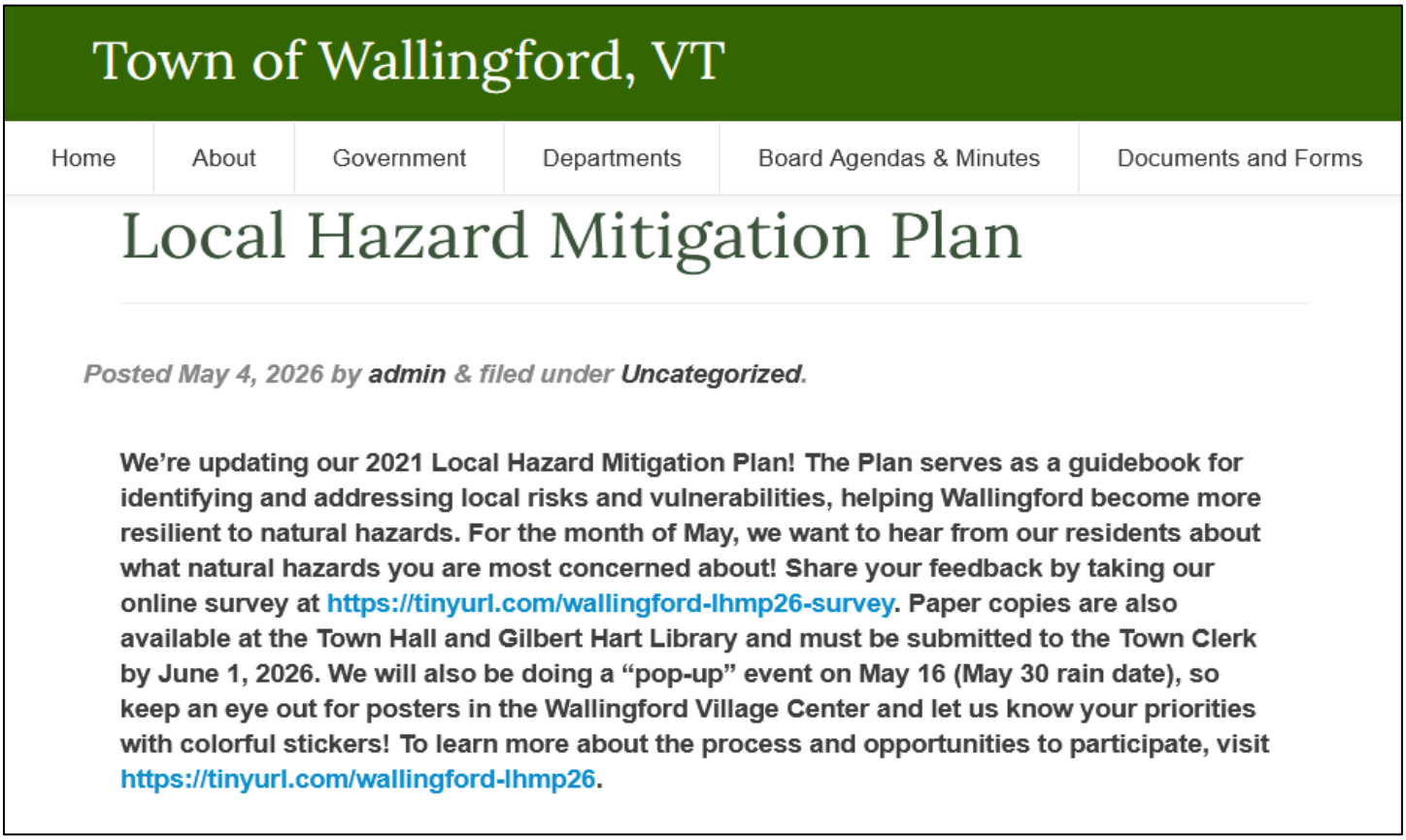
KICK-OFF SOCIAL MEDIA & WEBSITE POSTS











SOCIAL RESILIENCE GUIDE PILOT – COALITION GROUP OUTREACH

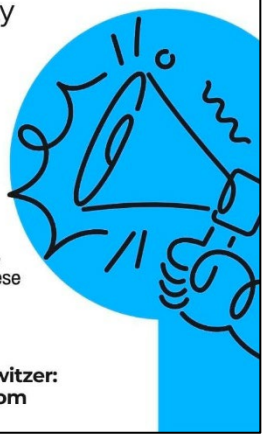
Rutland Regional Planning Commission
Apr 14 •

Attention **Town of Wallingford** -

We are seeking volunteers to serve on ... See more

SEEKING VOLUNTEERS

Wallingford Community Liaison



TIME COMMITMENT

1-3 hours a week from May to October 2026

ROLE

Connect with community members, understand their needs, and use these insights to shape mitigation and community resilience priorities.

Interested? Contact Sandy Switzer: townadmin@wallingfordvt.com

RUTLAND REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

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PUBLIC INPUT NEEDED

WALLINGFORD COMMUNITY LIAISON SEARCH –

Date posted: April 14, 2026

We are seeking volunteers to serve on a committee that works alongside town staff to make Wallingford more resilient to natural hazards and climate change impacts, including supporting day-to-day community needs to build a stronger, healthier community. We are especially interested in those who have experienced weather-related emergencies and/or contributed to recovery efforts. We are also looking for people with strong ties to the community, including full-time residents, renters, and homeowners in East Wallingford and South Wallingford. All are encouraged to volunteer, as you will contribute critical perspectives and lived experiences to the conversation.

Volunteer responsibilities will include participating in regular meetings (1-2 meetings/month) and organizing community engagement activities for the local hazard mitigation plan. This project will run between May and October.

If you're interested in this opportunity, learn more by reading the position description (**https://tinyurl.com/wallingford-coalition-2026**) and contact Sandy Switzer via email at **townadmin@wallingfordvt.com**.

SVCOA News & Upcoming Events



Are you a resident of **Wallingford**? If so, the Town of Wallingford is seeking volunteers to serve as Community Liaisons, helping connect with other residents, understand local needs, and inform strategies that strengthen community resilience. This flexible opportunity, requiring just **1–3 hours per week from May through October 2026,** plays a key role in shaping how communities prepare for and respond to climate-related challenges. The

POSITION DESCRIPTION

If you're interested in this opportunity, contact Sandy via email at townadmin@wallingfordvt.com.

Position: Community Liaison
Timeframe: 6 months (May 2026 – October 2026)
Location: Town of Wallingford

Time commitment

- 1-3 hours per week. This will include 1-2 two-hour meetings per month, on average, as well as additional time outside meetings spent leading community outreach and engagement activities and reviewing and providing feedback on materials.

Responsibilities

- Participation in regular meetings (1-2 meetings/month)
- Amplify and enhance community engagement activities for the local hazard mitigation plan.
- Working with other Coalition members to explore community and climate data

---

Are you passionate about connecting with members of your community?

The Town of Wallingford is seeking volunteers to serve as Community Liaisons for the Hazard Mitigation Plan!

What is a Community Liaison?

A Community Liaison is someone who brings strong connections within the Wallingford community. The role of the Community Liaison will be to **connect with community members, understand their needs, concerns, and priorities, and ensure that these insights shape project decisions**.

PHASE 1 & SOCIAL RESILIENCE GUIDE PILOT COALITION GROUP EMAIL BLASTS

Maggie O'Brien

Reply | Reply all | Forward

To: Maggie O'Brien

Wed 4/29/2026 3:41 PM

Cc: James Bagnall <jcbagnall@gmail.com>; WILLIAM WEISS <weisswilliam@sbcglobal.net>; **+2 others**

Wallingford Email Blast Flyer-... 193 KB

Hello, Local & Regional Hazard Mitigation Agencies,

On behalf of the Town of Wallingford, we are announcing the official launch of the 2026 update to the Town's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP)! The local Planning Team is committed to providing targeted opportunities for community input, and we would like to hear from you throughout the plan development process. See below and attached for more information.

From **April 29 – June 1**, we are seeking your input on the natural hazards and risks of most importance to Wallingford. You can access the survey directly at https://tinyurl.com/wallingford-lhmp26-survey. Physical copies of the survey may also be picked up at the Town Hall (75 School Street) and Gilbert Hart Library (14 US Route 7 South). All surveys must be submitted to the Town Clerk by June 1.

The project's landing page will be kept up to date with public involvement opportunities and is available at https://tinyurl.com/wallingford-lhmp26. Questions should be directed to me, Maggie O'Brien, at maggie@rutlandrpc.org.

Maggie O'Brien

Reply | Reply all | Forward

To: Hawkins, Courtney <chawkins1@bayada.com>

Wed 4/15/2026 10:21 AM

Cc: Stewart, Greg <gstewart@bayada.com>

Bcc: Town Administrator; Ndemazea Fonkem <ndemazea@silerclimateconsulting.com>; **+1 other**

Coalition Team Position Desc... 68 KB

Hi Courtney,

I am reaching out today about a community resilience-building initiative (see below for more info) that is closely related to my work as an emergency management planner for the Rutland Region. I would appreciate it if you could forward this opportunity to anyone you know who might be a good fit for the role. Also, if there is another contact at Bayada who is better suited for this type of outreach, please feel free to pass it along as appropriate.

