

Town of Waterville Valley, NH

Master Plan

Chapter 2

Effective – Summer 2011

Town of Waterville Valley, NH 03215

Master Plan

2.1

## **2. Town of Waterville Valley, New Hampshire Master Plan**

### **2.1. Chapter 1 - Vision Statement**

#### **2.1.1. About the Master Plan**

**2.1.1.1.** The purpose of the Master Plan is to set down as clearly and practically as possible the best and most appropriate future development of the Town of Waterville Valley. The plan will aid the Selectmen and the Planning Board in designing ordinances and regulations that result in preserving and enhancing the unique quality of life and culture of our Town. It will guide both in the performance of their duties in a manner that achieves the principles of smart growth, sound planning and wise resource protection. (RSA 674:2 I)

**2.1.1.2.** In developing the plan, the Planning Board is attempting to look twenty-five years into the future and define what our Town should look like and be like then. The Board has held numerous meetings with the various constituencies in Town and has solicited input from all members of the community, many of whom have generously given their time and thoughts. Still, the Board is humbled by the challenges that lie ahead, and asks for the assistance of the public as it moves forward in the quest to develop a great Town to live in, work in and visit.

**2.1.1.3.** The Master Plan is a living document intended to provide guidance and leadership, but also to reflect changing conditions that might impact our Town. Your continuing support and input is necessary to ensure that our Town becomes what we all wish it to become.

#### **2.1.2. Adoption of the Master Plan**

**2.1.2.1.** By New Hampshire statute, The Waterville Valley Planning Board is responsible for producing a Master Plan (RSA 674:1)

**2.1.2.2.** The plan is to provide the vision that will assist the citizens, Town officials and the Planning Board in formulating plans and policies that will affect the future development and growth of Waterville Valley. The Master Plan has no regulatory power, so the Planning Board, or, when appropriate, the Selectmen or citizens (by Town vote) must decide any actions taken to implement any part of this plan.

**2.1.2.3.** The Master Plan has been adopted under RSA 675:6 with the understanding that it will be updated at least every five years.

**2.1.3. The Waterville Valley Planning Board Members**

**2.1.3.1.** Full Members of the Planning Board (at the time of this revision, in June 2010) include Donald Jasinski, Raymond Kucharski, John Kelly, Terry Waite, Cyndy Piekos and Nancy Knight. Alternate Board Members include Katherine Chandler, Bob Guilbert and Wendi Rathgeber. Bill Larsen serves as the Planning Board’s Ex. Officio Member.

**2.1.4. The Town of Waterville Valley**

**2.1.4.1.** Throughout its 187-year history, Waterville Valley has been treasured for its intimate size and the way it disappears within the undulating cradle of the surrounding 4,000-foot mountains, hidden from the rest of the world. Waterville has been a refuge since the late 1800s, when city dwellers came for summers of mountain air, tennis, golf, fly-fishing and seclusion. By the 1930s, winter sports began attracting visitors, with the rising popularity of downhill skiing.

**2.1.4.2.** In the mid-1960s, two-time Olympic ski racer Tom Corcoran scoured New England looking for a mountain he could develop into a year-round ski resort. When he first encountered Waterville Valley – which had a mountain with a couple of rope tows and trails, an inn, and 500 acres for sale – Corcoran knew it was the place. For the next thirty or so years, Waterville Valley grew slowly and steadily under a comprehensive Master Plan developed by Corcoran’s Waterville Company.

**2.1.4.3.** Today’s Waterville Valley is a rare and precious resort community. Ours is a Town whose families express concern about how the valley operates, who become loyal friends, who rally to each other’s sides during times of need. We are an involved community that reads “Town”, not just “resort package”. Yet the community can mind its own business and “live free or die” as our state motto suggests (Adapted from a work in “Mountain Views” by Jan Stearns).

**2.1.5. Introduction**

**2.1.5.1.** A Town’s most basic resource is its land, and the use of this resource determines to a very large extent the character and quality of life for the community. The rate, location and type of growth

placed upon the various resources create the appearance and efficiency of the Town's built and natural environment. A well-planned community establishes a system for determining which uses occur on what lands and that community's aesthetics are a reflection of this system. The Master Plan is the foundation of this planning system.

**2.1.5.2.** In its purest form, the Master Plan is a series of reports, maps, diagrams and statements designed to chart Waterville Valley's development. The Master Plan inventories and evaluates socioeconomic, housing, natural resources, community facilities, transportation, historic resources, town government, and whatever other characteristics make the Town unique. It recognizes the community's past achievements, assesses its present dynamics and projects its future character. From this analysis, the Master Plan proposes goals and objectives designed to manage the inevitable future growth for the benefit of the community and its residents. These goals and objectives often take the form of proposed land use regulations, zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations, capital improvement programs, site plan review regulations, Town ordinances and statements of direction.

**2.1.5.3.** The Master Plan, however, is much more than a static document. It is the result of an intensive planning process and its greatest strength lies therein. Communities that regularly amend and update their Master Plan understand the benefits of continued re-evaluation of the community's resources and their appropriate use.

**2.1.5.4.** Waterville Valley is not a typical rural New Hampshire Town. It is a completely self-contained year-round resort community designed with vision and developed with a strong planning process. Aspects of Waterville Valley that make it unique are its geographic features, the housing mix and quality of development of the approximately 529 acres on the valley floor of the village, its high seasonal population and the stunning beauty of the Town surrounded by National Forest. Consequently, grouping it with other sub regional, geographic units is often inappropriate.

## **2.1.6. General Goal Statement**

**2.1.6.1.** Waterville Valley seeks to be a self-contained residential four-season resort community with extensive recreational, educational and leisure-oriented amenities and activities; a community that protects and enhances the great natural beauty of the valley while providing a high level of services and facilities for

residents, property owners and visitors.

**2.1.7. A Town in Transition**

**2.1.7.1.** In the mid-1990s, the Waterville Company, which had been the primary developer in Waterville Valley for many years, sold its holdings in the Waterville Valley Ski Resort, conference center and Town Square while retaining its real estate holdings and other assets. This change from a “one company Town” has had, and will continue to have profound effects on our community.

**2.1.8. Land Use**

**2.1.8.1.** The original Waterville Company’s Master Plan (not to be confused with the Town of Waterville Valley Master Plan) reflected the symbiotic relationship between the Town and the Waterville Valley Ski Resort, especially in the area of land development. When the Waterville Company owned the Waterville Valley Ski Resort, their Master Plan reserved large tracts of land for high density residential and commercial development that would provide a bed base and business infrastructure to support a growing skiing and resort environment.

**2.1.8.2.** Recent and planned development has shifted from high-density condominiums and lodges to lower density residential homes. This is encouraging more families to become full time residents, enhancing our community and providing a larger population base that is helping us become more than just a resort – we are a real Town now. Many of our new residents are older adults that have chosen the valley as an ideal place to retire.

**2.1.8.3.** Ninety one percent of the land within the Village has now been fully developed and real estate is scarce and appreciating rapidly. Our challenge is to ensure that our limited land resources are properly utilized so that we maintain opportunities to attract a diverse population base and to support balanced growth of the recreational business base. It is necessary to project the future needs of our residents and property owners, our visitors, our local businesses and our resort businesses to ensure that an appropriate amount of land is available to support both balanced growth and the infrastructure needed to support our Town when it is fully developed.

**2.1.9. Economic Factors**

**2.1.9.1.** The economic strength of the Town comes from a variety of sources. The Waterville Valley Ski Resort was the primary attraction and contributor to the economy in years past. As the Town has developed, other strong contributors to the economy have developed. The summer season has expanded dramatically and the various businesses in the Valley are providing an economic base.

**2.1.9.2.** The Town's economy is still fragile, however. Many businesses rely on the weather, the economy, a strong tourism structure and/or major capital expenditures to remain competitive and fuel growth. If the businesses that contribute so much to the economic vitality of our Town experience declines, then the Town and its residents will also be affected. Town government, the business community and the residents of the Town will be well served by actively working together for the benefit of all.

**2.1.10. Changing Demographics**

**2.1.10.1.** The number of full time residents is increasing steadily. Waterville Valley is a beautiful Town: more and more people want to live here on an extended or full-time basis. Long time property owners are choosing to live or retire here.

**2.1.10.2.** These trends are expected to continue and will affect many of the services and amenities of the Town. Schools, emergency services, water, traffic, roads, sanitation facilities, and recreation programs are just some examples of potential impact.

**2.1.10.3.** While the growth in permanent residents is welcome, many of the newest residents are retirees. Our challenge is to encourage a diverse population mix and housing opportunities for the employees and owners of the businesses within the Valley.

**2.1.11. Infrastructure**

**2.1.11.1.** The Town's infrastructure is very solid and will provide excellent support for our community for many years. It has been designed with vision and has been well maintained. Nevertheless, it is aging, and will require continued attention and investment to remain in peak condition. We will have more roads to maintain, more sidewalks to plow and more buildings to keep in repair as the Town continues to build out.

**2.1.11.2.** All of these changes point to a Town that is healthy, vibrant and poised for continued growth. We will all get to enjoy the benefits of this growth, but, from time to time, we may sit back and

reminisce about “the good old days.” Change is here and will continue to challenge our ability to manage the growth in a seamless fashion and to provide continuity for the Town.

**2.1.12. Statements Of Direction and Action Plans**

**2.1.12.1.** During the Master Plan development process, the Planning Board identified a number of items and initiatives that it believes should be prioritized and turned into action plans. A brief discussion of each of these follows.

**2.1.13. Preserving our Community**

**2.1.13.1.** Our community has three major elements that we must nurture and encourage. First, our physical environment is keystone to the future. The beauty of the valley must be protected while still allowing the smart build out of the Town. As land becomes developed, extra vigilance must be exercised in development within the context of the Master Plan. Protecting and preserving our natural resources is of prime importance.

**2.1.13.2.** Second, the various groups in our Town are expanding and growing. In the past, there were a small number of residents, a small and dedicated municipal “family,” and some “regulars” who were employed in the various businesses. Most of the people visiting our Town were weekend property owners or vacationers. Today the Town has an increasing number of residents, non-resident property owners and young families with children.

**2.1.13.3.** Town management responsibilities are expanding and Town employees will increase. The Town has more businesses and more employees. More people are choosing our Town as a “retirement” community (they’re more active now than ever) and we have visitors from all over the world, seeking more and more adventures and attractions. Each group will have its needs and wants and it is necessary to provide the services and support that will make all visitors want to stay or come back. Working and cooperating together will enhance the very special “sense of neighborhood” that makes our Town a wonderful place to live and visit.

**2.1.13.4.** Thirdly, the strength of our recreational economic base is critical in supporting our community’s health and maintaining its attractiveness, and the Town has played and will continue to play an important role. The Planning Board encourages the Town to work with the various business interests to:

- Encourage the capital investment in resort facilities necessary to keep our Town competitive and desirable.
- Encourage the cooperation and coordination of resort business to ensure an outstanding experience for resort guests.
- Work with the Town’s businesses and the appropriate state and other agencies to actively promote our Town as a premier destination resort in the White Mountains.

**2.1.14. Major Event Opportunities**

**2.1.14.1.** Waterville Valley has been identified as an ideal location for focused events and a possible “center” for others. The Adaptive Skiing Program and the Waterville Academy are examples of blending what we have to offer with a dedicated and successful effort to attract people and resources to our community.

**2.1.14.2.** Many possible opportunities exist that would establish the Valley as an international center for the arts, crafts and related recreational activities. The cooperation of the Town, the businesses and the community will help make these types of events happen.

