

## Chapter 4: Serving the Community



### A. Local Government

After existing as separate governments for over 100 years, the Town and Village of Stowe merged in 1996 after receiving voter approval. As a result, the Village no longer exists as a separately incorporated legal or geographic entity.

The Town of Stowe provides a full range of municipal services including police and rescue services, volunteer fire services, road maintenance, comprehensive recreation services, library services, and water and sanitary services (for portions of the town).

In 2007, the town switched from a Town Administrator to a Town Manager form of government. The Town Manager is appointed by the elected, five-member Selectboard and is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the town, preparing the annual budget and hiring and supervising town staff. Other elected positions include:

- Town moderator;
- Town clerk/treasurer;
- Town constable;
- Three listers;
- Three auditors,
- Five school directors; and
- Local justices of the peace.

Town boards appointed by the Selectboard include:

- Planning Commission (7 members);
- Development Review Board (7 members);
- Conservation Commission (7 members);
- Recreation Commission (5 members);
- Historic Preservation Commission (7 members);
- Cemetery Commission (5 members);
- Library Trustees (7 members); and
- Stowe Electric Utility Commission (3 members).

The increasing responsibilities and complexities of local government also have required the hiring of qualified staff to help manage the daily affairs of the town. Staffing levels have increased significantly since the 1980s, and now include 66 full and part-time employees, not including school employees. As such, town government is a significant local employer.

#### **Financing Town Government**

Stowe has long benefited from a relatively strong and stable local tax base, supported by growth in the grand list, and a history of public and private investment in the community. The town's grand list generally increases on an average of 2-3% each year. In 2008, the Town's equalized municipal grand list was \$2,131,760,000, which ranked it third in the state of Vermont after Burlington and South Burlington. The Town's total budget for FY09 was \$9,694,836. For FY10, the Town's total budget increased by 3.8% to \$10,067,136.

<b>County</b>	<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Equalized Municipal Property Value</b>	<b>2007 Population</b>
Chittenden	Burlington	3,603,651,000	38,531
Chittenden	South Burlington	2,575,069,000	17,445
<b>Lamoille</b>	<b>Stowe</b>	<b>2,131,760,000</b>	<b>4,886</b>
Chittenden	Colchester	1,848,177,000	17,207
Chittenden	Williston	1,688,884,000	8,371
Windsor	Ludlow	1,571,591,000	2,654
Windsor	Hartford	1,436,212,000	10,700
Bennington	Manchester	1,289,792,000	4,282
Chittenden	Shelburne	1,263,939,000	7,143
Chittenden	Essex Town	1,227,076,000	19,465
Windham	Brattleboro	1,118,387,000	11,590
Rutland	Rutland City	1,088,226,000	16,826
Windham	Dover	1,003,522,000	1,437
Windham	Stratton	985,855,000	167
Chittenden	Essex Jct.	978,834,000	19,465
Chittenden	Milton	950,898,000	10,539

Bennington	Bennington	925,127,000	15,155
Rutland	Killington	922,210,000	1,138
Bennington	Winhall	874,451,000	777
Windsor	Woodstock	867,231,000	3,143

Because of the combination of its high grand list, low number of students and relatively high cost per pupil, Stowe contributes the largest net payment to state education fund of any municipality in Vermont. The table below shows the top ten municipalities in the state contributing to the education fund.

<b>2009 Net Payments to Education Fund Top Ten Largest Amounts</b>				
<b>Town Name</b>	<b>Net Payments</b>	<b>% Total Net Payments</b>	<b>Equalized Education Grand List (EEGL)</b>	<b>% Statewide EEGL</b>
<b>Stowe</b>	<b>\$20,425,398</b>	<b>13.5%</b>	<b>23,982,140</b>	<b>3.0%</b>
Ludlow	\$16,887,764	11.2%	16,886,745	2.1%
Stratton	12,853,329	8.5%	10,019,889	1.2%
Dover	\$11,231,409	7.4%	10,488,979	1.3%
Killington	\$10,704,810	7.1%	10,162,928	1.3%
Winhall	\$10,115,357	6.7%	854,9034	1.1%
Warren	\$6,658,972	4.4%	747,4805	0.9%
Manchester	\$6,542,674	4.3%	1,341,5412	1.7%
Woodstock	\$5,517,042	3.7%	9,037,714	1.1%
Dorset	\$5,142,114	3.4%	7,597,502	0.9%