[DPS.ProjectVision-Rutland] Fw: Upcoming Wallingford Volunteer Opportunity - Please Share

From Prouty, Matthew <Matthew.Prouty@vermont.gov>
Date Fri 4/17/2026 7:27 AM
To dps.projectvision-rutland@list.vermont.gov <dps.projectvision-rutland@list.vermont.gov>

2 attachments (69 KB)
Coalition Team Position Description.pdf; ATT00001.txt;

From: Maggie O'Brien <Maggie@rutlandrpc.org>
Sent: Wednesday, April 15, 2026 10:28 AM
To: Matthew.Prouty@vermont.gov <Matthew.Prouty@vermont.gov>
Subject: Upcoming Wallingford Volunteer Opportunity - Please Share

Hello Chief Prouty,

I am reaching out today about a community resilience-building initiative (see below for more info) that is closely related to my work as an emergency management planner for the Rutland Region. Could you please forward the following to the Project VISION Listserv so we can amplify this opportunity? Since we are looking for individuals with direct links to those who have lived experience of climate change-related disasters, I believe this is the perfect audience to share this unique initiative with. Thank you so much!

DRAFT PRESENTATION & PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD EMAIL BLASTS



Maggie O'Brien

To: Maggie O'Brien

Wed 7/15/2026 9:44 AM

Cc: Town Administrator

Bcc: Matt Jakubowski <firebeevt@gmail.com>; mikeklopchin@gmail.com; **+26 others**

Hello, Local Officials in Neighboring Municipalities,

On behalf of the Town of Wallingford, we are notifying key members of the community that the local Planning Team has reached a critical milestone in the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) update process. The draft Plan, including work completed to date, will be presented at the Town's Selectboard meeting on **Monday, July 20**, at **6:30 PM**. The in-person meeting will be held at the Town Hall on 75 School Street.

Following this meeting, you will receive notice that we are seeking public comments on the draft – more information to follow. You may also visit https://tinyurl.com/wallingford-lhmp26 to remain current on public involvement opportunities. Questions should be directed to me, Maggie O'Brien, at maggie@rutlandrpc.org.



Maggie O'Brien

To: Maggie O'Brien

Tue 7/21/2026 8:00 AM

Cc: Glenn Mayer <glenn@outsidelogic.com>; **+3 others**

Bcc: kmluzader@vermontel.net; silycb@gmail.com; robtreestar@gmail.com; **+8 others**

Wallingford Flyer- Presentati...
51 KB

Hello, Wallingford Local Officials,

On behalf of your Town, we are notifying key members of the community that the Public Comment period is now open for the Wallingford Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP). We are seeking comments on how the local Planning Team assessed the Town's risk to natural hazards. View the draft plan online at https://tinyurl.com/wallingford-lhmp26. Physical copies of the plan, including enlarged versions of the flood risk maps, are also available at the Town Hall @ 75 School Street.

The Public Comment period will close on **Monday, August 3rd.** Email all comments to me, Maggie O'Brien, at maggie@rutlandrpc.org. We look forward to hearing from you!



Maggie O'Brien

Reply Reply all Forward

To: Maggie O'Brien

Tue 7/21/2026 8:00 AM

Cc: Town Administrator

Bcc: sarah.furman@rutlandeconomy.com; jade@thebus.com; **+28 others**

Wallingford Flyer- Presentati...
51 KB

Hello, Local Businesses, Schools, and Community Partners and Organizations,

On behalf of the Town of Wallingford, we are notifying key members of the community* that the Public Comment period is now open for the Wallingford Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP). We are seeking comments on how the local Planning Team assessed the Town's risk to natural hazards. View the draft plan online at https://tinyurl.com/wallingford-lhmp26. Physical copies of the plan, including enlarged versions of the flood risk maps, are also available at the Town Hall @ 75 School Street.

The Public Comment period will close on **Monday, August 3rd.** Email all comments to me, Maggie O'Brien, at maggie@rutlandrpc.org. We look forward to hearing from you!

DRAFT PRESENTATION & PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD SOCIAL MEDIA & WEBSITE POSTS

Town of Wallingford, VT

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For more information, click below:

https://www.wallingfordvt.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/Walli
Presentation-1.pdf

To keep up to date on efforts, click below:

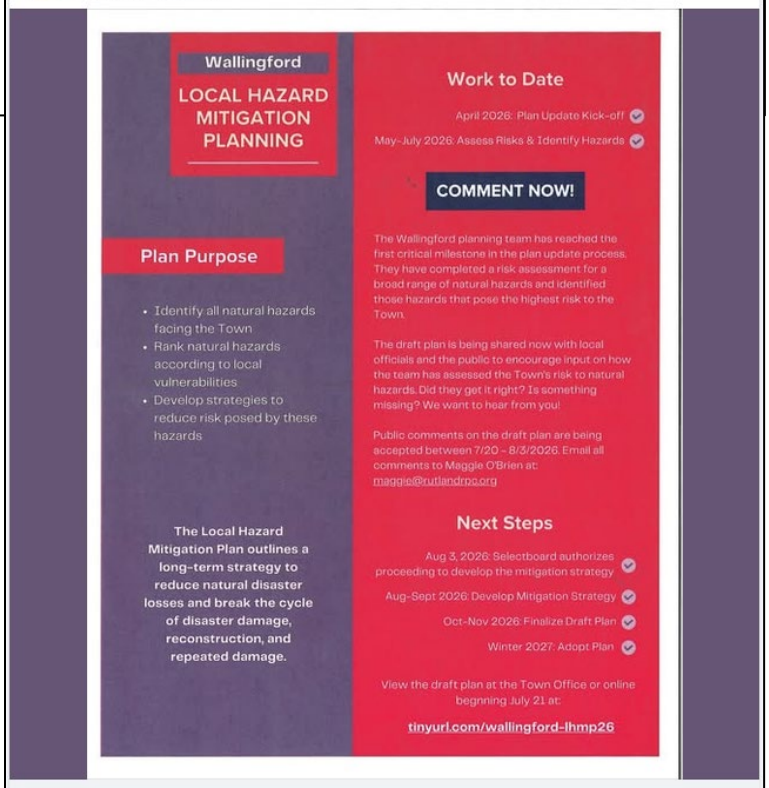
Wallingford LHMP26

Rutland Regional Planning Commission
4d •

Wallingford residents: the working draft of the 2026 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan is available for your review! ... See more



Town of Wallingford
July 13 at 12:51PM ·

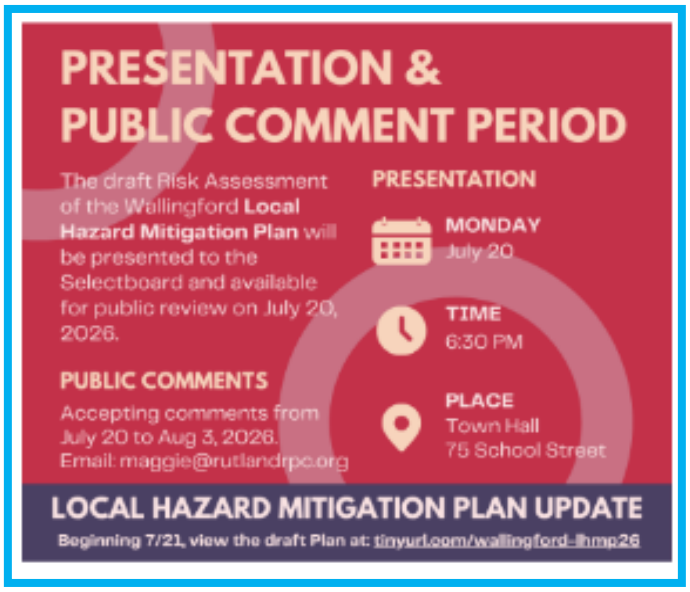


Town of Wallingford
Government organization

Send message

3

WALLINGFORD STANDARD DRAFT PRESENTATION & PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD NOTICE



C&M PLUMBING AND HEATING
JIMMY COLLINS
KEVIN MAGUIRE
— OWNERS —
PLUMBING • HEATING • COOLING
SERVICE • REPAIRS • INSTALLATIONS
802.558.7445
802.774.8423
PROUDLY SERVING CENTRAL VERMONT
FAMILY OWNED. QUALITY SERVICE. TRUSTED IN OUR COMMUNITY.

Live Music at Wallingford Rotary!



Join us on July 22nd at 7:00pm for an evening of creative music by Lizzie No and Friends! Lizzie will be joined by fellow musicians Kimaya Diggs, Kapali Long and Tray Wellington to play music from their new album, Outlaws' Almanac.

"Outlaws' Almanac is a compilation album that melds folk, Americana, roots, and more to respond to the occasion of this nation's anniversary, and to be of use to the American people. The album finds its roots in slave rebellion, in protest songs, and in traditional tunes. It roars into the present with full-throated visions for a better future."

There will be refreshments following the concert, and the opportunity to talk with the musicians.

See you there!



GILBERT HART LIBRARY by Wendy Savery

There is a lot happening at the library this month, with something for everyone from the small to the tall. Programming connected to summer reading and this year's theme "Unearth a Story" will take place Monday June 29th & July 27th at 10:30am. Game On! Meet-ups will occur July 1st & 15th at 4pm, and the adult book discussion group meets at 6pm on July 1st and July 29th.

A home organizing workshop will be held Wednesday July 8th at 5:30pm and will surely inspire and direct participants. Thursday July 16th the Tamarack Music Festival presents a special musical story time for young listeners (all are welcome) at 11:00am in the Klock Room. Saturday July 18th at 10:30am, we welcome Fizzical Fairytales of Bennington for "Finding Rhymes as Diggy Digs," a performance sponsored by a grant from the VT Department of Libraries'.

Copies of this year's VT Reads selection *Charity and Sylvia* by Tillie Walden, have arrived from Vermont Humanities Council and will be distributed throughout the month with eyes on a discussion in early fall. In connection with the book, a VT Speaker's Bureau presentation by Howard Coffin is coming to Wallingford. **1800 and Froze to Death:The Cold Year of 1816** includes scores of anecdotes about the dark year of failed crops, scarce food, and religious revival. The plan is to hold this VHC event at noon on Wallingford Day at the Town Hall.