**2.1.15. Technology Infrastructure**

**2.1.15.1.** The technology infrastructure of the Town should be evaluated and new requirements defined and encouraged. At a time when telephone wire and cable are being replaced with fiber optic and wireless, we should be in front of the technology curve instead of lagging behind.

**2.1.16. Town Beautification and Image**

**2.1.16.1.** As beautiful as our Town is, it could be even more impressive. Planning to identify a “look and feel” for the Town, starting with the entry to the Town and continuing throughout, is a priority.

**2.1.16.2.** A program of improvements involving street lighting, plantings, signage, street furniture, gazebos, bus shelters, crosswalks, etc. will be coordinated and conform to a consistent design theme that conveys a “sense of place”.

**2.1.16.3.** Volunteers carry out many beautification projects and the Planning Board thanks and encourages those efforts.

**2.1.17. Volunteerism**

**2.1.17.1.** Our Town depends on and is well served by a wonderful and dedicated group of volunteers. Programs need to be implemented to encourage and expand our volunteer force.

**2.1.18. Teen and Adult Recreation Activities**

**2.1.18.1.** The Waterville Valley Recreation Department has always had outstanding and award-winning programs for children. Recently, the Town has developed programs for teenagers and adults. As the demographics of the Town changes, more teen and adult-oriented programs are desirable.

**2.1.19. The Waterville Valley Ski Resort**

**2.1.19.1.** The Waterville Valley Ski Resort has been a major contributor to the Town and its ongoing economic health and vitality will have a very strong impact on the overall health of the community. The Town should make every effort to understand, support, and encourage a top quality Ski Resort.

**2.1.20. The Waterville Valley Conference Center**

**2.1.20.1.** A state-of-the-art conference facility can be a major contributor to our Town, especially during off-seasons. Corporate conference centers can bring in large groups for short periods that can have a major impact on visitor revenue contribution while consuming minimum services. The existing facility is aging and is not attractive to prime corporate clients. A top quality corporate conference facility for the Valley should be investigated and encouraged.

**2.1.21. Pedestrian Accessibility**

**2.1.21.1.** The Town needs to accelerate the planning and implementation of an integrated walking, wheeling and vehicle network. The rapid expansion of summer visitors has increased the number of pedestrians and bicyclists, straining the capacity of our sidewalk network and creating safety hazards.

**2.1.22. Public Accessibility**

**2.1.22.1.** The Town should do a thorough accessibility needs assessment of the public buildings, hotels, restaurants, transportation, trails and sidewalks and develop and plan and recommendations for improvement.

**2.1.23. Meeting House**

**2.1.23.1.** The development of a Meeting House facility should be encouraged and supported.

**2.1.24. Corcoran Pond**

**2.1.24.1.** A plan should be developed for the maintenance of the pond and dam.

**2.1.25. Recycling**

**2.1.25.1.** A plan should be developed and implemented to expand recycling to all residences and businesses in the Valley.

**2.1.26. Lighting**

**2.1.26.1.** Additions, revisions and improvements to existing public lighting to provide ground illumination appropriate in style to a mountain village and in character with the Valley would be helpful.

**2.1.26.2.** Property owners and condominium associations should be encouraged to replace existing “grand fathered” lighting fixtures with ones that conform to enacted lighting ordinances.

**2.1.27. Historic Sites**

**2.1.27.1.** The historic sites and points of interest throughout the Town should be cataloged and a plan developed to protect them.

**2.1.28. Gazebos**

**2.1.28.1.** A unique feature of the Town is the large number of gazebos that exist. The Town owns some of these gazebos, while businesses and individuals own the others. The maintenance and preservation of these gazebos should be encouraged.

## **2.2. Chapter 2 – Recreation & Culture**

### **2.2.1. Introduction**

**2.2.1.1.** It is the vision of the Town of Waterville Valley to preserve the recreational activities and sport amenities, which have been a mainstay of visitor and resident activity for the Town of Waterville Valley since the mid-1800s. It is equally important to promote the development of recreational facilities to further enhance the life experience by taking advantage of our unique setting in the White Mountains. The long-term economic stability of the Town is intrinsically tied to the area's offering of indoor and outdoor recreation activities for all ages. It is, therefore, paramount to acknowledge, preserve and develop recreational offerings for the economic existence of the Town of Waterville Valley. The integrated recreational or sports amenities and facilities are envisioned to be a joint endeavor involving private resources, the Town and the White Mountain National Forest.

### **2.2.2. Integrated Recreational and Sports Programs Objectives**

**2.2.2.1.** The existing mix of recreational facilities and sports programs serves the Town well. As we look to the future we seek to both preserve and enhance the development of facilities that are consistent with the unique life style and natural setting of the valley. Our goals are to:

- Provide a broad range of indoor and outdoor recreational activities that serve both Town residents and resort visitors.
- Offer activities and facilities that are consistent with the natural mountain setting of the valley, are ecologically sound, and maintain the low key, quiet, friendly atmosphere of the Valley.
- Develop a close working relationship between public and private resources to encourage programs that are economically sound and appropriately promoted.
- Promote designs that allow for public access.

### **2.2.3. Existing Conditions**

**2.2.3.1.** Historically, recreational pursuits of hiking and fishing provided the first attractions for visitors to Waterville Valley. As the proximity to Boston was convenient and various modes of transportation improved, there were a growing number of sportsmen, artists, writers and city dwellers that desired a retreat

and found respite here in Waterville Valley. Consequently, tennis facilities, a golf course, croquet court, an integrated hiking trail network, cross country skiing and alpine skiing were all recreational activities that gained popularity as more and more visitors found their way to the White Mountains. The Town has in the past and continues to encourage such activities

**2.2.3.2.** The scope and size of the Town changed forever in 1966 when the Waterville Company acquired all of the private land in the Valley and began creating a four-season integrated destination resort. Guided by a resort Master Plan, the Waterville Company sought to create a highly integrated resort and sport community with a unique “natural” appeal to both residents and vacationers.

**2.2.3.3.** This resort Town continues to evolve today. The resort is no longer owned or managed by a single company. It has now evolved to a partnership involving multiple private and public interests, but still offering four season sports and recreational activities in a natural setting. The challenge is many different activities coming together to show a seamless resort that feels like one.

#### **2.2.4. Department of Culture and Recreation**

**2.2.4.1.** In 1979, the Town voted to approve the formation of a municipal Recreation Department, which would be annually funded through the Town’s operating budget for the purpose of offering quality leisure activities, which foster a sense of community for the residents and visitors alike. Programming initially took place at various locations throughout the valley: at the Inns, the Town offices, the library, and in the great outdoors. As recreational programs grew, the need for a facility was apparent. The Town residents voted in 1987 to build a recreational facility to house the Recreation Department adjacent to the Elementary School located at 3 Noon Peak Road. This facility includes a gymnasium, staff offices, a multi-purpose room, stage, kitchen, cafeteria and an art & music room. The Recreation Department maintains Packard’s Field and supervises the activities there, the playground for those 5-12 years old and operation of Corcoran Pond and Boat rentals. The Recreation Department hosts a variety of services and operates an extensive array of programs for all ages year-round with the busiest times being the 10 weeks of the summer and vacation periods throughout the school year. Programs include Summer Day camps for those 4-12 years old, social events for families, after school care and specialty athletic camps for youths, conferences, functions and

weddings. They are constantly looking for additional destination activities to make guests want to come to Waterville Valley.

### **2.2.5. The Margret & H.A. Rey Center**

**2.2.5.1.** The Margret and H.A Rey Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded in 2006 and headquartered in Waterville Valley. It is governed by a board of directors elected by dues-paying members, with a year round staff of full-time and part-time employees. The Center supports itself through a combination of donations, member dues, grants, program fees and fundraising events. The lives of Margret and H. A Rey were filled with continued learning and community service. The Rey's were active in writing and illustration; astronomy; natural history; photography; environmental action (including calls for renewable energy); concern for animals; the simple joys of gardening, walking and bicycle riding; and of course, children's experimental learning. These life pursuits of the Rey's form the basis of the Rey Center programs. This mixture of art and science, the physical and intellectual, young and old, and ever present curiosity is the foundation for a multigenerational center for learning and exploration.

**2.2.5.2.** In the early 1950s, Hans and Margret Rey made their way to Waterville Valley and became enamored with the dark night sky which aided Hans revising his book, *The Stars*. Each summer they returned, settling into a community that welcomed and loved them. Hans died in 1977 at the age of 78. Margret lived nearly another 20 years before she passed away in 1996 at the age of 90. In 1992, she sold their Waterville Valley home and in cooperation with the new owners, donated it to the Town of Waterville Valley. The Cottage was moved to a location adjacent to the elementary school on land donated to the Town by Waterville Company Inc. Along with the Cottage itself, the Town acquired permission to use its current name the "Curious George Cottage". The Rey Estate, through the Combined Jewish Philanthropies, made a generous donation to start the nonprofit Margret and H. A Rey Center in 2006. The bequest for the Rey Estate plus matching funds for a number of Waterville Valley community members and support from the Town of Waterville Valley provided the financial foundation to start the organization that exists today.

### **2.2.6. The Curious George Cottage**

**2.2.6.1.** The Rey Center continues to operate the Curious George Cottage, where community members gather for discussion groups,

art classes and from which Rey Center staff lead nature adventure programs and offer public stargazing nights. The Cottage is owned by the Town, with a 15 year lease to The Rey Center beginning in 2010. In the summer of 2010 the Cottage made its final move to a spot next to the Waterville Valley Recreation Department and Elementary School. It also underwent several energy efficiency upgrades. The relocation and investment in renovation are part of the Rey Center's plan to create a Curious George Cottage Campus to showcase the Cottage as a "green" demonstration house, transform the adjacent lot into educational and community gardens, revitalize the Curious George Nature Trail and feature astronomical observatory. The relocation and green renovations would not have been possible without the generous support of the Town of Waterville Valley, ABODE Homebuilders, Pella Windows and the NH Electric Coop Foundation.

**2.2.6.2.** The Mary Bierbrier Community Gardens are raised garden beds available for the use of community members. In addition, the Elementary School and Recreation Department each have a bed for educational purposes. Planning is underway for additional educational gardens including a greenhouse and youth garden.

**2.2.6.3.** An astronomical observatory is located behind the Curious George Cottage. The Rey Center offers astronomy programs year round, in partnership with the McAuliffe-Shepard Discovery Center and New Hampshire Astronomical Society.

**2.2.6.4.** The Curious George Nature Trail was originally funded by the Rey Estate with assistance from the New England Wildflower Society. The trail is intended to showcase a variety of natural plant communities and is also used as an outdoor classroom for the Rey Center programs for students and the public.

**2.2.7. Waterville Valley Ice Arena**

**2.2.7.1.** The Waterville Valley Ice Arena was developed in 1986 when The Waterville Company built it as an amenity to the Resort. The ice-skating arena operated on a six-month schedule, weather permitting that ran from the beginning of October through the end of March. The facility was refrigerated in the summer of 1995 and became the home of the Plymouth State College hockey program for both practices and games. Since 1997, the facility has been owned, operated and maintained by the Town. The arena has contracted ice time with hockey camps in both the winter and summer. It also provides public skating programming for residents and resort guests throughout the year.

**2.2.7.2.** Since the Town began operating the arena it has made steady progress in both improving the facilities but has struggled to meet its financial goals. Many hockey camps run winter and summer, bringing those families into the Valley to stay and use the amenities here. At the 2011 Town Meeting, the Town voted to lease to sell the facility to Hockey America.