Net payments include funds paid to towns for "Homestead Tax Adjustments" (formerly prebates and rebates to individuals). As a result, total payments to the Education Fund by towns are reduced by this amount resulting in the "Net Payment". The percent of total net payments indicates the percent that town contributed towards the sum of all net education payments statewide. The EEGL includes all property values included on the education grand list. Certain properties are included on the municipal grand list but are exempt from inclusion on the education grand list. The percent state EEGL indicates what percentage that town's education grand list is of the total statewide grand list. For example, Stowe contributes 13.5% of the total education payments, but is only 3.0% of the total statewide education grand list.

Stowe had a common level of appraisal ratio in FY 2009 of .8913. The following are the FY 2008 property tax rates:

<b>FY2008 Property Tax Rates (p/\$100)</b>	
Municipal tax rate	0.3309
Education tax rate for homesteads	1.3749
Education tax rate for non-residential	1.4085

The large yearly payment to the state education fund has an adverse effect on Stowe's property owner's willingness to fund all but essential operations and capital improvements. Feeling that the town's large state education payment places an unfair burden on the community, many residents feel less inclined to support local spending that may otherwise be acceptable. Property values over the past several years have risen much faster than personal income, making it increasingly more difficult for Stowe homeowners to afford their properties. In 2008, property values declined but the property tax still increased by 10%. The Town is a member of the Vermont Coalition of Municipalities, an organization formed to explore other options to the current system of financing education created by Act 60 and Act 68.

With the exception of larger projects funded through bonding, Stowe's capital expenditures have ranged between \$250,000 and \$1 million per year since 1990, averaging approximately \$500,000. Capital projects have consisted mainly of regular road reconstruction and equipment replacement. In 2005, the town adopted its first 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan. In 2008, the town voted to establish an equipment reserve fund, so that each new piece of equipment would not have to be voted on separately at Town Meeting.

At the March 2006 Annual Town Meeting, the town adopted a 1% local options tax on rooms and meals. This generates approximately \$500,000 per year in revenue that is used for capital projects to benefit both residents and visitors. Also in 2006, the town hired a consultant to develop an impact fee study to provide information on how the town might adopt impact fees to offset the costs of new development on the Town's infrastructure. The study provided a methodology by which impact fees could be levied in accordance with state statute. Thus far, the Town has not adopted impact fees, but it is an ongoing conversation within the community.

**Town Administrative Facilities and Services**

Most of the administrative functions of town government are housed in the town offices in the Akeley Memorial Building on Main Street. This historic building was constructed in 1902 as a soldier's memorial, and in the past has housed the post office, a jail, the Union Bank, and the Stowe Free Library.

Recent capital improvements included the 1992 installation of a new heating system, at a cost of \$120,000; and in 1994, \$160,000 in building renovations to improve accessibility, including the installation of an elevator. A space use study was commissioned in 2006 to identify future building needs including additional office and vault space. The FY10 capital budget included \$17,000 for repairs to the cupola and exterior painting.

Since 1986 the Selectboard's office has had at least two full-time staff, including the Town Manager. All other administrative departments, except for the Cemetery Commission, now have at least one full-time staff person.

## **B. Education**

The public education of local children has been and remains a high priority for Stowe residents. Stowe's first public school, a log structure located in the Upper Village, was built in 1803. One-room neighborhood schools continued to be built to serve a growing school population, generally within walking distance of the children they served. By 1882 there were 19 schools, overseen by 19 independent school districts, scattered throughout town. This district system was abolished in 1893 with the consolidation of neighborhood districts into a single town-wide district. It was not until 1954, however, with the construction of the Stowe Elementary School in Stowe Village, that the last of the town's one-room schools was closed. The elementary school has since been updated and renovated, last in 1992, to meet the needs of the community and state educational standards.