In addition to all these offerings, the library continues to have a VT State park day use pass and VT Historic Sites passes available for check-out. Also available is access to ebooks and audios through both LIsten UP! Vermont and Palace Project. Make the library your spot to refresh, research, and read this summer; the a/c is on and other than being closed July 4th, we are here to welcome you!

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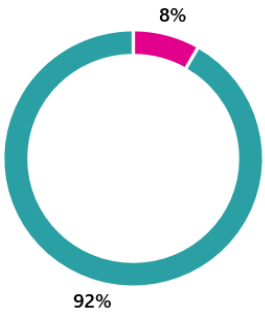
HAZARDS & RISKS SURVEY RESULTS – 36 SURVEYS RECEIVED

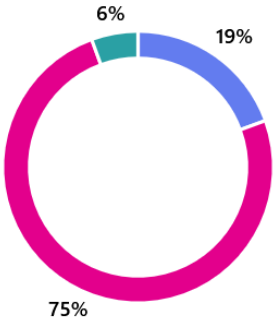
1. How long have you lived in or owned a business or property in Wallingford?

Less than one year	0
One to five years	3
More than 5 years	33



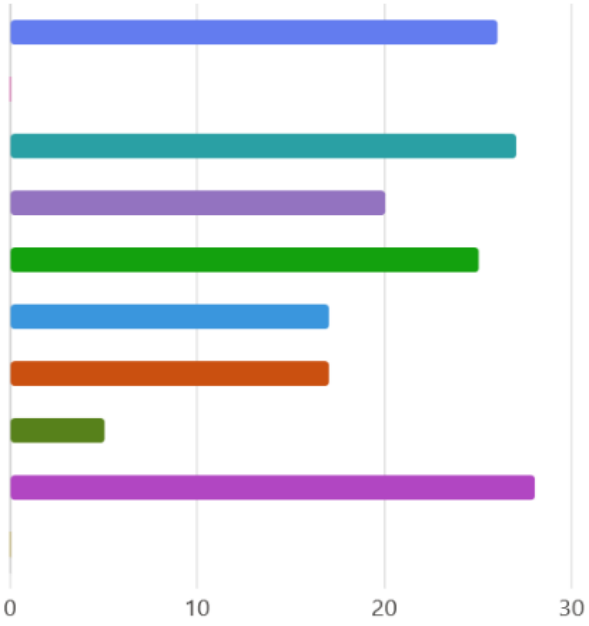
2. Is your home or business property located in a FEMA designated floodplain?

Yes	7
No	27
I don't know	2



3. Which of the following natural hazards[1] have you or someone you know experienced while living or doing business in Wallingford? *(165 votes)*

Drought	26
Earthquake	0
Extreme Cold/Snow/Ice	27
Extreme Heat	20
Flash Flood/Fluvial (Stream) Erosion	25
Hail	17
Inundation Flood	17
Landslide	5
Strong Wind	28
Wildfire	0

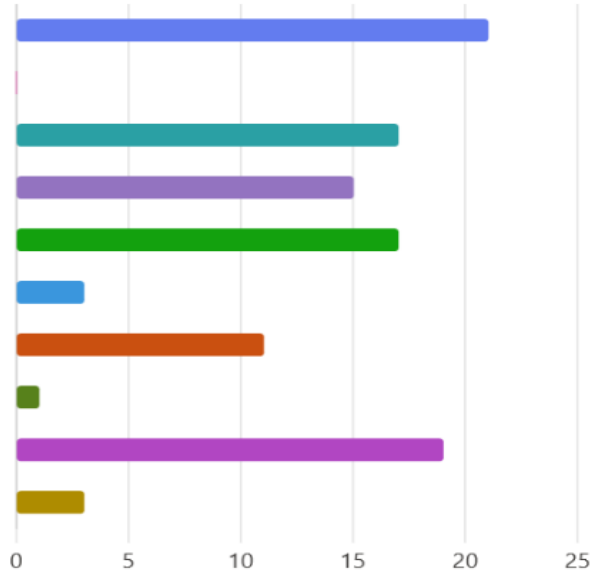


#1 Strong Wind **78%**
#2 Extreme Cold/Snow/Ice **75%**
#3 Drought **72%**

[1] The Planning Team chose <u>not</u> to survey invasive species given the unique and diverse nature of this hazard, and the subsequent decision during the hazard identification and risk assessment to focus on a specific forest pest of concern, the Emerald Ash Borer.

4. **Of the natural hazards listed in Question 3, what are the top three you think are likely to occur in the next five years?** *(107 votes)*

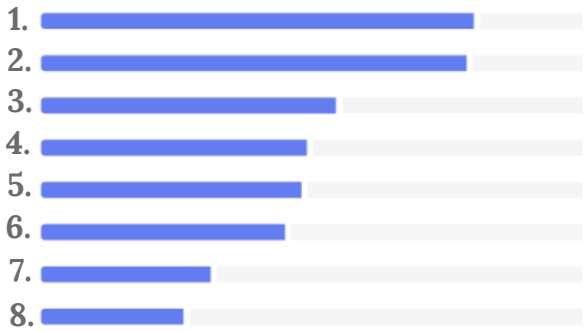
Drought	21
Earthquake	0
Extreme Cold/Snow/Ice	17
Extreme Heat	15
Flash Flood/Fluvial (Stream) Erosion	17
Hail	3
Inundation Flood	11
Landslide	1
Strong Wind	19
Wildfire	3



#1 Drought **63%**
#2 Strong Wind **58%**
#3 Tie: Extreme Cold/Now/Ice and Flash Flooding/Fluvial Erosion **52%**

5. **Which potential natural hazard impacts are most concerning to you? Rank from 1 to 8. It would be most concerning to experience damage or loss in regards to...** *(35 responses)*

1	Damage or loss of roads, bridges, public utilities (e.g., sewer)
2	Loss of life or injuries, especially among vulnerable populations
3	Loss or damage to agricultural operations
4	Business closure or loss
5	Damage to schools and other public properties (e.g., parks, buildings)
6	Damage to environmental resources (e.g., wetlands, lakes, ponds, rivers, forests)
7	Damage or loss of cultural/historic properities
8	Loss of wildlife



6. **Are you aware of any location(s) in Wallingford that appear more prone to the impacts of flooding, ice, wind, or wildfires? Describe any past damages or recurring incidents in these areas.** *(34 responses)*

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	Route 103 and Village street in East Wallingford. Significant flooding since Irene. Now there is a bridge out leaving residents only one way out from Village street, and if it floods at that exit. Loss of life in imminent.
2	anonymous	River Street and creek rd residences and bridges

6. Are you aware of any location(s) in Wallingford that appear more prone to the impacts of flooding, ice, wind, or wildfires? Describe any past damages or recurring incidents in these areas. *(Continued)*

ID ↑	Name	Responses
3	anonymous	River St and Creek Rd
4	anonymous	River Street has flooded several times in the recent past, flooding homes, eroding banks, damaging property.
5	anonymous	Flooding on creek rd. High winds in East Wallindford. Road damage on route 140 in "the gulf".
6	anonymous	Hawkins Road, East Wallingford • Wind & Ice
7	anonymous	Properties in the floodplain
8	anonymous	Otter Creek through the village; Mill River in East Wallingford.
9	anonymous	Higher elevations such as Sugar Hill area are more prone to impact of high winds and ice
10	anonymous	Erosion of route 140 east of village
11	anonymous	Adjacent to Otter Creek
12	anonymous	Railway and maple street drainage north towards Shaw garage my
13	anonymous	Flooding: River Street, Waldo Lane & Meadow Street
14	anonymous	River Street, Meadow Street, Creek Road All these streets have had major damage to homes
15	anonymous	Flooding on River St
16	anonymous	I can tell you that the "floodplain" here on Mill Street has NOT been impacted by ANY of the floods since and including Irene in 2011, yet FEMA wants us to have flood insurance for mortgages and such. We used to have a LOMA but that apparently is no longer in effect.
17	anonymous	The area near otter creek has flooded numerous times
18	anonymous	River Street - severe flooding
19	anonymous	River Street
20	anonymous	Creek Road- River Street- Hartsboro Road

6. **Are you aware of any location(s) in Wallingford that appear more prone to the impacts of flooding, ice, wind, or wildfires? Describe any past damages or recurring incidents in these areas. *(Continued)***

ID ↑	Name	Responses
21	anonymous	The dip east of the bridge at the north end of Hartsboro Road floods annually. The road/train crossing on the north end of Hartsboro Road routinely sinks and becomes hazardous to vehicles due to poor footing or support for the cargo trains using the rail daily. Both of these issues are related to flooding of Otter Creek. High winds and storms also cause several power outages annually on Hartsboro Road. In the last nine years, we have submitted multiple catastrophic insurance claims for wind damage to buildings and trees on our property.
22	anonymous	492 Centerville. Wind and snow drifts
23	anonymous	River and Creek Rds
24	anonymous	North end of Hartsboro floods
25	anonymous	Railroad and River Streets
26	anonymous	Creek Road has frequent flooding issues damaging properties. I'm worried about a forest fire in the National Forest in East Wallingford due to the clearing of trees and the debris that was left
27	anonymous	140 closure due to flooding, creek overflow behind the fire station
28	anonymous	Otter Creek flooding, Roaring Brook flooding
29	anonymous	Along Otter Creek/Creek Road
30	anonymous	River Street, Creek Road, Gulf Road - Flooding
31	anonymous	None
32	anonymous	River Road/Creek Road
33	anonymous	Creek Rd, River St, Railroad St, W. Hill Rd, Sugar Hill Rd, Dawson Hill Rd, Parker Rd, True Temper property
34	anonymous	River St & Meadow St
35	anonymous	Flooding!