**2.2.8. Skateboard Park**

**2.2.8.1.** The Skateboard Park is an amenity to the Resort especially for the teen segment of the community. It currently operates from Memorial Weekend to Columbus weekend in the parking lot across from the Black bear Lodge. Skateboard camps run all summer long, using this park every day.

**2.2.8.2.** The Skateboard Park, which is managed by the Ski Area, is located on land owned by the Waterville Company, originally designated for parking. This requires that the Ski Area has to come before the Planning Board each year to renew the waiver for non-conforming land use. In the future the land may be developed requiring a relocation of the Park.

**2.2.9. Cycling & Biking**

**2.2.9.1.** Cycling is currently a recreation activity that is pursued in a variety of manners. The-majority of cycling takes place on the roads, parking lots and sidewalks shared by pedestrians and autos. This type of cycling is easy and accessible, but also very dangerous as the by-ways are shared by so many. Sporting and racing cycling events, including triathlons and duathlons, continue to bring more people into the Valley for recreation.

**2.2.9.2.** Mountain biking also is a recreational pursuit, which is far more physically demanding. Mountain biking brings cyclists into the woods on hiking and cross-country trails also shared by pedestrians.

**2.2.9.3.** See recommendation under Transportation chapter, Section E, Bicycle Ways

**2.2.10. Fishing: Ponds Rivers & Streams**

**2.2.10.1.** Nathaniel Greeley built a farmhouse on the floor of the valley somewhere around 1845. Shortly after moving in fishermen began arriving and asked to stay at the farmhouse. As word spread around

Boston and business improved, a hotel was planned. An ardent admirer wrote in the Boston Journal “*Trouting is a great attraction for the gentlemen, many brooks prolific in the spotted beauty emptying them into the main river*”. The Mad River and its tributaries were loaded with native, wild brook trout and limit catches were common. Keeping fish was the fashion of the time back then. Fishing remained good until the lumbering industry came along, built dams and cleaned out the river in order to float out the logs. The release of water and logs scoured out the bottom of the rivers and along with acid rain destroyed the habitat for aquatic life that sustained the brook trout population. That scouring of the bottom of the river, combined with the possible impacts of acid rains seems to have reduced the native brook trout population.

**2.2.10.2.** Presently visitors do not come to Waterville Valley for the fishing, although some are still interested in fishing. Today the Mad River and its tributaries still contain wild brook trout but they are mostly less than six inches with a few grandfathers up to nine inches. Years of very low water levels may be affecting spawning and populations of these native species.

**2.2.10.3.** Fishing today depends on the State of New Hampshire’s stocking program. The Mad River is stocked with primarily one-year-old brook and rainbow trout, along with a few two-year-old fish. The River is also stocked with Atlantic salmon fry in an attempt to bring back the Atlantic salmon to the Merrimack and Pemigewasset Rivers. The fry grow to around three inches the first year and around six to seven inches the second year before returning to the ocean. In several years the salmon return to their home river to spawn. Flat Mountain and Livermore Greeley Ponds are stocked with brook trout fingerlings and provide a hike-in experience. The Waterville Valley Athletic and Improvement Association with the support of the Waterville Company and the Curious George Cottage stock Corcoran Pond with one and two year old brook and rainbow trout. It is a single, barbless hook, catch and release fishery. The trout in the pond grow around three inches over the summer feeding on leaches, scuds and nymphs. Its unfortunate, but the fish do not survive the winter as the pond is slowly filling in with silt. Winterkill is common in shallow ice covered ponds where the water is depleted of oxygen. Trout are also lost when the dam breaks and trout are washed over the dam and washed into Snows Brook. The Recreation Center and Curious George cottage run their fishing programs on Corcoran Pond and the Mad River. The pond is also host to an annual youth fishing Derby, “Casting for Kirby”.

**2.2.10.4.** It is important for Waterville Valley to enhance the fishing

experience for visitors to the Town. The WVAIA, Waterville Company and the Curious George Cottage will continue to stock Corcoran's Pond. The Conservation Committee is looking into methods of improving the stability of Corcoran's Pond, which may prevent winterkill. Future improvements to the dam and its control could aid in preserving trout in Corcoran's Pond. Some stream restoration may improve aquatic habitat. Waterville Valley should encourage the New Hampshire Fish and Game to increase stocking program and possibly create a catch and release section in the Mad River. The recently formed Pemigewasset Chapter of Trout Unlimited may be enlisted in accomplishing some of these goals. These changes may someday bring fishermen back to Mad River drainage.

### **2.2.11. Trail System and Cross Country Skiing**

**2.2.11.1.** The Greeleys opened their hotel in 1868 and the most popular activities for guests in those years were hiking and fishing. Early records indicate the surrounding mountains were called the Waterville Haystacks. In 1888 a group of guests formed the Waterville Athletic and Improvement Association and from the beginning assumed the care of hiking paths. The members participated in informal hiking and many group picnics took place at the Cascades, Norway Rapids, The Scaur, Goodrich Rocks, and Greeley ponds. Mount Osceola was the center of attraction for "Happy Valley" vacationers. The WVAIA continued to develop new trails. In 1906, in conjunction with the Wonolancet group, a trail was developed connecting the two Towns via Flat Mountain Pond. In 1981 two Forest Service bridges over Snows Brook and the Mad River completed the Mad River trail. This new trail replaced the old River Path that was destroyed by condominium development.

**2.2.11.2.** The "Valley" was added in 1967 when the Town changed its name to eliminate confusion with other Towns by the name of "Waterville" in neighboring states. The Town of Waterville Valley must be carefully distinguished from the Waterville valley (the valley of the Mad River). The Town of Waterville Valley includes the summits of Mt. Whiteface and Mt. Passaconaway, which are not considered part of the Waterville valley by even the broadest definition. Mt. Osceola is actually located on the border of the Livermore and Lincoln Townships.

**2.2.11.3.** Today hiking and cross-country skiing remain an important part of the Town of Waterville Valley. The Waterville Valley Athletic and Improvement Association remains the primary caretaker of the hiking trail system along with the Forest Service. Booth Creek

resort maintains the groomed cross-country trails network in the winter for use by residents and visitors.

**2.2.11.4.** The hiking and cross-country trails of Waterville Valley are quite extensive and diverse. They range from a challenging Mt. Tripyramid loop to an easy walk along the Big Pines Trail. Trailheads for trails leading to Sandwich Mountain are located along Route 49. Snows Mountain trailheads are located primarily in the north end of Town. Livermore Road and Greeley Pond Trail is the source of many trails that branch off from these primary trails. The trailhead for the two major mountains, Mt. Osceola and Mt. Tecumseh, are located off Tripoli Road. The Town of Waterville Valley is home to five of the forty-eight Four Thousand Footers in New Hampshire. Detail Maps of the trail system are available at the Town Hall as well as the Town Recreation Center.

**2.2.11.5.** The future of hiking in and around Waterville Valley is paramount to keeping the Town a destination for the outdoor enthusiast. It is important that the Town of Waterville Valley work with Land Developers in preserving and maintaining our trail system. The Waterville Valley Athletic Improvement Association (WVAIA), with continuing support from the Town of Waterville Valley and the United States Department of Agriculture, White Mountain National Forest Service, will continue to monitor and maintain the trails in and around Waterville Valley. The WVAIA depends on volunteer participation with support from the Town and its Recreation Center. Heavy trail work such as stair building and tree cutting is outsourced. Long-range plans include extending and connecting trails to form more loop trails such as connecting the Big Pine trail to The Scaur Trail and the Scaur to Flume Brook Trail. Future plans also include developing the Rivers Edge Trail as a barrier free trail.

**2.2.11.6.** The Town of Waterville Valley has long been a preferred venue for both recreational and competitive cross-country skiing, which brings business as well as diversity of experiences for residents and owners. The trails are also open to snowshoeing. There are two networks of trails in the valley at the South end and North end of Town. The South end trails can be reached from the Town center and the North end trails are reached by Depot camp parking lot. While these two networks are connected via the Swan's Way Trail, it would be desirable to further interconnect the networks through the golf course. . Osceola Ledge Trail.

**2.2.11.7.** There is interest in developing more groomed cross-country trails for skiing with pets. Currently the Village trail is the only one

available and the experience is limited. Re-establishing the Village Trail to connect to Town Square with the Drakes Brook Parking Area would extend the experience.

### **2.2.12. White Mountain Athletic Club**

**2.2.12.1.** The White Mountain Athletic Club, (WMAC) which is privately owned and membership driven, is a hub of recreational activities in the Valley. Anyone staying in one of the inns or in a residence that is a member can use the facility. The facility currently houses two indoor tennis courts, an indoor and outdoor swimming pool, a racquet ball court, fitness room with machines, aerobic room with machines, dance studio/multipurpose room, saunas, steam rooms, private massage rooms, video games room and ladies and men's locker rooms. Visitors to the Valley staying at the local hotels are all offered the opportunity to use the facility as a part of their stay in The Valley. The WMAC offers a variety of fitness programs throughout the year for residents and more during the vacation periods to accommodate the increase of visitors.

**2.2.12.2.** The *Waterville Valley Tennis Center* (WVTC) - is an award-winning 18-clay court outdoor tennis facility named by *Tennis Magazine* as one of the 50 greatest tennis resorts in the U.S. Tennis has flourished in the north side of the Town of Waterville Valley since 1884, making it one of the oldest and most endearing assets in Waterville Valley. Many years ago it was Tom Corcoran who brought Tom Gross along with Rod Laver Tennis Camps to the Valley and tennis has since developed a strong following. There are very few places in the world which offer a more beautiful setting to play tennis. The 5-month season is exciting with lessons for all ages, tennis camps, round robins, tournaments and social events. The two indoor courts at the Athletic Club, and a successful ladies tournament team that plays all over the state and hosts matches, compliment the outdoor courts as well.

**2.2.12.3.** This is a privately owned and membership driven club and it is not accessible to all visitors of the Valley. As recreation is one of the primary attractions for Waterville Valley, a facility that is accessible to the public would add to their visit to the Valley.

**2.2.12.4.** A section of the Tennis Center is also home to the Waterville Valley Croquet Club, which plays friendly matches on Sunday afternoons in the summer. The croquet club is open to all players and those interested in learning to play the game of croquet.

### **2.2.13. Golf**

**2.2.13.1.** The public nine-hole golf course has been an attraction for visitors to Waterville Valley for over 100 years and is a major valley attraction during the summer and fall. The Golf course is the largest open space remaining within the village boundaries. With the development of the Moose Run subdivision the course was re-configured

#### **2.2.14. Alpine Skiing & Snowboarding**

**2.2.14.1.** Since the 1940's alpine skiing has been a major attraction bringing people to Waterville Valley, first at Snow's Mountain and since 1966 at Mt. Tecumseh. Currently the Mountain, a 2000-foot vertical, has the second highest lift capacity in the state. The mountain is currently owned and operated by Booth Creek resorts. Like many Waterville Valley Ski Resorts around the country, Waterville Valley is always looking for new ways to attract skiers to the sport. The business at this point is relatively flat, but snowboarding has kept it invigorated. The mountain has created some innovative and nationally recognized programs to introduce people to the sport and keep them coming back to Waterville Valley.

**2.2.14.2.** Snowboarding has kept this industry invigorated and Waterville Valley Resort has worked hard at integrating this market into the mountain operation. Waterville Valley has four terrain parks and a half pipe and the Resort is host to many snowboarding special events to bring more snowboarders to the Resort each year.