Secondary education took longer to arrive in Stowe. A tuition high school was established by the Village School District in 1863, and took in students from other districts and surrounding communities. Following local district consolidation, the Stowe High School was reorganized to provide publicly supported secondary education, and graduated its first class in 1901. Both high schools were located in the Village District's Village School, built in 1861, which now houses the Helen Day Art Center and Stowe Library. The present Stowe High School was built on the Barrows Road in 1973, and a middle school wing was added in 1992. A regret expressed in town planning forums was the siting of this important community facility outside of Stowe Village. It is not within easy walking distance of the village, and remains physically unconnected to the town's community center.

The Stowe School District provides Kindergarten through High School education for 651 students. The elementary education enrollment has dropped by almost 11% in the last 9 years, while the middle/high school enrollment has increased by 2.5%. An overall drop of 21 students in the last 9 years, or a 3.1% decrease, is less than the statewide enrollment decline of 10.5%.

Average student/teacher ratios in 2007 were 16.44 for elementary education, 19.56 for middle school education, and 14.82 for high school education. Of the 67 teachers employed in 2007, 73% had at least a Master's Degree and 67% had over 10 years of teaching experience.

The 2007 high school graduation rate of 95.74% exceeds the statewide rate of 91.83%. Eighty-eight percent of the students plan to attend two- or four-year colleges compared to a statewide rate of 71%.

Stowe is a member of Lamoille South Supervisory Union (with Elmore and Morristown), which provides of human resources, personnel and administrative services to the local school district. These include fiscal management, grant application and administration, data management, and instructional, curriculum, and assessment support. Student-based services (e.g., speech language pathology and essential early education programs) are paid for based on the number of days/weeks the services are provided locally.

A private school opportunity in the immediate area for students in grade kindergarten through eight is at the Bishop Marshall Catholic School in Morrisville. Town residents have access to technical programs at the Green Mountain Technical and Career Center (formerly called the Lamoille Area Vocational Center) in Hyde Park, and other higher education programs within commuting distance – including but not limited to the University of Vermont in Burlington, Johnson State College, and Community College of Vermont (CCV) programs in Morrisville and Waterbury. CCV is an important center for affordable continuing and adult education.

<b>Community Services Supported By the Town of Stowe Fiscal Year 2010</b>	
Central VT Adult Education	\$ 3,500
Central VT Community Action	\$ 500
Central VT Council on Aging	\$ 3,000
Clarina Howard Nichols Center	\$ 2,500
Green-Up Day	\$ 200
LCNRCD	\$ 100
Lamoille Economic Dev Corp	\$ 3,000
Lamoille Home Health Assoc.	\$ 13,017
Lamoille Housing Partnership	\$ 250
Lamoille Family Center	\$ 3,000
Lamoille Food Share	\$ 3,000
LC Court Diversion	\$ 1,250
LC Mental Health	\$ 5,000
Meals on Wheels (LENS)	\$ 2,000
Maple Leaf Farm	\$ 2,010
N Country Animal League	\$ 1,000
Northern VT RC&D	\$ 75
Rural Community Transit	\$ 2,200
Out & About	\$ 1,000
Retired Senior Volunteer Program	\$ 660
Stowe American Legion	\$ 350
Stowe Historical Society	\$ 3,000
Stowe Land Trust	\$ 6,000
Stowe Youth Baseball/Softball	\$ 2,000
VT Association for the Blind	\$ 500
VT Center for Independent Living	\$ 420
VT Children's Aid Society	\$ 500
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 60,032</b>

### C. Health and Human Services

The "public interest" served by local government traditionally has been defined as public health, safety and welfare. Providing for or protecting the general health and welfare of town residents was once the direct responsibility of the town and today remains the basis for many of the facilities, services and programs provided or supported by local government.

Stowe residents and visitors, including special needs populations, are now served by a growing network of regional health and human service organizations. These currently include fifteen town-supported, nonprofit service providers, which are listed in the table below along with the FY10 appropriations from the Town. Such organizations typically rely on a variety of funding sources and volunteer services to sustain their operations.

#### Health Care Services

Stowe has a relatively high number of dentists and physicians in private practice to serve the needs of the local population. As of 2008, Stowe had eight dentists, ten physicians, three chiropractors, five

physical therapist services, and three eye-care specialists. Several medical practices are jointly located in a care facility on the Mountain Road.