7. **List any specific community assets you are concerned about losing because of natural hazard impacts. Examples might include a local business or employer, a community gathering site, or a cultural/historical site or artifact.** *(30 responses)*

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	Wallingford Fire department, Rescue Squad buildings, Town highway and assets are in flood plain.
2	anonymous	Stone Meadow, True Temper (already lost to tariffs)
3	anonymous	I'm concerned about the potential impact of flooding on our water treatment facility, and the impact of sewer overflow on waterways.
4	anonymous	Hitorical properties.
5	anonymous	Thrive Center, Barn, Home
6	anonymous	Town Garage and Wallingford Rescue
7	anonymous	Recreation Field next to Otter Creek in the village.
8	anonymous	Given the extensive forests in the area, a period of drought followed by a fire could result in significant damage to natural resources as well as private and public resources. The entire character of the area could be significantly damaged.
9	anonymous	Fire station seems pretty vulnerable to flooding
10	anonymous	Housing Adjacent to Otter Creek, mountain roads
11	anonymous	My house and neighbors along railroad lines
12	anonymous	Wallingford Fire Station
13	anonymous	Wallingford Rec field
14	anonymous	Residential properties are more at risk
15	anonymous	It would be terrible to lose any of our town's historic buildings.
16	anonymous	Elfin lake shoreline
17	anonymous	Emergency Services
18	anonymous	The ball fields and access to the transfer station both are in low flood plain areas of Otter Creek. Appalachian Trail crossings over streams in town should be included in planning and mitigation processes. The trail/former road connecting Ice Bed Road to the White Rocks picnic area has experienced a lot of erosion and storm damage. It would be good to restore it for mountain bike and better hiking access.
19	anonymous	Every home and life above 492 Centerville is at risk.

7. **List any specific community assets you are concerned about losing because of natural hazard impacts. Examples might include a local business or employer, a community gathering site, or a cultural/historical site or artifact.** ***(Continued)***

ID ↑	Name	Responses
20	anonymous	Town garage and equipment
21	anonymous	The village is well protected
22	anonymous	Firestation, town garage, rescue building, bridges over Otter Creek and on route140 in East Walligford
23	anonymous	A cultural/historical site would be hard to replace/replicate. Most other things can be rebuilt or replaced
24	anonymous	Farms, Main Street with its historic structures, housing & businesses
25	anonymous	The Rescue Squad, and homes near there I think are in a flood plain
26	anonymous	Stone Meadow, White Rocks Recreation Areas
27	anonymous	Boy Boot
28	anonymous	Ball Field, Rec Field
29	anonymous	Recreation fields, road washouts, damage to sewer & water systems
30	anonymous	Continued damage to people house

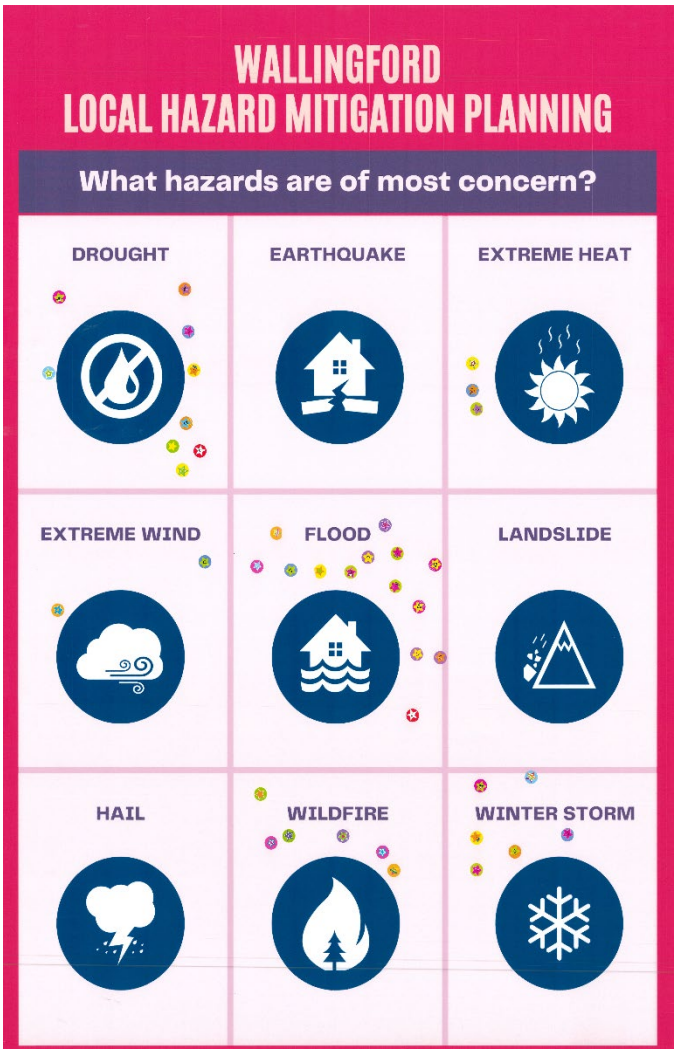
4 respondents (13%) answered Otter Creek for this question.



8. **Anything else related to natural hazard risks or impacts you would like to provide for consideration and incorporation into the Wallingford Local Hazard Mitigation Plan?** *(17 responses)*

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	Beaver pond that has broken twice in the last 15 years above Route 140 East. Causing washouts, landslide and flooding each time.
2	anonymous	Fall/Injury risks in winter on sidewalks. Glare ice forcing all to walk in road.Sidewalks need repair!
3	anonymous	We need to repair all bridges to ensure efficient evacuation roures.
4	anonymous	Keep Oscar Daubenspeck on your radar & part of planning. He is a genius. I often say that Killington should have a billboard campaign that says "Thank You Oscar" - because without him nobody plays!
5	anonymous	We've lost roads and access to other communities from storms like Irene in the recent past.
6	anonymous	Impact of wind leading to trees on power lines has been a growing problem in recent years. GMP is in process of burying lines but it is not clear where Wallingford falls in the priority.
7	anonymous	If there is emergency sheltering avaiable, it is not well advertised.
8	anonymous	FEMA response/available resources due to inept federal administration
9	anonymous	Drainage was done a year ago and is not working
10	anonymous	Property owners located between the Creek Rd bridge and the Clarendon border if there was extreme flooding.
11	anonymous	Tick control
12	anonymous	Runoff from livestock at 492 Centerville will affect the water source. E. coli will now be prominent as pastures were set too close to water. Snow drifts and wind from clear cut will continue to block the road with blow downs and snow drifts. Centerville residents will lose life and property.
13	anonymous	No
14	anonymous	Na
15	anonymous	Thank you for taking the time to do this for us
16	anonymous	Safe places with generators and storage for food & water located in several areas. It's also important to have the flexibility to answer unexpected situations. Medical access & resources should be addressed
17	anonymous	No.

HAZARDS & RISKS POP-UP POSTER RESULTS



Question: What Hazards Are of Most Concern?		
Response	**Total**	**%**
Flood	**14**	**35%**
Drought	**9**	**23%**
Wildfire	**6**	**15%**
Winter Storm (Extreme Cold/Snow/Ice)	**6**	**15%**
Extreme Heat	3	8%
Extreme Wind	2	5%
Earthquake	0	0%
Hail	0	0%
Landslide	0	0%

Question: What Assets Are Most at Risk?		
Response	**Total**	**%**
Infrastructure: Roads	**12**	**17%**
Economy: Crop/Property Damage	**9**	**13%**
People: Elderly	**9**	**13%**
Economy: Closed Businesses	**8**	**11%**
Environment: Rivers	**8**	**11%**
Environment: Wetlands	6	9%
Infrastructure: Power Lines	5	7%
People: Disabled	5	7%
Environment: Trees	4	6%
People: Youth	4	6%
Economy: Commuting	0	0%
Infrastructure: Buildings	0	0%



PHASE 1 PUBLIC COMMENTS SUMMARY

Note: All submitted comments are related to the same topic, so only one response is given to limit redundancy.

Comment 1: "With the invasive species, is it just insects? Because I'm not seeing the horrific knotweed problem that we have taking up all the ditches and stuff along [VT Route]140, sucking up water."

Comment 2: "Two areas not in the plan, which the WCC [Wallingford Conservation Commission] thinks are very important: 1) Japanese Knotweed which can damage crucial infrastructure and make flooding worse by taking over native plants, and 2) tick control by eliminating species such as non-native honeysuckle and Japanese Barberry."

Comment 3: "While I noticed the Emerald Ash Borer mentioned under invasive species, I did not see any reference to Japanese Knotweed. Given our town's concerns regarding flooding, I believe this should be addressed in the plan. Japanese Knotweed debris can clog drainage areas and culverts, and its aggressive rhizomes can infiltrate concrete cracks, and asphalt causing damage and structural degradation to roads, culverts and bridges."

Comment 4: "We [WCC] were concerned about the Japanese knotweed as it pertains to flooding in Town, as opposed to being a nuisance species. And my reason for wanting to bring that up is two-fold. You know, we have Roaring Brook that comes down out of the mountains… when the Japanese knotweed grows on the sides, and we get a heavy runoff like we had- was it March, [when] we had a heavy [snow]melt and heavy runoff?- the Japanese knotweed is designed to collapse as the water comes rushing down. So, what we can surmise from this is that we're going to have faster-moving water, and probably heavier volume because of the lack of [native] vegetation where the Japanese knotweed is crowding it out. So, that's just one thing we might want to keep in mind going forward[…] The second thing to be aware of is that the roots do go down underneath rock and so on- at the level, the plant is actually 2/3s underground, so you don't even see most of it. But the roots do go underneath the rocks and things. So, not only do you have the breakoff plant that's getting washed downstream and possibly impeding, you now have the rocks and things that will also move downstream, possibly get caught, and create an issue there with an overflow or flooding where you may not have expected it. So, I guess what I'm wondering is, is it worth taking a look at places like Roaring Brook that come downhill… and taking a look at what might be a problem spot if something like that should happen and maybe monitoring that?"