**2.2.14.3.** The Resort has numerous programs that attract a variety of skiers and boarders. There are packages for beginners, to bring them back again, a nursery with skiing for the toddlers, programs for young children and for older children, programs for women, specialty clinics for people with specific interests, for skiers with disabilities. As the market changes the Snow Sports Department creates programs to meet the needs of the clients who come to Waterville Valley. The Resort initiated and supports a program, JETS, for all local children in the local SAU to ski at Waterville Valley.

**2.2.14.4.** The Resort has a Master Development Plan for future expansion to Green Peak and beyond. The Resort will need additional water for snowmaking. A current special use permit does allow for expansion at the mountain. With all expansion, the Waterville Valley Ski Resort with the US Forest Service is required to apply the NEPA (National Environmental Protection Act) process to evaluate the feasibility of the project.

**2.2.14.5.** Having an economically viable ski resort is critical to the long-term economic viability of the valley. During the winter season it is the key business that brings both overnight and day guests to the valley. If the Ski Area were to close it would have a devastating effect on both property values and the health of other valley businesses.

**2.2.14.6.** The Town should work with the Ski Resort to facilitate a ski/transport lift to bring people from the Valley floor to the mountain

### **2.2.15 Waterville Valley Black and Blue Trail Smashers (WVBBTS)**

**2.2.15.1** WVBBTS/SSEF (Snow Sports Education Foundation) is a 501(c) (3) non-profit educational foundation which operates Waterville Valley Academy and the BBTS Snow Sports Club. The Club, organized in 1934, is one of the oldest and most well known clubs in the country. The Academy, founded in 1972, is a five month Snowsports academy designed for full time student athletes in grades 6 – 12 who are dedicated to pursuing the highest level of performance in alpine racing, freestyle skiing and snowboarding in parallel with their academics. The BBTS Snow Sports Club is a weekend training program for young athletes, ages 5 through 18, for athletes dedicated to pursuing higher performance in alpine racing, freestyle skiing and snowboarding. The BBTS Snow Sports Club also offers a Masters program for alpine racers 18 and up.

**2.2.15.2** WVBBTS is interested in extending their programming outside of the winter season window into more fall, summer, and spring activities that compliment their strong winter programs. This may include camps, dryland training and conditioning and athletic training to the snow sports that they serve. This will allow longer duration for some of the 95 people they employ during the winter. They intend to create new venues at Snows Mountain including building a dry-slope venue with an airbag.

**2.2.15.3** The future plans are to consider a full term option for the academic program for The Waterville Valley Academy. This academic program would be connected with the New Hampton School.

**2.2.15.4** There are plans to continue to build new facilities at Snows Mountain, the most immediate being a Sport Specific Training Center with a trampoline and gymnastics floor and other sport specific amenities. They need another classroom building as well.

**2.2.16 Recreation and Culture; Issues and Needs**

**2.2.17 Integrated Resort Development**

**2.2.17.1** Create a Town Recreation Committee that is planning and overseeing the development of the Towns recreation needs, consistent with the needs of any destination resort.

**2.2.17.2** Create a resort that is accessible to all with user friendly facilities and adequate parking facilities.

**2.2.17.3** Maintain the Golf Course as open space for the Town.

**2.2.17.4** Continue to work with the Waterville Valley Ski Resort to understand the expansion and water access process and to assist them in completing their goals.

**2.2.17.5** Continue to work closely with The Ski Resort ownership and coordinate efforts to promote the valley as a destination for both day and overnight skiers.

**2.2.17.6** Re-create a teen center that is accessible, visible, and comfortable with supervision and programs appropriate for the teenage age group and brings those families with children 13 – 18 years old, who have aged out of the current Recreation Department programs, back to Waterville Valley.

**2.2.17.7** Continue to offer more activities that make visitors and residents want to come to Waterville Valley.

**2.2.17.8** Build a Ropes Course that is accessible to all groups visiting the Valley.

**2.2.17.9** Continue the lease to the Margret and H.A. Rey Center to support the cultural and educational programs that bring families into the Valley.

**2.2.18 Recreational and Cultural Activities**

**2.2.18.1 Skateboarding**

- Find a permanent space for the Skateboard Park to attract families with teen age children

### **2.2.18.2 Cycling and Mountain Biking**

- Create a fully integrated bike path system
- Actively seek additional races, including triathlons to bring more athletes into the Valley.

### **2.2.18.3 Fishing: Ponds, Rivers & Streams**

- Continue to stock the ponds and rivers, including working with the New Hampshire Fish and Game and the Pemigewasset Chapter of Trout Unlimited to increase their support.
- Create a catch and release section of the Mad River.
- Restore the streams in the Valley to establish a better fish habitat
- Encourage youth fishing programs, like the annual “Casting for Kirby” and public fishing use of Corcoran pond.

### **2.2.18.4 Trail System & Cross Country Skiing**

- Work to continue to connect trails to form more loop trails for both hiking and cross country skiing. Create a barrier free trail on the Rivers Edge Trail. Link trails intersecting with West Branch Road (Connector trail) to Town.
- Work with Land developers to ensure that the rights of way for all existing trails are maintained as new property is developed.
- Continue to support the WVAIA in its efforts to maintain hiking trails within the valley, including actively seeking sources for funding.
- Make all the ski trails in the Valley so skiers do not need to take their skis off at any point to minimize the impact on publicly maintained road.

### **2.2.18.5 Alpine Skiing & Snowboarding**

- Work with The Ski Resort to understand snow making water access issues.
- Support the Ski Resort in its efforts to build snowmaking ponds and grow the sport of alpine skiing and snowboarding.
- Work with the Ski Resort to promote the Valley as a resort for both overnight and day guests.
- Work with the Ski Resort to support and facilitate, as

- appropriate, expansion plans.
- Work with the Ski Resort on a transportation lift from the Valley floor to the mountain.

## **2.3 Chapter 3 – Land Use**

### **2.3.1 Introduction**

**2.3.1.1** Waterville Valley is a planned resort community. Development in the Valley has generally followed an original Master Plan that divided the Town into five different zones according to the land's natural constraints and overall design. In order to ensure good design and planning, the Town established several different codes and ordinances. These development guidelines have managed Waterville Valley in an organized manner. Recent amendments to the Zoning Ordinance in 2004, which established three new zone classifications of land, know as "Greenbelt", "Commercial One" and "White Mountain National Foest", have changed the zoning designation of some of the parcels of land and have helped to augment these efforts.

**2.3.1.2** Waterville Valley's land ownership pattern is unique. The White Mountain National Forest holds 40,153 +/- acres within Waterville Valley and is thereby the largest landholder. The U.S. Forest Services is responsible for managing this woodland area for its recreational and natural resources. The Village of Waterville Valley is made up of approximately 480.4 +/- acres of natural valley floor. Outside the village boundaries there are 279.5 +/- acres in private ownership. The first parcel of 111.5 +/- acres borders the Town of Thornton, is on the northern side of the Mad River and is northeast of the "6 Mile Bridge". The second parcel of 168 +/- acres borders the Town of Sandwich and straddles the Wonalancet River. These two remote parcels are contiguous with additional acreage in the adjoining Townships and do not abut the village area of the Town of Waterville Valley. The parcel bordering Sandwich was rezoned from Low Density Residential Zone to Recreational Zone at the 2004 Town Meeting. For many years, the major private landowner in the village has been the Waterville Company, Inc. This company remains the major developer in the Town and still holds approximately 161.2 +/- acres of the 410 +/- acres it once controlled. The balance of the village is under private and municipal ownership and includes Town facilities, privately owned commercial and recreational properties and private residential properties.

### **2.3.2 Existing Land Use**

**2.3.2.1** The Town's land use regulations and the original Waterville

Company Master Plan, as updated, have guided Waterville Valley's development. Presently the land within the village boundaries is zoned as follows:

| <b>Zoning District</b>     | <b>Acres</b> |
|----------------------------|--------------|
| Lower Density Residential  | 99.06        |
| Higher Density Residential | 96.11        |
| Village Commercial         | 97.83        |
| Commercial One             | 18.68        |
| Recreational               | 136.45       |
| Special Civic              | 24.91        |
| Greenbelt                  | 7.32         |
| White Mtn. National Forest | 33,278       |

**2.3.2.2** Total developed land equals 344.1 +/- acres and there are a total of 1,409 property parcels in the Town.

**2.3.2.3** Waterville Valley's philosophy in regard to regulations is summarized on page one of the Town's subdivision regulations "The intent of the Town and its residents is to permit development within an approved Master Plan that will ultimately lead to the completion of a high quality thoroughly planned resort community . . . ensure that growth is orderly and controlled and in accordance with this Master Plan . . ." Because the village has nearly reached its full capacity, a summary of current regulations best describes existing land use in Waterville Valley.

### **2.3.3 Town Zoning**

**2.3.3.1** Waterville Valley's Zoning Ordinance was established on March 6, 1973 The Valley is separated into eight (8) zoning districts that are briefly explained below. The entire word descriptions of the zoning districts may be found in the Town of Waterville Valley Zoning Ordinance. Maps of zoning districts may also be found in the same document.

### **2.3.4 Lower Density Residential (LDR)**

**2.3.4.1** To provide for housing in a residential atmosphere with more open space than and apart from commercial and other non-residential operations. Intended use: non-commercial residential.

### **2.3.5 Higher Density Residential (HDR)**

**2.3.5.1** To provide for lower cost alternative housing to separate structure private homes, more concentrated and allowing some non- residential uses, but still apart from the major commercial and most non-residential operations. Intended use: residential and limited commercial.

### **2.3.6 Village Commercial (VC)**

**2.3.6.1** To provide areas of more mixed use where residences are in close proximity and intermingled with commercial, recreational and other non-residential operations creating a village atmosphere. Permitted use: Mixed.

### **2.3.7 Commercial One ( C1)**

**2.3.7.1** To provide areas of concentrated commercial, recreational and other non-residential operations set apart from unrelated residences to serve the needs of the community and visitors while allowing proximate housing for the owners and workers of such enterprises. Permitted use: Mixed other than single-family and two-family dwellings.

### **2.3.8 Recreation (R)**

**2.3.8.1** To provide opportunity for recreational activities in keeping with the stated goal of maintaining a resort atmosphere. Intended use: that which is directly related to recreation.

### **2.3.9 Special Civic (SC)**

**2.3.9.1** To provide areas of development devoted to the use and benefit of the Town Residents. Permitted use: that which benefits the Town Residents.

### **2.3.10 Greenbelt (G)**

**2.3.10.1** To provide for natural undisturbed areas protected against development and all but minimal improvement of any kind. Permitted use: unimproved or minimally improved access.

### **2.3.11 White Mountain National Forest (WMNF)**

**2.3.11.1** To identify those areas of land in the Town of Waterville Valley controlled by the Federal Government and designated by the Federal Government as the White Mountain National Forest.

**2.3.12**        **Subdivision**

**2.3.12.1** Waterville Valley’s subdivision regulations were first established on April 5, 1973. The intent of the regulations is to ensure ordered growth that follows the original Master Plan. The following is a summary of the subdivision procedure for Waterville Valley. For more detailed information see: Town of Waterville Valley Subdivision Regulations, June 13, 2002.

**2.3.13**        **Site Plan Review**

**2.3.13.1** The purpose of site plan review is to ensure quality development in Waterville Valley that is in accordance with the Town’s Master Plan and to encourage innovative design development compatible with the surrounding area. Site plan review considers the intended use of the property, building design, siting and treatment of outdoor areas.

**2.3.13.2** Site plan review ensures proposed development adequately provides for vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic, has adequate lighting and sign facilities, preserves natural features, and has a pleasing visual effect. These regulations parallel subdivision regulations in many ways and are recommended to be used in conjunction with them. The following is a summary of the procedure for complying with Waterville Valley’s site plan review regulations.

**2.3.13.3** Submission requirements, performance guarantees and other details of the regulation can be found in the Town of Waterville Valley Site Plan Review Regulations.

**2.3.14**        **Other Existing Regulations**

**2.3.14.1** In addition to the regulations already mentioned, Waterville Valley also has the following regulations:

**2.3.14.2** Basic International; Building/Plumbing/Mechanical/Fire Prevention/and Electrical codes:

- Bicycle Ordinance
- Dog Ordinance

- Noise Ordinance
- Off – Premise Ordinance
- Parking- Fire Hydrants Ordinance
- Fire Lane Parking Ordinance
- Street Parking Ordinance
- Firework Ordinance
- Wild Animal Ordinance
- Alternative/Modified Heating System Ordinance
- Building Permit Ordinance
- Road-Use Event Ordinance
- Street Numbering Ordinance
- Solid Waste Disposal Ordinance
- Placement of Snow in Town Road Ordinance
- Secured Entry Way Ordinance
- Handicap Parking Ordinance
- Animal Waste Ordinance
- Open Container Ordinance

**2.3.15 Future Land Use Recommendations**

**2.3.15.1** According to Town calculations there are approximately 64.28 acres +/- undeveloped acres within the village boundaries of Waterville Valley, all of which are zoned Village Commercial or Commercial one, plus 65 acres +/- of land zoned Recreational, which is used as follows:

- |                         |            |
|-------------------------|------------|
| • Golf Course           | 30.0 acres |
| • Cascade Path Parcel   | 25.0 acres |
| • Riverside Rec. Parcel | 10.0 acres |

**2.3.15.2** Since there is very little land left to influence the character of the Town as it develops, it is important that all new developments and redevelopment of older properties be directed towards specific land use needs as identified in other chapters in the Master Plan. Towards that end future site plan reviews should include a review of the intended purpose of the development with priority given to:

- Facilities, housing, and lodging to support recreational, educational, business and cultural activities within the community.
- Residential development that will attract a diverse population of permanent residents.

**2.3.15.3** Finally, the Town believes that, to the extent possible, its historic sites should be preserved and maintained. Identifying these sites should be a first step, to be followed by any action necessary to preserve the sites.

## **2.4 Chapter 4 – Housing**

### **2.4.1 Introduction**

**2.4.1.1** In its most simple form housing may be defined as dwellings or shelter provided for people. In our society, however, housing imparts a much greater significance. As shelter, it protects our basic social unit, the family. As a commodity, it is often the singular largest financial commitment that one makes in a lifetime. Approximately 25% to 30% of the average American’s income is dedicated to housing. Construction of new housing is a driving force in the United States economy. Real estate taxes based on assessed property values of homes and businesses are the primary source of revenue to cities and Towns in New Hampshire.

**2.4.1.2** The purpose of this chapter is to describe the housing available in Waterville Valley today, project the needs over the next twenty-year period, and identify any changes in law that are required to provide good and balanced housing development that protects the rights and investments of residents. Future development must not be at the expense of our cherished environment. It must be in partnership with the natural surroundings.

### **2.4.2 Specific objectives**

**2.4.2.1** The government of the Town of Waterville Valley does not build or develop housing or commercial spaces. Such development is the result of investment by commercial and residential property developers, which they undertake in the hope of creating a profit. The Town, however, has control over any such development through its zoning ordinance, subdivision control law, taxation, and eminent domain. The Town must also ensure that any development meets the requirements of federal and state law. Examples include the protection of wetlands, enforcement of fair housing law, accessibility, and affordability.

### **2.4.3 Specific goals of this chapter of the Master Plan include:**

#### **2.4.3.1**

- Review current housing status
- Identify any opportunities to provide immediate enhancement to regulations

- Identify any changes in laws that are required to ensure that state and federal requirements are currently being satisfied.
- Project requirements for housing needs over the next twenty years
- Identify any updates in Town Ordinances necessary to administer changes over the plan period.

#### **2.4.4 Existing Conditions, Circumstances and Facilities**

#### **2.4.5 Housing in Waterville Valley**

**2.4.5.1** The Town of Waterville Valley is unique among the Towns of Grafton County. It is truly a peaceful valley surrounded by majestic mountain peaks. The natural beauty of the mountains and streams attracts people from all walks of life. The number of permanent, or year-round, residents is relatively small but growing. Most full time residents are property owners, while a small percentage rent their dwellings. There are a large number of non-resident property owners, those that come to the valley periodically for stays of various lengths. Some may come for weekends only, while others may stay for a full season, either summer or winter. The housing needs of the full and part-time residents are satisfied by single-family homes, condominiums, and to a lesser extent, the lodges.

**2.4.5.2** The primary industry of Waterville Valley is recreation and other leisure oriented activities. It is a year round resort, catering to enthusiasts of various snow and ice sports in the winter and golf, tennis, hiking or biking in the other seasons. Thus, it attracts many non-property-owning visitors that stay in the Town for various durations. The housing needs of these visitors are satisfied through the rental of condominium units, lodges, and inns. The health of the local recreation industry, restaurants, and other merchants is very much dependant on the availability of housing for visitors.

**2.4.5.3** The large majority of living units in Waterville Valley are condominiums, many of which serve as second homes to non-resident property owners. Some condominium owners rent to visitors, while others maintain their condo for personal use. From the mid 1970s through 1990 part time rental of condominium units was very common. However, during the period of 1990 through 2000, the percentage of units available for rental use declined as more owners tended to reserve the property for their exclusive use. Management of several resort businesses including the Waterville Valley Ski Resort and the ice arena has stressed the importance of rental properties, or beds, to their ability to attract visitors.

**2.4.5.4** Employees of the Waterville Valley Ski Resort, restaurants, shops and the Town also have housing needs. However, home prices, and high rent may be prohibitive to the labor force. Most of these employees find housing outside of the Town. This may be one area of concern, especially with regard to public safety personnel.

## **2.4.6 Municipal Control**

**2.4.6.1** Local government is empowered to exercise control over land use and housing. The Governmental powers include zoning ordinances, sub-division control, taxation, and eminent domain.

**2.4.6.2** The Town of Waterville Valley has an effective zoning ordinance, which defines allowable usage of land in the various zoning districts within the boundaries of the Town. The purpose of the ordinance is to provide order to development, protection for abutters, balance in the land use within the community, and protection of the Town's natural beauty. The Board of Selectmen and the Planning Board may propose changes or updates to the zoning ordinance as needed. Approval of changes rests with the voting residents at the annual Town meeting. Therefore, the ordinance reflects the desires of the voters in the community.

**2.4.6.3** Sub-division control law defines requirements to which developers must adhere as tracts of land are converted to new housing stock. This set of requirements, administered by the Planning Board, is intended to ensure that growth is orderly and controlled in accordance with the Master Plan. The Town has established design standards and criteria for all development that takes place within its limits.

## **2.4.7 New Construction**

**2.4.7.1** In the last ten years construction of new housing units was ongoing. New single-family homes include homes at Cascade Ridge and Moose Run. The development of new condominiums was limited. Advanced planning is underway for a new phased townhouse style condominium project adjacent to the Black Bear Lodge, south of Snow's Brook Road. The area of the Town is approximately 500 acres, of which 80 acres has not yet been developed. Most of the available land is zoned Recreation or Higher Density Residential. Recreation land uses need to be economically viable which is dependent upon occupancy rates. Securing financing and permitting for High Density development makes it more difficult to pursue. At some time in the near future the Town

will be at full build out condition.

#### **2.4.8 Housing Costs**

**2.4.8.1** Scarcity of available land, difficult terrain and construction costs are contributing factors to the cost of building new housing in Waterville Valley. The difference between new construction costs and resale of homes or condominiums is substantial. Resale values have decreased, while construction costs are stable. These factors plus the recession have slowed the real estate market over the last five years. The real estate survey shows that property values have decreased less than 10% although places at the lower end of the market have decreased more significantly.

#### **2.4.9 Existing Housing Stock**

**Table 3-1  
Waterville Valley Lodging and Residential Units 2010**

| <b>Inns and Lodges</b>          | <b>Number of Units</b> |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| Golden Eagle Lodge              | 140                    |
| Black Bear Lodge                | 108                    |
| Snow Owl Inn                    | 85                     |
| Northstar Inn                   | 20                     |
| Best Western Silver Fox Inn     | 20                     |
| Valley Inn                      | 53                     |
| Birches                         | 19                     |
| <b>Condominium Developments</b> | <b>Number of Units</b> |
| Windsor Hill                    | 132                    |
| Village Condominiums            | 93                     |
| Noon Peak                       | 41                     |
| Forest Rim                      | 65                     |
| Mt. Village South               | 6                      |
| Sunnyside                       | 20                     |
| Snow's Brook                    | 20                     |
| Mountain Brook                  | 25                     |
| Mountain Meadow                 | 20                     |
| Mountain Sun                    | 22                     |
| Mountain View                   | 2                      |
| Mad River                       | 42                     |
| Tripyramid                      | 30                     |
| Osceola                         | 24                     |

|   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| Tecumseh                                | 32                 |
| High Country                            | 36                 |
| Tyler Spring                            | 46                 |
| Boulderwood                             | 14                 |
| One Valley Place                        | 3                  |
| Northface                               | 54                 |
| Waterville Place                        | 8                  |
| Town Square                             | 21                 |
| Forest Knoll                            | 52                 |
| Presidential                            | 7                  |
| Single Family Homes                     | 154                |
| <b>Total Units in Waterville Valley</b> | <b>1,413 Units</b> |

#### 2.4.10 Table 3-2: Planned Developments

| Development Name | Number of Units            |
|------------------|----------------------------|
| Moose Run        | 3 condominium units        |
| Village Green    | 80 o 100 condominium units |

##### 2.4.10.1 Notes:

- Some lots at Moose Run may be combined to support building condominiums.

#### 2.4.11 Gaps that need to be filled to improve existing conditions and move towards meeting future goals.

**2.4.11.1** Recent development has focused largely on high-end single-family homes. There has been little development of high-density housing, which provides entry-level opportunities for new residents and reasonably priced opportunities for upward migration. If this trend continues the current balance of housing stock could be lost. If the community is to continue to grow there must be housing opportunities that attract a diversity of permanent residents including young families that will become part of the community and local businesses.

**2.4.11.2** Spiraling housing prices can preclude young families with children from entering the community. Thus, the demographic balance, which has existed as the Town has grown, may be lost and Waterville Valley may tend to become a retirement community for

the wealthy.

**2.4.11.3** The Town's industry, recreation, is also dependent on high density, moderately priced rental units. Because of the demand for second home lot sites, there has been almost no development of lodges, hotels or high-density condominiums over the past ten years. Anticipating future growth in the resort amenities, there is a need to set aside land for the development of additional visitor lodging in Waterville Valley.

**2.4.11.4** Current regulations do not include any requirements that developers dedicate a portion of new development to satisfy the needs for affordable housing. The Town of Waterville Valley and the Planning Board support housing that encourages a broad spectrum of full-time residents, including young families with children.

**2.4.12 Projects and or programs needed to fill gaps**

**2.4.12.1** The zoning ordinance provides zoning districts that guide future development. The various zones restrict the types of housing allowed, density, lot size and coverage, set backs and other restrictions or requirements. Recent changes to the ordinance were intended to ensure that the opportunity for balanced development is maintained in the future. The Planning Board periodically reviews the ordinance and considers the mix of housing developed since the last review. In future reviews priorities should be directed towards.