Response (Comments 1-4): The Planning Team agrees that the cascading effects posed by Japanese Knotweed are significant enough to warrant mitigation. While invasive species are very difficult, if not effectively impossible, to eradicate, monitoring and limiting their spread is a worthwhile endeavor. Added language in the Invasive Species profile in Section 5 calls out the concerns expressed above, particularly as they relate to flooding impacts. The Planning Team will also consider targeted mitigation actions, such as the digital mapping of Japanese Knotweed populations, as part of the Mitigation Strategy in Section 6.

Examples of Phase 2 Engagement Materials

Mitigation Strategy Survey Email Blasts
Mitigation Strategy Survey Social Media Postings & Website Posts
Wallingford Standard Mitigation Strategy Survey Notice
Mitigation Strategy Survey with Results

PHASE 2 MITIGATION STRATEGY SURVEY EMAIL BLASTS



Maggie O'Brien

To: Maggie O'Brien

Fri 9/4/2026 10:00 AM

Cc: Glenn Mayer <glenn@outsidelogic.com>; **+3 others**

Hello, Wallingford Local Officials,

On behalf of your Town, we are notifying key members of the community that the local Planning Team has reached the next milestone in updating their Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP). The Town has developed a draft goal and actions to mitigate the impacts of natural hazards in Wallingford. Let us know what you think about the proposed goal and actions by taking the online survey at https://tinyurl.com/wallingford-lhmp26-survey2. Physical copies may also be picked up at the Town Hall or the Gilbert Hart Library. The survey will be open until **Friday, October 2**, and physical copies must be submitted to the Town Clerk at 4:00 PM.

Questions should be directed to me, Maggie O'Brien, at maggie@rutlandrpc.org. For more information on the Wallingford LHMP update process, visit https://tinyurl.com/wallingford-lhmp26.



Maggie O'Brien

To: Maggie O'Brien

Fri 9/4/2026 10:00 AM

Cc: Town Administrator

Hello, Local Officials in Neighboring Municipalities,

On behalf of the Town of Wallingford, we are notifying key members of the community that the local Planning Team has reached the next milestone in updating their Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP). The Town has developed a draft goal and actions to mitigate the impacts of natural hazards in Wallingford. Let us know what you think about the proposed goal and actions by taking the online survey at https://tinyurl.com/wallingford-lhmp26-survey2. Physical copies may also be picked up at the Town Hall (75 School St) or the Gilbert Hart Library (14 US-7 S). The survey will be open until **Friday, October 2**, and physical copies must be submitted to the Town Clerk at 4:00 PM.

Questions should be directed to me, Maggie O'Brien, at maggie@rutlandrpc.org. For more information on the Wallingford LHMP update process, visit https://tinyurl.com/wallingford-lhmp26.



Maggie O'Brien

To: Maggie O'Brien

Fri 9/4/2026 10:00 AM

Cc: WEISS WILLIAM <weisswilliam@sbcglobal.net>; **+2 others**

Hello, Local & Regional Hazard Mitigation Agencies,

On behalf of the Town of Wallingford, we are notifying key members of the community that the local Planning Team has reached the next milestone in updating their Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP). The Town has developed a draft goal and actions to mitigate the impacts of natural hazards in Wallingford. Let us know what you think about the proposed goal and actions by taking the online survey at https://tinyurl.com/wallingford-lhmp26-survey2. Physical copies may also be picked up at the Town Hall (75 School St) or the Gilbert Hart Library (14 US-7 S). The survey will be open until **Friday, October 2**, and physical copies must be submitted to the Town Clerk at 4:00 PM.

Questions should be directed to me, Maggie O'Brien, at maggie@rutlandrpc.org. For more information on the Wallingford LHMP update process, visit https://tinyurl.com/wallingford-lhmp26.

MITIGATION STRATEGY SURVEY SOCIAL MEDIA & WEBSITE POSTINGS









WALLINGFORD STANDARD MITIGATION STRATEGY SURVEY NOTICE

Otterknoll Animal Care
~CAT NEUTER CLINIC~
Sept. 21, 2026 $25.00 per BOY
Cat with TWO testicles
Cash or Venmo (@Amy-Daveport-69) or check ONLY
20 Spots Available
Must Sign Up by September 15th
818 Waldo Lane





Otterknoll Animal Care
~CAT SPAY CLINIC~
October 19, 2026
$50.00 per cat
Cash or Check ONLY
Sign-up Sheet: 818 Waldo Lane Sept 16th to Oct 12th.
Sign-up sheet and $25 DEPOSIT MUST be submitted during this period.
Questions? Please call (802) 353-9910

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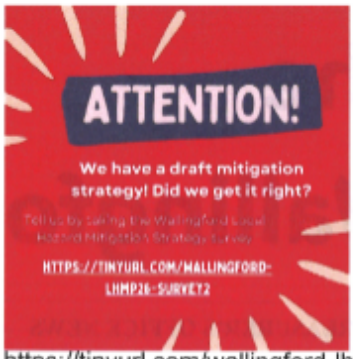
~Safety Reminder~

Wednesday, August 26th marks the first day of school! School days naturally bring extra traffic and congestion. With school buses picking up & dropping off students, kids walking and hurried parents rushing to drop off their children before work, it is more important than ever for drivers to slow down.

Please stay highly alert when children are present ~ especially immediately before and after school. Parents, even after your own kids are safely dropped off, please continue to drive slowly. Vehicles frequently speed on School Street but many children are still walking to school.

Thank you all for doing your part in keeping our community safe!



The Planning Team for the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Update has developed a draft goal and actions to mitigate the impacts of natural hazards in Wallingford. Let us know if you think we are on the right track by taking the online survey at https://tinyurl.com/wallingford-lhmp26-survey2.

Physical copies are also available for pickup at Town Hall and Gilber Hart Library and must be submitted to the Town Clerk no later than Friday, September 25th.For more information on the Wallingford LHMP update process, visit https://tinyurl.com/shrewsbury-lhmp26.

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GREEN MOUNTAIN NEIGHBORS
MOUNT HOLLY • SHREWSBURY • WALLINGFORD

~Green Mountain Neighbors Monthly Update~
Neighbors Helping Neighbors!

Volunteers: As our membership grows each year, so does our need for more volunteers. You don't even need to leave home!. In particular, GMN is seeking a volunteer with technical skills to assist with software administration and setup to help manage the organization. Please email tech@greenmountainneighbors.org with your skills and interests.

If you are interested in becoming a member, a supporting member, or explore volunteering with GMN, please check out our website at greenmountainneighbors.org. You can also call (802) 417-2292 and listen to the prompts. We are a 501(c)(3) organization run entirely by volunteers. We would love to have you participate in our efforts to help our seniors stay in the homes and towns they love as long as they are able.

Events:
~Bingo at Wallingford House, 1:30-3:30, on the third Monday of each month.
~VNA/Hospice of SW Virginia will hold a discussion regarding Advance Directives on August 26th, 1:30-3:00 @ Wallingford Gilbert Hall Library.
~August GMN Luncheon: Sweet Caroline's in West Rutland, VT on Thursday, August 27th , starting at Noon. Please register here.

"GREEN MOUNTAIN NEIGHBORS has been a wonderful service for me! All the volunteers are so nice and accommodating. I really enjoy my rides with them!!" – Betsy Hinckley

*Note: The survey deadline was originally September 25 but had to be pushed out to October 2 after the Wallingford Standard was already published. The incorrect url link was also unable to be modified in time for publication. The correct date and link were included in the social media and website postings (see previous page).
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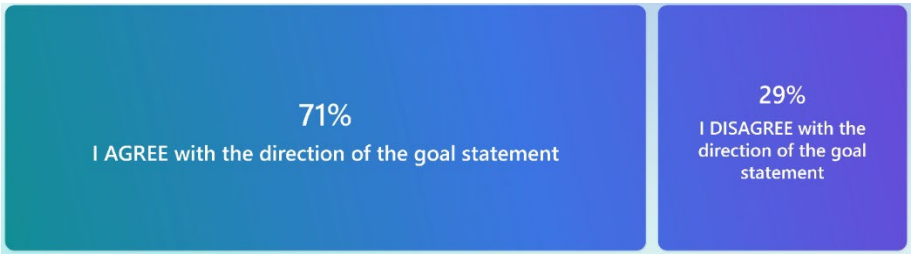
PHASE 2 SURVEY RESULTS – 14 SURVEYS SUBMITTED

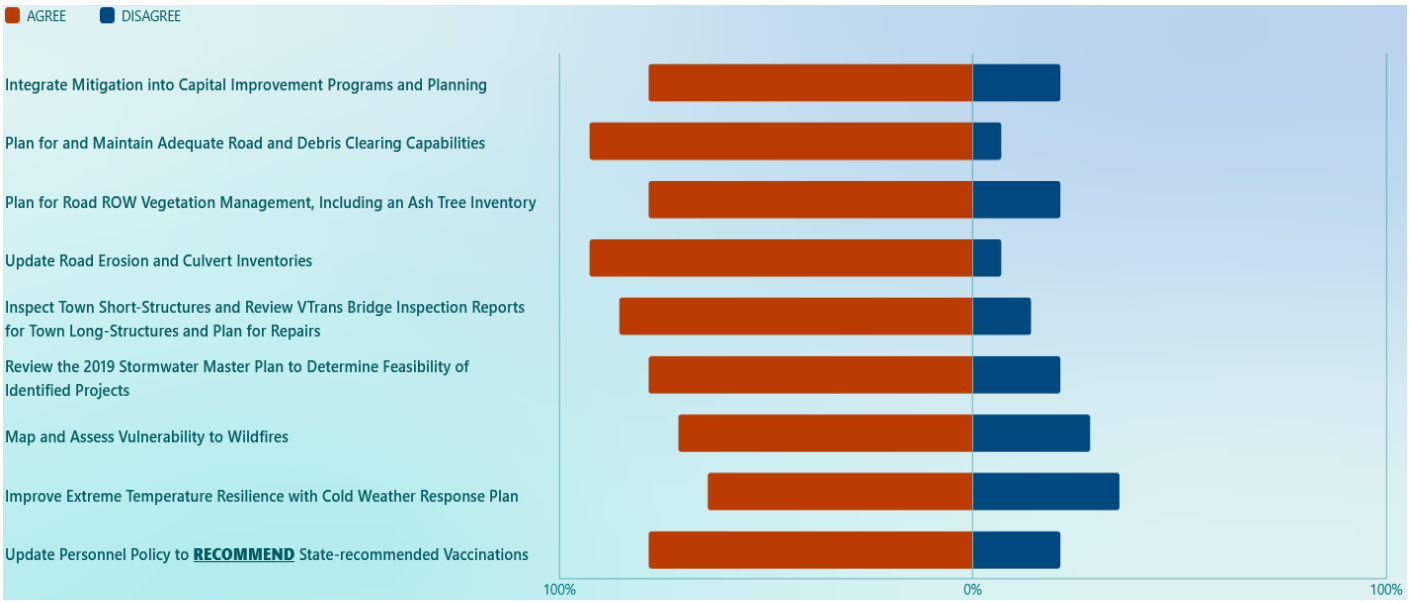
1. **Evaluate the community's primary mitigation goal: "To increase Wallingford's resilience to natural hazards by advancing mitigation investments. These investments will ultimately reduce or avoid long-term risks to people; homes and neighborhoods; the local economy; cultural and historic resources; ecosystems and natural resources; and Community Lifelines such as transportation, energy, and communications."**



2. **If you disagree with the goal statement, explain why. Is there something missing we should consider?**

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	Perhaps include study of disaster recovery response?
2	anonymous	Safety for all Wallingford residents. Not just those with money or that have a family name from wallingford
3	anonymous	Honestly, what are you going to mitigate? About the only thing you could remotely control is flooding. But the state wont let anyone touch the rivers. Deeming just about this entire program a waste of time and money.
4	anonymous	Waste of funds and taxes

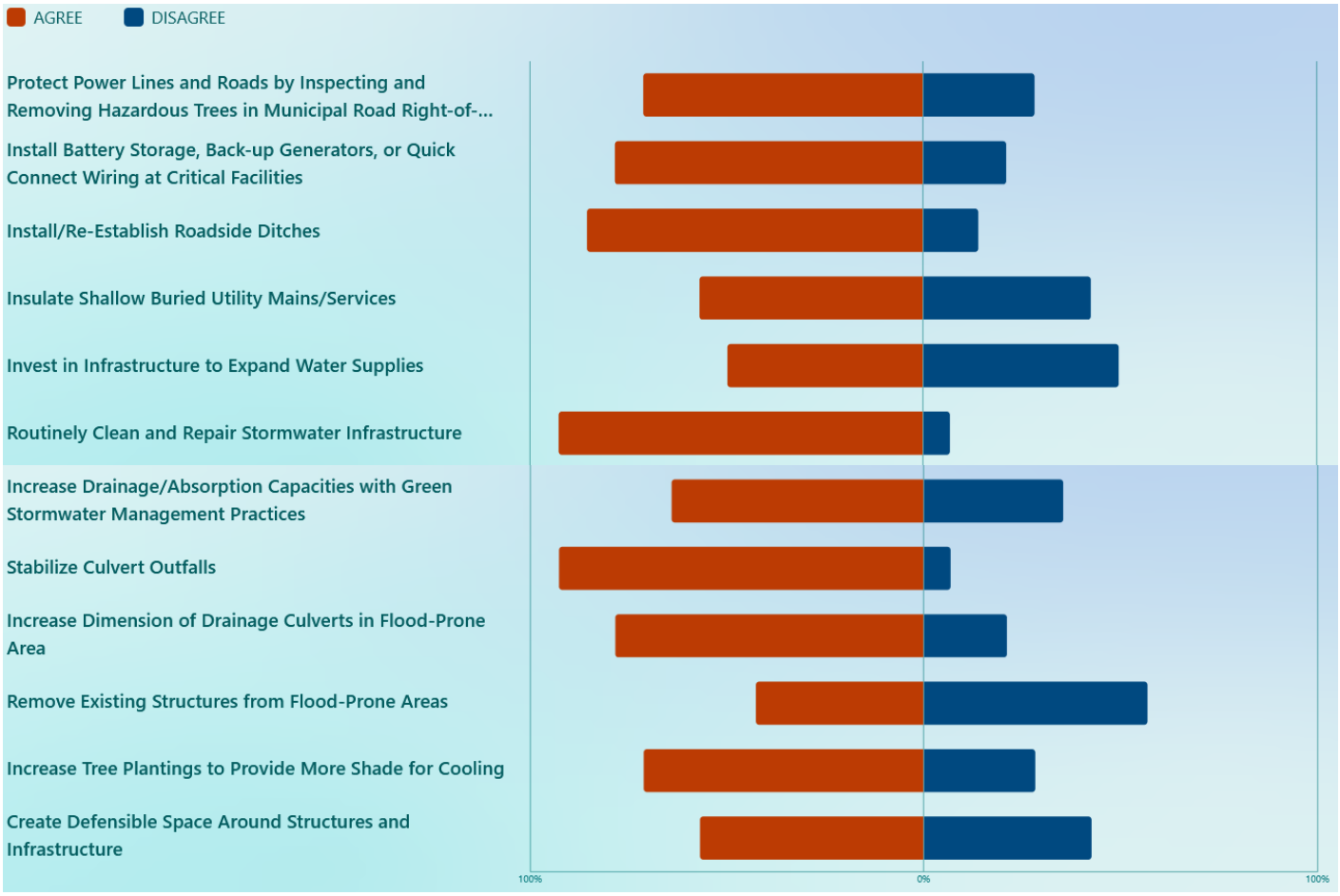
3. **Indicate if you agree or disagree that the following Planning and Regulatory mitigation actions are acceptable and practical for Wallingford to implement over a five-year period. These actions include plans, policies, or regulations that influence the way land and buildings are developed and built.**



4. **Is there something missing [from Question #3] that we should consider?**

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	I would also like to see a camera go up where the boy and the boot will go when it goes back out or maybe multiple camera
2	anonymous	Ability to mobilize residents with their talents, abilities, connections, and physical resources such as excavators, tractors, etc.
3	anonymous	An easily accessible (and clear) definition of "Town Short-Structures" should be included here... and clearly defined in any plan.
4	anonymous	Map invasive species
5	anonymous	Consider all Wallingford residents instead of favorites based in wealth and name
6	anonymous	Abandon the entire project. It will cost a fortune and we will get nothing out of it.
7	anonymous	Stop wasting money you a killing your older residents

5. **Indicate if you agree or disagree that the following Structure & Infrastructure Project mitigation actions are acceptable and practical for Wallingford to implement over a five-year period. These actions involve modifying existing structures and infrastructure to protect them from a hazard or remove them from a hazard area.**

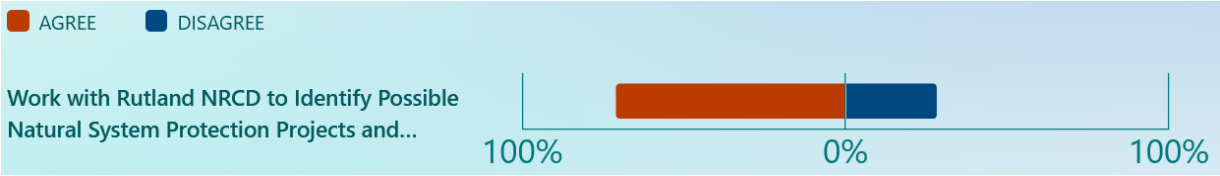


6. Is there something missing [from Question #5] that we should consider?

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	You really do need to provide people with "public friendly" definitions for the terms you're using in this survey. It's not just accessible for folks with lower reading levels or who don't know the terminology/"lingo" for what you're discussing here. Unclear/ misunderstood questions = garbage data
2	anonymous	Listen to your residents
3	anonymous	Raise the roadbed at Harstboro north end constantly floods
4	anonymous	Not sure if increasing water supplies refers to in-town water systems or the entire township, including those on wells. "Remove Existing Structures" provision sounds vague and potentially capricious. Are there criteria for determining what structures are at risk or what those structures might do to harm the town in the event of flooding?