- Housing and lodging to support recreational, educational, and cultural businesses and activities within the community.
- Residential development that will attract a diverse population of permanent residents.
- Residential development that supports more diverse-housing for local employees and their families.

**2.4.12.2** The Planning Board must be sensitive to legislation that defines requirements for creation of affordable housing. Methodologies employed by other communities to induce such development might suggest changes to current Town requirements that would allow the Board to negotiate with developers to include some level of affordable housing in new developments.

**2.4.12.3** There may be a need to provide more accessible housing for those with special needs or senior citizens. The planned adaptive training center may satisfy some or the requirements for accessible

housing. The Planning Board needs to be sensitive to this issue as plans for multi-family housing are introduced to the community. Although the Board does not review building designs, it is free to express its concerns to developers, and can often negotiate with developers to achieve desired goals.

**2.4.12.4** There are federal and state government programs that provide education and financial assistance to lower income families. These programs are often directed toward first time homebuyers. They provide low interest loans and grants to help eligible families become homeowners. Employers and realtors are encouraged to provide information on these programs to prospective employees.

## **2.5 Chapter 5 – Transportation**

### **2.5.1 Introduction**

**2.5.1.1** The vision of the Town of Waterville Valley is to establish and maintain a pedestrian-oriented community that is dedicated to the safe and efficient movement of people and goods by all modes of transportation throughout the year. Appropriate transportation facilities and services will allow this unique Town to grow while maintaining its appealing atmosphere. The integrated transportation system is envisioned to operate as a joint public-private entity that considers four-season mobility, accessibility, economic growth and development, safety and environmental quality. The modes of transportation in the Town incorporated in this Chapter include:

- Highways and Streets
- Public transit service
- Pedestrian ways (trails are covered in Chapter 6)
- Bicycle way

**2.5.1.2** There are also connections by modes serving the Town that include intercity bus service, limited taxi service, and freight transportation by truck. An integral part of the existing transportation system includes parking within the Town, and access among all modes.

### **2.5.2 Integrated Transportation System Objectives**

**2.5.2.1** The existing transportation system serves the Town adequately. As we look to the future our goal is to improve and enhance that system to establish an integrated and accessible network that provides:

- Safe streets and highways to serve all public needs
- Transit and pedestrian facilities and services to reduce dependency on the auto
- Separation of people, bicycles and vehicles wherever possible
- Safe, extensive and coordinated sidewalks, bike routes and trails
- Adequate and coordinated short term and long term parking for residents and visitors
- Integrated facilities and services
- Clear responsibilities for public and private provision and operation of all modes

**2.5.2.2** Of significant interest is our intent to also explore other future developments such as:

- Examining the possibility of creating a I-93 Corridor transit initiative.
- Providing bus access to Plymouth as well as to Concord and Manchester.
- Examining the possibility of night bus service during peak seasons.
- Exploring possibilities for State and Federal funding to supplement Town funds to implement the plan described herein.

**2.5.2.3** It is also essential that this plan and all future Transportation improvements be fully coordinated with those Town organizations that deal with Public Safety, Environmental Conservation, Recreation and Economic Development.

### **2.5.3 Existing Conditions**

**2.5.3.1** The diversity and efficiency of a Town's transportation system can ultimately affect the quality of life and sense of community in that Town. The general mobility of the residents and those who visit the community is a function of a Town's roads and transportation service. There is also interdependency between a Town's economy and its transportation system. The development of one will influence the direction in which the other proceeds. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct transportation planning based upon the economic, social and environmental considerations projected to occur and that which is desired. Within that context, the following provides a summary of existing conditions to provide the basis for developing future plans.

### **2.5.4 Existing Highways and Streets**

**2.5.4.1** The task of providing and maintaining a road network is a prime governmental function and responsibility. Planning the capital expenditures needed for highway improvements can have a vital influence on the economic well being of a community. It is, therefore, important for the Town to carefully assess its needs and establish an orderly and realistic range of expenditures and priorities.

**2.5.4.2** A circulation system generally contains elements of different

capacity, each of which performs a specific role. Since there are different types of movement, a highway system should be composed of roads that serve varying types of traffic and volumes.

- 2.5.4.3** Although there are many variations in types of streets and highways, they may be subdivided into four basic categories: limited access, arterial, secondary and local. The characteristics of each type are:
- 2.5.4.4** Limited Access roads are designed for rapid movement of heavy volumes of traffic; direct access to adjacent property; parking in the right of way is prohibited. State Route 49, to the intersection of Tripoli Road and Valley Road, is the only facility in this category.
- 2.5.4.5** Arterial and Primary Highways are designed for movement of through traffic and heavy local traffic; crossings at grade; construction for reasonable speed and volume; and Town regulated access to adjacent property. The prime example is Valley Road.
- 2.5.4.6** Secondary and Collector Streets are designed to link local streets to arterials; collect traffic from several local streets; bypass traffic around residential neighborhoods. One example is Tecumseh Road.
- 2.5.4.7** Local Streets serve traffic at generation points; provide access to adjacent property; through traffic is not desirable; parking and loading is allowed in the right of way. This category represents a major proportion of the overall highway system in the Town. At the present time, the following road mileage exists within Town boundaries:

**TABLE 1**  
**Town of Waterville Valley, NH**  
**Town Roads and Lengths**

|                        |             |
|------------------------|-------------|
| Valley Road            | 1.354 Miles |
| West Branch Road       | 0.577 Mile  |
| Stone Tower Lane       | 0.133 Mile  |
| Tripoli Road*          | 0.750 Mile  |
| Boulder Way            | 0.290 Mile  |
| Upper Greeley Hill Rd. | 0.435 Mile  |
| Greeley Hill Road      | 0.289 Mile  |
| Tecumseh Road          | 0.250 Mile  |
| Snows Brook Rd.        | 0.240 Mile  |
| Station Road           | 0.050 Mile  |

|                   |                    |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| Jennings Peak Rd. | 0.150 Mile         |
| Village Road      | 0.303 Mile         |
| Elliot Road       | 0.123 Mile         |
| Osceola Road      | 0.190 Mile         |
| River Road        | <u>0.150 Mile</u>  |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>5.284 Miles</b> |

**2.5.4.8** *\*The New Hampshire Department of Transportation owns and maintains Tripoli Road from the intersection at Route 49, to the Ski Access Rd. There on, Tripoli Road is owned by the United States Forest Service and is part of the White Mountain National Forest. However, there is a maintenance agreement between the USFS and the Town of Waterville Valley that the Town is responsible for maintenance of the road from the Ski Access Road intersection to the West Branch Road intersection. This section also provides the only secondary access to and from the Town (in addition to Rt. 49). But, it is open only from May to October, thereby raising possible safety issues for emergency access in the event of the closure of Route 49.*

**2.5.4.9** The owners of the Waterville Valley Ski Resort maintain and provide access to the Waterville Valley Ski Resort on the access road connecting to Tripoli Road.

**2.5.4.10** The classification map in Figure 1 shows the existing location of each highway type, including those owned by the US Forest Service and the Waterville Valley Ski Resort.

## **2.5.5 Existing Highway and Street Maintenance**

**2.5.5.1** Waterville Valley maintains a total of 5.284 local miles, as shown in Table 1. All accepted roads in Waterville Valley are given equal priority for continuing maintenance by the Town’s Highway Department.

**2.5.5.2** The US Forest Service and Booth Creek Corp. provide those maintenance activities for the roads under their jurisdiction. The NH DOT is responsible for Route 49.

**2.5.5.3** For the construction of roads in subdivisions and other developments, Town specifications exist for road construction and upgrading. Those specifications are based on the State’s “Suggested Design Standards for Rural Subdivision Streets” and provide minimum standards for road construction. The specifications should be reviewed periodically and recommendations made for appropriate amendments.

## **2.5.6 Issues to Address**

**2.5.6.1** In developing the future vision for the Town, the following issues to address:

- Establish and fund a continuing maintenance and Capital Improvement Program. (CIP).
- Establish Traffic Calming methods to deter speeding, and enhance safety.
- Develop coordinated parking facilities to serve four season activities, to provide short-term and long-term parking for residents and visitors.
- Examine the alternatives for secondary access to the Town (in addition to the seasonal availability of Tripoli Road.)

## **2.5.7 Existing Public Transit Service System in Town**

**2.5.7.1** The Waterville Valley Transit authority (WVTA) was officially established on May 27, 1998, when the Board of Selectmen signed the WVTA “Articles of Incorporation”. However, since December 1994 the combined efforts of the Town, the owners of the Waterville Valley Ski Resort, and the local businesses have shared the cost to provide the “Schuss Bus” service throughout the Town and to the Waterville Valley Ski Resort. This partnership continues.

**2.5.7.2** The WVTA’s transit system operates a fixed route (with designated bus stops), free-fare service with circulation routes within the Town. “Demand” service is also provided, especially in the newly developed sub-divisions. The current fleet provided by the Ski Operator consists of passenger vehicles for winter and special purpose service. There also exists a Trolley that operates in the non-ski seasons (spring, summer and fall).

**2.5.7.3** This excellent existing bus service provides many public benefits. In particular, its significant usage in the winter reduces auto travel between the Town and the ski mountain; thereby, reducing congestion and vehicle emissions. A detailed report describing the transit system and future plans is contained in “Waterville Valley Transit Plan”, November 2000; prepared for the WVTA by Resource Systems Group and Snow Engineering. (Reference 2.)

## **2.5.8 Issues to Address**

### **2.5.8.1**

- Expand Schuss Bus service to newly developed areas in Town
- Establish fee-based public transit service to the Plymouth area and access to Concord and Manchester.
- Establish a continuing maintenance and Capital Improvement Program.
- Establish handicapped access facilities.
- Encourage conversion to alternative energy resources

## **2.5.9 Existing Pedestrian Ways**

**2.5.9.1** The Town has built sidewalks and established an overall plan to build additional sidewalks to provide safe access for pedestrians throughout the community.

**2.5.9.2** The Town guidelines for sidewalks are a 6ft minimum, 8ft preferred width and Nantucket Curves.

## **2.5.10 Issues to Address**

### **2.5.10.1**

- There is a general consensus that the existing sidewalks are helpful but too narrow to serve multiple needs. They are generally four feet wide, with a curb in most instances. Thus, they do not meet generally accepted national and state design standards.
- There is an urgent need to establish facilities that will provide safe but separate access for people, motor vehicles, and bicycles.

## **2.5.11 Existing Bicycle Ways**

**2.5.11.1** There currently are two general types of bicycle uses in place. For those who choose to do mountain and off-road riding there are extensive trails throughout the Town and within the surrounding Forest Service land. (See Chapter 6.)

**2.5.11.2** However, many residents and visitors use the existing, paved highway and street system for recreational bicycling. There are no marked bike lanes in the Town. The existing use of narrow shoulders on Valley Road and Route 49, and use of the sidewalks

throughout the Town is a safety concern to many.

### **2.5.12 Issues to Address**

#### **2.5.12.1**

- There is an urgent need to develop separate and safe bike lanes within Town, to supplement the off-road trails (which now provide adequate facilities).
- The Town should work with the NH DOT to establish wider bikeways along State Route 49.

### **2.5.13 Existing Parking**

**2.5.13.1** There are currently no publicly owned parking facilities in the Town. The Waterville Company, Inc. and private sector operators of Inns, Condominium Associations, and of the Town Square and Ski Resort provide off-street parking.