**Note: "Remove Existing Structures from Flood-Prone Areas" was erroneously included in the survey; the Planning Team concluded this action would not be acceptable or practical for implementation.*

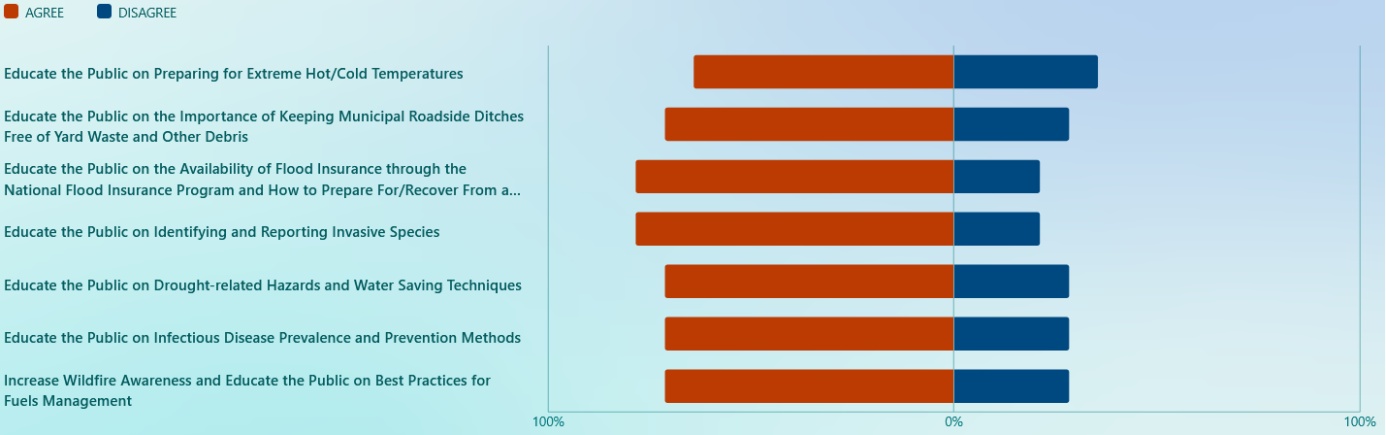
7. Indicate if you agree or disagree that the following Natural Systems Protection mitigation actions are acceptable and practical for Wallingford to implement over a five-year period. These actions help minimize damage and losses and preserve or restore the functions of natural systems and their related environmental services (e.g., floodwater storage).



8. Is there something missing we should consider?

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	Clear the trees out of the creek that would help with flooding and ice jam, and also in area that flood more maybe dig out the creek deeper or make the banks higher!
2	anonymous	NRCD? See previous comments. You folks really need help in constructing accesssible public surveys. This is pretty sad, from an accessibility perspective.
3	anonymous	Caring for all residents instead of just the wealthy

9. **Indicate if you agree or disagree that the following Outreach and Education mitigation actions are acceptable and practical for Wells to implement over a five-year period. These actions inform and educate the public about hazards and potential ways to mitigate them.**



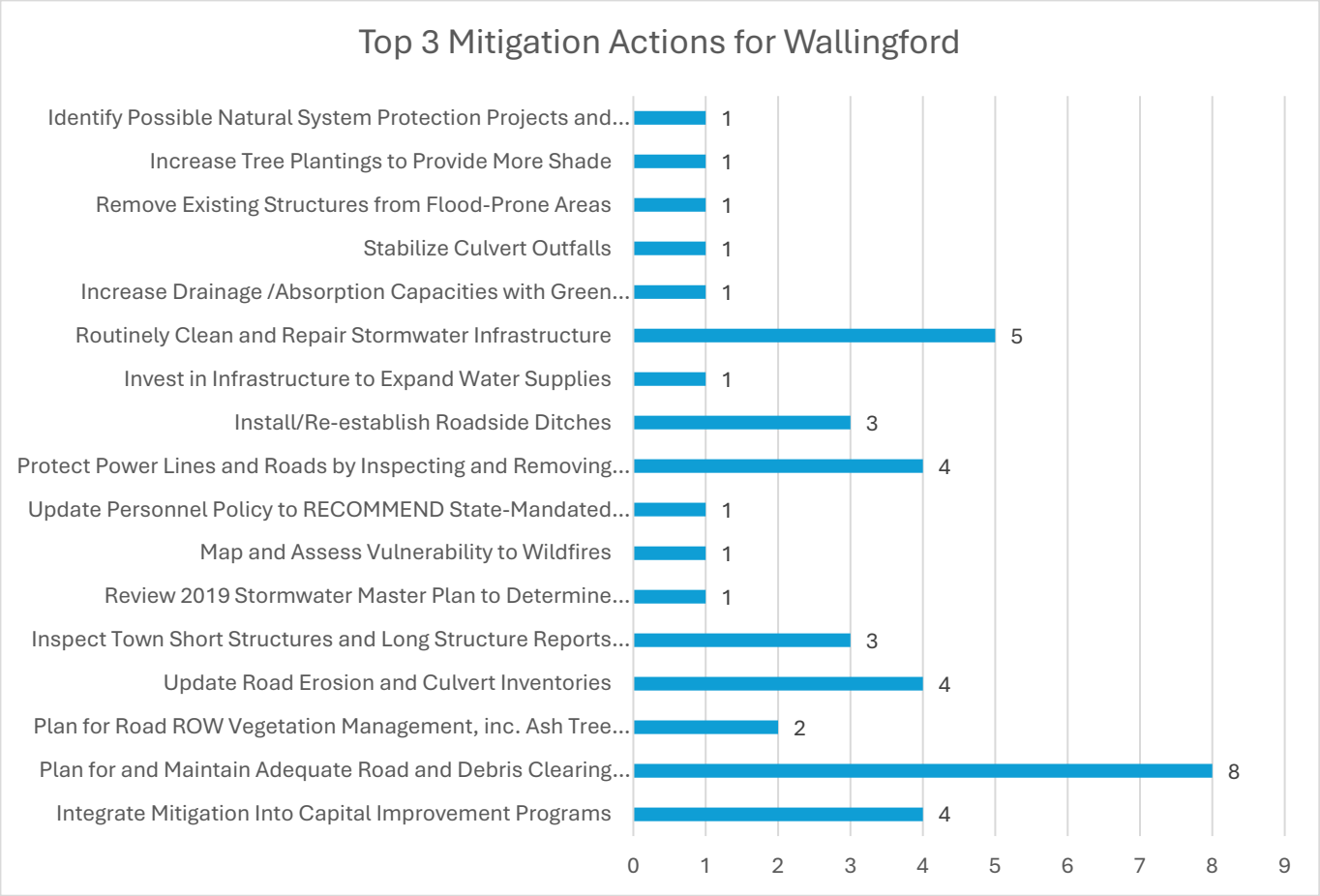
10. **Is there something missing we should consider?**

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	Educate the highway crew as to their responsibilities to reach and achieve roadside mowing, ditch maintenance, culvert cleaning, etc, etc...they have a passive approach and only respond when ordered to.
2	anonymous	Protect all residents of Wallingford. Not just the wealthy or the old names...
3	anonymous	You must think the general population is stupid. Educate a Vermonter on temperatures. And all that other garbage!

11. **Out of *all* the mitigation actions presented, which three (3) are the most important for Wallingford to implement?** *(See bar chart on following page for all results)*

#1 (8 votes): Plan for and Maintain Adequate Road and Debris Clearing Capabilities
#2 (5 votes): Routinely Clean and Repair Stormwater Infrastructure
#3 (Tie, 4 votes each): Integrate Mitigation into Capital Improvement Programs; Update Road Erosion and Culvert Inventories; Protect Power Lines and Roads by Inspecting and Removing Trees in Road ROW

Question 11: All Responses



**Note: "Remove Existing Structures From Flood-Prone Areas" was erroneously included in the survey; the Planning Team concluded this action would not be acceptable or practical for implementation*

Examples of Phase 3 Engagement Materials

Final Draft Presentation Flyer
Final Draft Presentation & Public Comment Period Email Blasts
Final Draft Presentation & Public Comment Period Social Media & Website posts
Wallingford Standard Draft Presentation & Public Comment Period Notice
Public Comments Summary

FINAL DRAFT PRESENTATION FLYER

ACT NOW

LOCAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN 2026

For more information visit:
tinyurl.com/wallingford-lhmp26

Comments on the Final Draft due by Nov 16, 2026

Help Make Wallingford More Resilient!

Plan Purpose

- Identify all natural hazards facing the Town
- Rank natural hazards according to local vulnerabilities
- Develop strategies to reduce risk posed by these hazards

The Local Hazard Mitigation Plan outlines a long-term strategy to reduce natural disaster losses and break the cycle of disaster damage, reconstruction, and repeated damage.

The Wallingford planning team has completed its work to update the Town's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.

The final draft is being shared now to encourage input from local officials and the public. The comment period is open from **November 2 to November 16, 2026**.

Attend the November 16, 2026 Selectboard meeting to share your comments or email comments to Maggie O'Brien at: maggie@rutlandrpc.org

Next Steps

- Nov 2–Nov 16, 2026: Public Comment Period
- Nov 2026: Address Comments, if any
- Nov–Dec 2026: Selectboard Authorization to Submit Plan to State for Approval Pending Adoption
- Winter 2027: Adopt Plan

View the draft plan at the Town Office or online at:
tinyurl.com/Wallingford-LHMP26

FINAL DRAFT PRESENTATION & PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD EMAIL BLASTS

Maggie O'Brien

Reply | Reply all | Forward

To: Maggie O'Brien

Mon 10/26/2026 9:00 AM

Cc: James Bagnall <jcbagnall@gmail.com>; WEISS WILLIAM <weisswilliam@sbcglobal.net>; **+3 others**

Hello, Local & Regional Hazard Mitigation Agencies and Partners,

On behalf of the Town of Wallingford, we are notifying key members of the community that the local Planning Team has reached the next critical milestone in the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) update process. The Local Planning Team-approved draft Plan will be presented at the Town's Selectboard meeting on **Monday, November 2, at 6:30 PM**. The in-person meeting will be held at Town Hall, 75 School Street, Wallingford, VT.

After this meeting, you will receive notice that we are seeking public comments on the final draft; more information will follow next week. You may also visit https://tinyurl.com/wallingford-lhmp26 to stay up to date on public involvement opportunities. Please direct questions to me, Maggie O'Brien, at maggie@rutlandrpc.org.

Maggie O'Brien

Reply | Reply all | Forward

To: Maggie O'Brien

Mon 10/26/2026 9:00 AM

Cc: Glenn Mayer <glenn@outsidelogic.com>; Town Clerk <townclerk@wallingfordvt.com>; **+1 other**

Hello, Local Wallingford Officials,

On behalf of your Town, we are notifying key members of the community that the local Planning Team has reached the next critical milestone in the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) update process. The Local Planning Team-approved draft Plan will be presented at the Town's Selectboard meeting on **Monday, November 2, at 6:30 PM**. The in-person meeting will be held at Town Hall, 75 School Street, Wallingford, VT.

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Maggie O'Brien

Reply | Reply all | Forward

To: Maggie O'Brien

Tue 11/3/2026 10:53 AM

Cc: Town Administrator; Town Clerk <townclerk@wallingfordvt.com>

Wallingford Flyer-Prese...
143 KB

Hello, Local Officials in Neighboring Municipalities

On behalf of the Town of Wallingford, we are pleased to announce that the final draft of the updated Wallingford Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) is now available for public review and comment. Click here to access and download the Plan. Physical copies are also available at the Town Hall @75 School Street.

The Public Comment period will close on **Monday, November 16.** Email all comments to me, Maggie O'Brien, at maggie@rutlandrpc.org.

Please share this information with other local colleagues in your community! For more information on the Wallingford LHMP update process, visit https://tinyurl.com/wallingford-lhmp26.

Maggie O'Brien

Reply | Reply all | Forward

To: Maggie O'Brien

Tue 11/3/2026 10:54 AM

Cc: Town Administrator; Town Clerk <townclerk@wallingfordvt.com>

Wallingford Flyer-Prese...
143 KB

Hello, Local Schools, Businesses, and Regional Organizations and Partners,

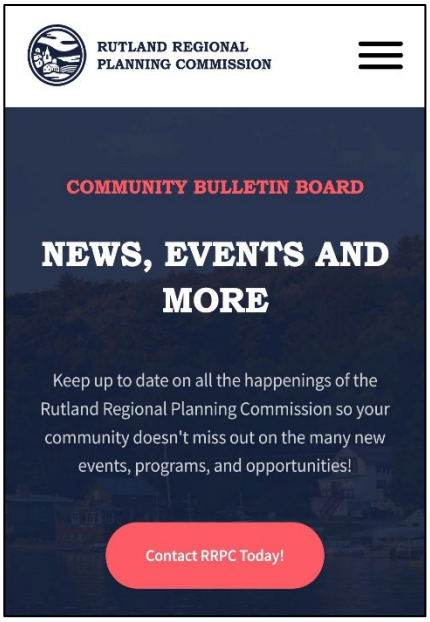
On behalf of the Town of Wallingford, we are pleased to announce that the final draft of the updated Wallingford Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) is now available for public review and comment. Click here to access and download the Plan. Physical copies are also available at the Town Hall @75 School Street.

The Public Comment period will close on **Monday, November 16.** Email all comments to me, Maggie O'Brien, at maggie@rutlandrpc.org.

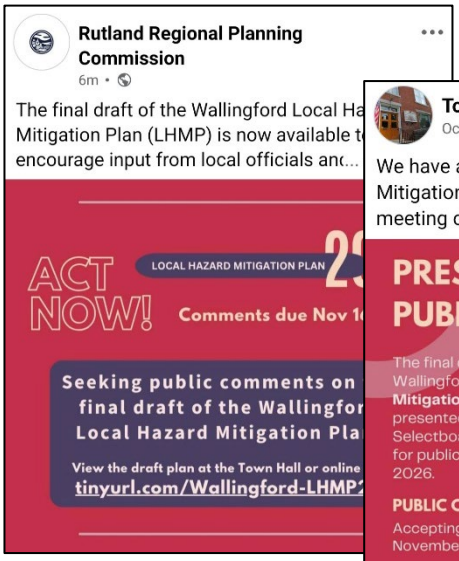
Please share this information with other local colleagues in your community! For more information on the Wallingford LHMP update process, visit https://tinyurl.com/wallingford-lhmp26.

FINAL DRAFT PRESENTATION & PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD SOCIAL MEDIA & WEBSITE POSTINGS

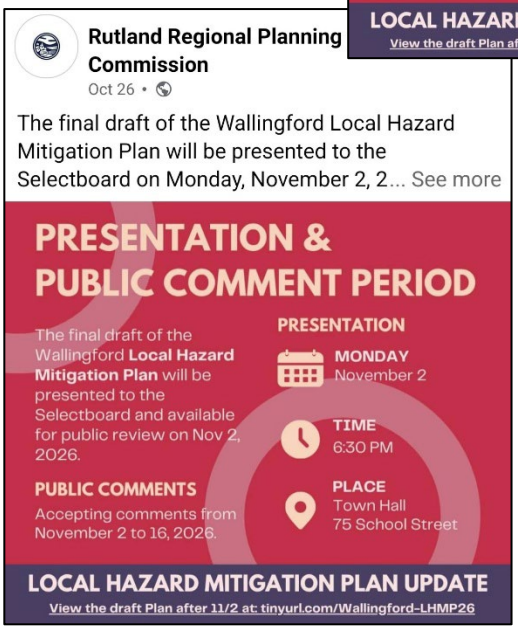












PHASE 3 PUBLIC COMMENTS SUMMARY

Comment 1:

Dear Chairpersons and Members of the Select board and Hazard Mitigation Planning Team,

I am writing to encourage our Hazard Mitigation Planning Team to include in our updated plan a rapidly escalating threat to our community's flood resilience: the spread of Japanese knotweed along our primary river corridors—specifically Otter Creek, Mill River, and Roaring Brook.

We cannot afford to view this invasive species simply as an environmental nuisance. In the context of hazard mitigation, Japanese knotweed acts as a dangerous hazard multiplier that directly drives fluvial erosion across our critical watersheds.

Japanese knotweed possesses a highly aggressive, destructive root and rhizome architecture capable of expanding through minute structural vulnerabilities. Infestations along municipal right-of-ways actively exploit cracks in asphalt, compromise road foundations, undermine concrete retaining walls, and breach stormwater drainage joints. This physical displacement accelerates the mechanical weathering and premature failure of public infrastructure, inflating long-term capitol maintenance costs and compromising asset integrity during emergency responses.

It aggressively outcompetes the deep-rooted native trees and shrubs that naturally anchor our river banks. Every winter, this plant dies back completely. This leaves hundreds of feet of the banks along our waterways entirely bare, exposed, and vulnerable to being scoured away by seasonal high flows.
This creates two critical vulnerabilities for our local infrastructure:

- First, it accelerates stream bank failure, which dumps massive amounts of sediment and brittle debris downstream into our main channels.
- Second, this debris collects at our critical choke points—specifically our culverts, bridges, and drainage networks—creating artificial dams that turn minor high-water events into severe, localized flash flooding.

By failing to integrate knotweed monitoring and eradication into our risk assessment and mitigation strategies, we are leaving our transportation lifelines and earthen flood defenses along these waterways vulnerable to predictable failures.

Conversely, by formally documenting this threat in our plan update, we open the door to leveraging nature-based solution grants through federal programs like FEMA's BRIC (Building Resilient Infrastructures and Communities) and other Federal and State led grants. This allows us to combine invasive eradication with active riparian restoration to protect our critical infrastructure. These grants may also help relieve some of the inevitable burden on Town taxpayers should we experience a catastrophic event.

Because the towns highest-priority hazards are flash flooding and fluvial erosion, the expansion of Japanese knotweed along our waterways should be evaluated as a primary hazard driver. I would ask that the final plan integrate Japanese knotweed into the risk assessment for any waterways that are closely aligned with our infrastructure ensuring our community remains eligible for all available resilience funding.

I would also ask that we officially update our risk profiles to cross-reference invasive species with our fluvial flooding hazards, and that we include targeted riparian inspection of our crucial infrastructure (bridges, roads, culverts and retaining walls) and management along the identified infrastructure in our final list of mitigation actions.

Thank you,
Denise Eddy, Chair of the Conservation Commission

Response 1: The Planning Team agreed to further expand on the detrimental effects of Japanese Knotweed, particularly as their rhizome structure relates to streambank and asphalt disruption. Additions to the Plan include a special section in the Natural Environment section of the Flooding Profile; including Japanese Knotweed in the Location section of the Invasive Species Hazard Summary; a commitment to continue emphasizing public education on the dangers posed by this invasive weed and effective eradication methods in Table 8; and an acknowledgment of this threat as a driving trend in the "Mitigation Strategy Updates – Changes Since 2021" section. After speaking with the Wallingford Conservation Commission Chair, it was agreed that a separate action for physical mapping, monitoring, and eradication did not seem appropriate without the sufficient capacity (manpower, time, and capital) to implement such measures.

Comment 2: Is Poison Parsnip in there as far as invasive species? Because it is currently out of control… [It's] along all the roads. I live on Route 7, so I always feel bad for anyone who breaks down and have to step out of their car. They're just greeted with it… 5,000 cars go by a day and just blow the seeds everywhere, So they've just, I've just seen it over the years… It's just gotten so out of control everywhere.

Response 2: The Selectboard Chair has also seen poison parsnip from Waldo Lane to Route 7. The Planning Team agreed to add a sentence to the invasive species profile acknowledging the potential for photochemical burns caused by this species, a direct impact on human health. In addition, the description of the "Road ROW Vegetation Management Plan" action in the Mitigation Strategy was modified to directly reference the Town highway crew's cutback and treatment of poison parsnip.

Comment 3: Someone requested an update on the group that met at the Library on June 3rd and its connection to the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan update.

Response 3: That group was part of an initiative to pilot the draft Social Resilience Guide through the Vermont Climate Action Office's Municipal Climate Planning Guides pilot program. This pilot program was intended to coincide with the Local Hazard Mitigation update, but this did not go as planned. See page A-13 for more details.