### **2.5.14 Issues to Address**

#### **2.5.14.1**

- During peak tourist season there sometimes exists a lack of adequate parking in the Town square area. The future plan should evaluate the possibility of establishing additional parking in other locations within the Town that can be served adequately by the WVTA.
- Another question to be addressed is that of ownership. Should the Town build and maintain new, strategically located parking areas. Or, should the private sector be the prime developer? (To be discussed.)

### **2.5.15 Connections to Modes Outside WV**

### **2.5.16 Existing Highways**

**2.5.16.1** The relative proximity to two major Interstate highways results in automobile transportation being the predominant mode of travel in the North Country. Interstate 93 (accessing the Boston Metropolitan area), Interstate 91 (accessing the Montreal, Springfield and Hartford Metropolitan areas), and Interstate 89 connect the Town to major metropolitan areas. NH Route 49 serves as the main connector for the Town to these major Interstate highways. (The only other access is the seasonal availability of

Tripoli Rd. to Lincoln.)

**2.5.17 Existing Air Transportation**

**2.5.17.1** Privately owned, public airports closest to Waterville Valley are the Plymouth Municipal Airport in Plymouth, Lake Region Airport in Wolfboro; the Newfound Valley Airport in Bristol; and the Moultonboro Airport in Moultonboro. The Manchester Airport (MHT) provides extensive commercial service to the US and the world. In addition, Helicopter access is available for medical evacuations.

**2.5.18 Existing Passenger Rail**

**2.5.18.1** In White River Junction Vermont, Amtrak connects passenger rail service to Boston, N.Y. and Montreal, Canada. In the year 2001 Amtrak also launched passenger rail service through eastern NH between Portland, ME and Boston.

**2.5.19 Existing Motor Carrier Service**

**2.5.19.1** There are many inter-and intrastate trucking firms serving Waterville Valley. Many have daily schedules that afford immediate service. Federal Express, Airborne Express and United Parcel Service also serve Waterville Valley on demand. Those services offer next day package delivery.

**2.5.20 Existing Intercity Bus Service**

**2.5.20.1** Waterville Valley is serviced by Concord Trailways bus service in Plymouth. There are trips daily going south to Concord, NH and Boston, MA; and one going north to Colebrook. Additional service on Friday and Saturday is offered during the Plymouth State University academic year. Bus service is also available from Littleton, provided by both Concord Trailways and Vermont Transit to Portland Maine, Burlington Vt. and Montreal Quebec.

**2.5.21 Existing Taxi Service**

**2.5.21.1** There are no regular taxi services available in Waterville Valley at this time. The closest taxi service is out of Plymouth, which is available on call. Taxi services are also available at major airports.

**2.5.22 Transportation Gaps and Needs to be Filled**

**2.5.22.1** An acceptable level of transportation service currently exists within the Town. However, as we look 20 years into the future we need to consider a number of issues that must be addressed in planning for future transportation system improvements. These include:

- A growing permanent population with the likely demographic shift towards a population possibly desiring increased public transportation services.
- An inevitable deterioration of existing facilities, requiring continuing maintenance and possibly extensive reconstruction.
- The need to establish a short range and long range Capital Improvement Program to properly address maintenance and capital needs.
- Meeting the objective of safely separating people, bicycles and vehicles in order to establish a “pedestrian friendly” village.
- Maintaining Waterville Valley’s unique and appealing identity.
- Enhancing the economic viability of the community.

**2.5.22.2** As such, the following future “Transportation Gaps and Needs” are summarized. This is followed by a set of recommendations on developing future actions to fill those needs.

### **2.5.23 Highways and Streets Needs**

#### **2.5.23.1**

- Continue the clearly defined Town Policy that accepts as a primary responsibility the provision of integrated highway access to all public and private property.
- Similarly, continue the clearly defined Town Policy that provides continuous maintenance and upgrades of all local highways and streets.
- Establish clear Town ownership of the local street system.
- Establish design standards for new developments and clear procedures for transferring ownership from private developers to the Town.
- Collect and maintain data for all modes of transportation, including safety data, and use that data to establish and maintain a more detailed Town Highway Plan.
- Establish a comprehensive “traffic calming” plan as part of the detailed highway plan.
- Improve signing to be “user friendly”, and lighting that meets the Town’s lighting ordinances to enhance highway safety.
- Strictly enforce speed limits, without adversely affecting the quality atmosphere of the Town.

- As new highway construction and major maintenance is planned, incorporate conduits for cable and fiber optics.

## **2.5.24 Public Transit Needs**

**2.5.24.1** The previously referred “Waterville Valley Transit Plan” (Nov. 2000) resulted in a detailed description of the system and a set of recommendations for short-term and longer-term improvements.

**2.5.24.2** The short-term recommendations included:

- Develop identity for the WVTA with a Logo, website and promotional materials.

The status is as follows:

- Finished: Logo
- To Do: Create a website to provide information on bus schedules, ridesharing opportunities and other Town-wide information and expand promotional materials.
- Provide Bus shelters at key locations this has not been accomplished, and should be considered.
- Establish an Automated Vehicle Location (AVL) system to assist in scheduling. This has not been accomplished, but should be considered.
- Consider a “call-in-service” for locations that do not have a significant or continuing demand. This type of ‘on-call-demand” service does exist on a limited basis, but it should be analyzed for effectiveness.

**2.5.24.3** The longer-term recommendations looking at a ten-year horizon are suggested for consideration:

- Establish WVTA as a “Rural Transit Provider,” a status to possibly allow the Town to become eligible for Federal funds.
- Establish bus connections to Plymouth, Concord and Manchester Airport.

## **2.5.25 Pedestrian Needs**

**2.5.25.1** Establishing safer and more extensive facilities to enhance the safety of Pedestrian travel is one of the critical needs of the Town. This need is directly related to the vision of establishing a “Pedestrian Friendly community”. As such the objective of the plan is to provide:

Town of Waterville Valley, NH 03215  
Master Plan

- Wider, more extensive and integrated sidewalks throughout the Town.
- Adequate lighting in all pedestrian areas.
- More extensive and visible pedestrian crosswalks.
- Handicapped accessible sidewalks.
- Adopting the principles which include the following concepts (excerpts from the Portland, ME Master Plan).
- The Pedestrian environment should be safe.
- The Pedestrian network should be accessible to all.
- The Pedestrian network should connect to places where people want to go.
- The Pedestrian environment should be easy to use.
- The Pedestrian environment should provide good places to go.
- The Pedestrian environment should be used for many things.
- Pedestrian improvements should be economical.

## **2.5.26 Bicycle Needs**

**2.5.26.1** Similar to the need for establishing separate pedestrian ways is the need to establish separate and safe bicycle facilities within the Town. This should be done to minimize interference with vehicles and pedestrians. Those needs include:

- Separate paved bikeways of adequate width.
- Separately marked and adequately signed bikeways on existing streets and highways.
- The development of local design standards for bikeways
- The preparation and continuing update of a bikeway map for within the Town and outside the Town.

## **2.5.27 Parking Needs**

**2.5.27.1** Data should be collected at all parking sites for the four seasons in order to obtain a better understanding of the needs and corresponding “gaps”. Then, a coordinated Parking Master Plan can be established, with clear responsibilities for maintenance.

## **2.5.28 Connections to Modes Outside the Town**

**2.5.28.1** The Town’s representative to the North Country Council Transportation Committee coordinates with the State DOT and the North Country Council. The purpose of this interaction is to develop plans, programs and possible State and Federal funding to assist Waterville Valley in meeting its objectives.

## **2.5.29 Developing the Transportation Plan, Projects and Priorities to Fill the Gaps**

**2.5.29.1** During the year 2004, the Waterville Valley Transportation Committee developed several drafts of this document, in concert with all Town Departments. A draft was then submitted to the Planning Board and to the Selectmen. Based upon recommendations and discussions by the Planning Board and the Selectmen, a short-term plan for “Traffic Calming” was presented to the Town Meeting for approval on March 9, 2004. The Town Meeting approved the short-term plan for Traffic Calming at that time. The concept of Traffic Calming was also considered and endorsed by citizens at two public meetings within the context of the overall Master Plan update. The Planning Board conducted those meetings on May 29 and July 3, 2004.

**2.5.29.2** Further discussion with Town officials and the Planning Board have resulted in the formulation of the Transportation Plan shown in Figures 2 and 3:

Figure 2: Vehicle Speed Reduction Plan

Figure 3: Off Road Bicycle Routes – Conceptual Plan.

## **2.5.30 The Vehicle Speed Reduction Plan**

**2.5.30.1** The problem being addressed by this plan is the fact that automobiles and trucks traveling on Valley Road often drive at excessive speeds. Although the posted speed limit is 30 mph, vehicles have been clocked at speeds up to double that limit. There have been no reported accidents but there is concern for the safety of pedestrians and vehicles.

**2.5.30.2** Therefore, the Transportation Plan recommends using accepted Traffic Calming methods as a pro-active action to avoid accidents involving pedestrians and vehicles.

**2.5.30.3** The concept of Traffic Calming is used throughout the US and the world as an important traffic safety strategy. Its purpose is to seek harmony between vehicles and people. It provides a combination of aesthetically pleasing physical measures to reduce negative effects of motor vehicle use, alter driver behavior and improve conditions for non-motorized street uses. Figure 2 provides an illustration of a three-phased program of Traffic Calming that will begin on 2005.

## **2.5.31 Off Road Bicycle Routes**

**2.5.31.1** Figure 3 provides a conceptual drawing for this part of the Transportation Plan. It envisions an off-road network that separates vehicles from pedestrians and bicycles. It will provide safe, connected and aesthetically pleasing off-road facilities that are accessible for all uses in both the winter and all other seasons. These trails will also be coordinated with the Town's Fitness Trail. Its major features will include:

- Paved facilities, maps and signage to show routings and degrees of difficulty.
- Paving will be with materials that will not adversely affect the cross-country ski usage.
- Dual use for cross-country skiing in the winter, and bicycles and pedestrians in the spring, summer and fall.
- Circulation and connections internally at the Town Square and the Inns.
- Access to more advance routes and trails outside the Town Square.
- Access to a widened highway shoulder on Valley Road.
- As part of this plan the Town will also request the NH DOT to add an important improvement to its long-range plan for State Route 49. The request will be to widen the paved shoulders to 8 feet in both directions from Tripoli Road southward to Thornton and Campton.

## **2.5.32 Program Costs**

**2.5.32.1** The capital and operating costs for the highway and bicycle programs will be developed as part of the Town's long range Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Those costs will be updated yearly.

## **2.5.33 Appendix**

### **2.5.33.1 References**

- Rules, Regulations and Specifications of the Highway Department, Town of WV, May 1, 1992
- Waterville Valley Transit Plan, November 2000, prepared by Resource Systems Group and SNO Engineering

### **2.5.33.2 Tables**

- Street mileage by highway classification.

## **2.6 Chapter 6 – Conservation & Preservation**

### **2.6.1 Introduction**

**2.6.1.1** Waterville Valley is a unique place, a Town in a pristine natural setting, bisected by clear streams, and surrounded by forested mountains. It is the vision of the Town of Waterville Valley to insure that the quality of the Valley and the natural resources within it are maintained into the future. Increasing population, housing and the accompanying services required to support it will strain the preservation of these natural resources. Some common sense plans to ensure that Waterville Valley maintains its unique “sense of place” and that the forest, recreational facilities, residences and commercial facilities be integrated through natural landscaping as one are proposed. The natural resources includes:

- Habitat for both plants and animals
- Water
- Soils
- Historic sites, Scenic, and Archaeological

### **2.6.2 Conservation & Preservation Objectives**

**2.6.2.1** While there are no major environmental problems in Waterville Valley today, the environment of the Valley needs to be protected. Towards that end we have established the following objectives:

**2.6.2.2** To maintain the biodiversity of plants and animals within and adjacent to the Town by:

- Reestablishing river and stream green corridors that support a diversity of plant and animal life.
- Preserving all existing wetlands.
- Minimizing fragmentation of remaining forested areas.
- Minimizing soil erosion.
- Re-establish the Mad River to a pre-logging state to allow for a more natural trout habitat.

**2.6.2.3** To maintain the quality of groundwater, streams and rivers by:

- Inspecting and certifying existing septic systems on a periodic basis.

- Monitoring drinking water quality.
- Reduce the use of salt on Town roads and insure safe storage of road salts.
- Work to educate businesses and residents to use low phosphate, slow release nitrogen fertilizer and to not to use pesticides on lawns.
- Completing Phase II & III of the Towns Water/Sewer Project.
- Encourage connection of high risk homes to the Towns water/sewer lines.

**2.6.2.4** To keep Waterville Valley as a beautiful forested natural setting:

- A minimum of 20% of all lots to be kept in their natural forest state, or if construction makes this impossible, replanted with native species.
- Thirty percent of new planted materials to be native species.
- Work with the forest service to manage the visual / erosion impact of forest harvesting.
- Maintain forested greenways along paths, hiking trails, cross country ski trails throughout the Town.

**2.6.2.5** To identify and protect historic, archaeological and scenic resources:

- Work with the USFS to maintain scenic outlooks and trails in forest areas close to Town.
- Identify (on maps) camps from the lumbering period.
- Working with the historical society to develop a walking map and metal historical markers identifying sites of historic interest and relics from early Waterville Valley days.

**2.6.2.6** To establish a Town wide recycling program.

**2.6.3** Existing Conditions

**2.6.4** Soils

**2.6.4.1** Soils listed for Waterville Valley in the USDA soil survey of Grafton County, NH include Colton, Monadnock, Herman, Kingman, Croghan, Becket and Rumney. The soils are described as sand and gravel and very permeable. The soils are generally considered poor at filtering pollutants and are easily eroded. They are shallow and subject to landslides and erosion. Evidence of the shallow soils, with landslides can be seen along several properties

on the East side of the Mad River. Erosion and sedimentation of soils can be seen on the high banks of West Branch Road, West of the Mad River.

## **2.6.5 Issues to Address**

### **2.6.5.1**

- The soils are not considered suitable for onsite sewage disposal systems (septic systems).
- There is a significant hazard of ground water pollution.
- Droughtiness limits the establishment of lawns and landscaping.
- The area is susceptible to erosion and sedimentation during flooding. During construction extensive erosion control measures are needed.

## **2.6.6 Surface Waters**

**2.6.6.1** Several four thousand foot high mountains surround Waterville Valley with narrow backed ridges connecting them. These mountains are thickly forested and capture enough moisture from passing storms to feed a multitude of rivers and streams. These rivers and streams along with ponds and wetlands constitute Waterville Valley's natural surface water. The wetlands throughout the Town serve many purposes; they hold excess water and release it slowly into surface and ground water, they filter pollutants and they provide for both plant and animal habitats. Acid rain is still a significant problem as confirmed by research from Hubbard Brook experimental forest in Thornton, NH. Acid deposition impairs the water quality of rivers and streams in three important ways; lowering pH levels, decreasing acid-neutralizing capacity and increasing aluminum concentrations.

## **2.6.7 Issues to Address**

### **2.6.7.1**

- Cutting the forests as the Town grows increases the flow of surface water bringing road salts, fertilizers, sediments and pollutants into the rivers.
- Development of forested areas with new roads and homes are filling in the wetlands.
- Throughout the winter salt is spread on Town roads, adding chloride to surface waters.
- New construction brings new lawns. These lawns are fertilized with high nitrogen and phosphates, which also run into our

Town of Waterville Valley, NH 03215

Master Plan

surface water.

- Future construction of ponds and retention basins on the Valley floor need to be designed to prevent silting.

## **2.6.8 Ground Water**

**2.6.8.1** Ground water, starting as rain and snowmelt seeps, by gravity, from the surface down into the soil, sand, gravel and rock. This ground water feeds an aquifer that is Waterville Valley's only water supply source. The quality of our drinking water is good; however the potential for problems exists in a few areas.

## **2.6.9 Issues to Address**

### **2.6.9.1**

- The third most common source of well contamination is from the storage and use of road salt. Waterville Valley has fixed the problem of storage but continues to use a mix of salt and sand on West Branch Rd. and Boulder Way. All other Town roads use straight salt.
- Seventy five percent of Waterville Valley households are on Town sewers. The North end of the Valley is the watershed for the Towns drinking wells. Plans have been funded by the Town to complete construction of the water/sewer lines to allow access to the remaining homes under risk.
- The aquifer is composed of soil, subsoil, sand gravel and other unconsolidated material that lies on top of bedrock. The properties of water movement in the aquifer, which makes it valuable as a water supply, make it easy for pollutants released to the aquifer to spread rapidly. As the population grows the potential for ground water pollution grows.
- Uncontrolled use of pesticides and fertilizers by businesses, the golf course and private homeowners.

## **2.6.10 Habitat for Plants and Animals**

**2.6.10.1** Waterville Valley developed as a Town in the forest and many of its residents moved here attracted to its natural setting and scenery. The ecosystem of the Town in which we live includes the people, animals, and plants. What we do to diminish any of these, effects everyone. The viability of the Town, Waterville Valley Ski Resort and forest are interdependent.

## **2.6.11 Issues to Address**

### **2.6.11.1**

- Along our rivers, where houses have been built, homeowners have removed natural vegetation buffers along the water's edge. These buffers hold soil, absorb pollution and provide wildlife habitat. Along the Mad River, homeowners should comply with the NH Comprehensive Shoreline Protection Act.
- In developing large tracts of land and in building new houses much of the natural trees and vegetation is being removed. New developments in Town haven't replanted trees and shrubs as buffers between buildings and roads as earlier developments have.
- This destruction of natural landscape has affected wildlife species that need a contiguous habitat. Development creates barriers between necessary habitats hampering wildlife's efforts to survive. Future developments should include Greenways to connect them to different forest habitats.
- Development fills wetlands. Ninety species of mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians in New Hampshire use wetlands during some stage of their lifecycle. Fifty species prefer or require wetlands for breeding or feeding habitats.
- High concentrations of aluminum and increased acidity have reduced species diversity and the abundance of aquatic life. Fish have received the most attention. But entire food webs are negatively affected.
- The Town is surrounded by 42,300 acres of forest that is managed and preserved for timber harvesting, and recreational purposes. Very little contact exists between the USFS and the Town to discuss how to jointly preserve the unique environment of the valley.
- New homeowners are encouraged to plant with native trees and shrubs, which are needed by birds and mammals for food and shelter.

### **2.6.12 Scenic, historic and archeological resources**

**2.6.12.1** The Town of Waterville has a rich history as a recreational and lumbering community.

### **2.6.13 Issues to Address**

#### **2.6.13.1**

- Several scenic overlooks on nearby forest service land have grown in.
- Locations near Town, on NFS land where lumber camps were

Town of Waterville Valley, NH 03215

Master Plan

located are being lost to memory. Old dam sites are not always identified on local hiking maps.

- Early settlement of Waterville Valley as outlined in both the Goodrich and Bean books is being lost to the present populations' memory.

#### **2.6.14 Priorities for Implementation**

#### **2.6.15 Short-Term Water Plans:**

##### **2.6.15.1**

- Continue issuing water quality reports and educational material to property owners.
- Protect wellhead watersheds by carefully monitoring private septic systems and periodically requiring homeowners to show proof that their systems are in good working order.
- Stop the use of road salts, pesticides, and chemicals on all roads, public and private property in the wellhead watershed areas.
- Educate everyone on the benefits of low phosphate, slow release nitrogen fertilizers and natural pest control.
- Monitor underground storage tanks for leaks.
- Establish zoning rules that for new construction all water runoff generated on building lots from roofs, driveways etc. be contained on the property by use of drywells, berms, and rain gardens.

#### **2.6.16 Long-Term Water Plans:**

##### **2.6.16.1**

- Prepare a long-term plan to connect all existing septic systems to the Town sewers.
- Prepare for the possibility of removing radon from our water supply.
- In 2005 when all digital mapping of the Town is complete, hire a qualified hydrologist to map all wetlands in Town.

#### **2.6.17 Short-Term Animal and Wetland Protection Plans:**

##### **2.6.17.1**

- Protect wetlands with a wetland ordinance establishing a reasonable buffer between all buildings and wetlands.
- Allow the Conservation Commission by ordinance to mark with

metal markers all wetlands within the Town boundaries (both private and public property)

- The Conservation Commission working with the Curious George Cottage to prepare educational material on the necessity of preserving wetlands. Distribute the material with the tax bills and building permits.
- Maintain sufficient woodland buffer along the Mad, West Branch and Snows Brook Rivers. The purpose of the buffer is to protect the quality of public waters by minimizing erosion and stabilizing soils, preventing siltation and turbidity, preventing excess nutrients and chemical pollution and maintaining natural water temperatures. Maintaining a healthy tree canopy and shrub under story will preserve fish and wildlife habitats.

### **2.6.18 Long-Term Animal and Wetland Protection Plans:**

#### **2.6.18.1**

- The Town should bear in mind the long-term animal and wetland protection programs.

### **2.6.19 Short-Term Plans to Preserve Waterville Valley's Woodland Character:**

#### **2.6.19.1**

- Hold workshops with the county forester and the forest service to develop a comprehensive plan to preserve the scenic beauty of Waterville Valley. Educate the public to the need for forest cutting, and preparing the Town when those cuts take place.
- Appoint a liaison to represent Town concerns to the forest service when the NFS implements and actions or changes to the forest Master Plan.
- Hold information sessions for individuals and condo associations to teach them the benefits of keeping property wooded and buffered.
- Provide lists of native plant material as part of the building permit application. By ordinance require that future landscaping contain 30% of native plant material.

### **2.6.20 Long-Term Plans to Preserve Waterville Valley's Woodland Character:**

#### **2.6.20.1**

- Grant “concessions” to developers who maintain existing  
Town of Waterville Valley, NH 03215  
Master Plan

habitats.

- Where appropriate purchase private recreation lands to remain undeveloped.

### **2.6.21 Short-Term Plans to Preserve Scenic, Historic and Archeological Resources:**

#### **2.6.21.1**

- Create a new historic zone for Waterville sites existing in the National Forest. Work to ensure these sites will be marked, preserved with forest harvesting prohibited. The Town believes that historic sites should be preserved and maintained. The first step should be the identification of sites within both the Towns boundaries, followed by actions necessary to preserve them.

### **2.6.22 Conclusion**

**2.6.22.1** For Waterville to continue into the future as a special place, the words of Nathaniel L. Goodrich written in 1952 in his book – The Waterville Valley, must never be forgotten:

**2.6.22.2** “In a world of change and upheaval, in times when so many shift from place to place till they have no roots anywhere, Waterville has come to seem one spot which is home to them, is changeless. Superficially it changes, as all things must, but basically it remains the same; mountains, forest, peace; old friends, welcoming inn with familiar ways. It comes down to this: Waterville is continuance.”