Home health care and hospice services are provided locally through Lamoille Home Health & Hospice- the largest single beneficiary of town appropriations.

Copley Hospital, a 50-bed medical facility located in Morrisville, is Stowe's principal, regional health care facility. Copley has recently seen an expansion in budget, programs, and staff to better serve the needs of the regional community. Patient visits, surgeries, hospital bed occupancies, and outpatient services have all increased dramatically in recent years. In response, the hospital has opened a new out-patient clinic, and established a working relationship with the Fletcher Allen Medical Center, Vermont's largest medical facility, to provide specialist services closer to home. Copley Hospital also recently purchased the Stowe Family Practice, and continues to provide financial assistance to several other subsidiaries, including the Manor Nursing Home in Morrisville, and Copley Woodlands in Stowe.

Mental health services are available through Lamoille County Mental Health Services, which works in collaboration with Copley Health Systems, and local schools. LCMHS offers a walk-in clinic for low-income residents; adult, children, family and outpatient programs; substance abuse programs, community rehabilitation and treatment programs; and development and emergency services. Stowe residents also have long supported the programs of Maple Leaf Farm, one of two licensed alcohol and drug rehabilitation centers in Vermont.

### **Senior Services**

Stowe's elderly are served by a number of organizations. The Central Vermont Council on Aging, based out of Morrisville, currently provides services to town residents that allow them to remain independent in their own homes. Federal, state and local funds are used to provide a variety of services for seniors - such as meal, transportation, advocacy, and volunteer services - either directly or through contracts with local groups and organizations.

The Council on Aging contracts with the Lamoille Elders Networking Service (LENS) to provide home meal delivery (Meals on Wheels). LENS also opened up the Stowe Senior Meal Site at the West Branch Apartments, in 1997. As previously noted, however, the long-term availability of this subsidized facility is in question, given that it may be converted to fair market housing at any time. Out & About, the Lamoille Area Adult Day Care Center, also provides in-home day care programs for frail and impaired elders with disabilities, as well as caregiver respite services.

There currently are no licensed residential care homes in Stowe. Copley Woodlands, a private retirement complex completed in 1998, offers some assisted living services for seniors. Three nursing homes also are located nearby in Morrisville and Waterbury. Copley Hospital is currently researching the feasibility of converting the Manor Nursing Home into a community care facility, and planning for an assisted living facility.

The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program for Central Vermont was formed as part of a nationwide network for people aged 55 and older who want to serve their communities through volunteer service. Several Stowe residents participate through volunteer service to local community groups and residents.

Given increased life expectancies and an aging population, the need for senior services and facilities is expected to grow in the future. It also appears, with the success of Copley Woodlands, that Stowe is becoming more attractive as a retirement community for active seniors. These demographic trends, and associated needs, may be evaluated more closely in the coming years with the availability of new census information.

### **Human Services**

Human services, including federal and state funded programs, are delivered through a number of regional service providers. Central Vermont Community Action, based in Morrisville, is the primary source of program assistance for the region's low income population. CVCA-managed programs include food and emergency fuel assistance; family, farmworker, and community support services; head start programs; housing and weatherization programs, and a business micro-loan program. Their focus is providing long-term support to families trying to get out of poverty, while offering short-term assistance to those in immediate need.

Lamoille Housing Partnership, discussed at more length in the housing section, is the area's primary provider of affordable housing and housing assistance. Formed in part as a result of the town's past concerns regarding the lack of affordable housing, LHP now receives a minimal amount of local financial support.

The Vermont Center for Independent Living, a statewide organization based in Montpelier, provides access to services for Stowe residents with significant disabilities in order that they may live more independently and participate in community life.

The Lamoille Family Center and the Vermont Children's Aid Society provide a wide range of programs for area families and children. The Family Center offers a number of parenting assistance and educational services- including home visits, workshops, playgroup and preschool programs, child care assistance, and mediation and shelter services. They also coordinate Lamoille County Friends, the area's big brother/big sister program. The Vermont Children's Aid Society is a statewide organization dating from 1919 that provides childcare, family and pregnancy counseling, and adoption programs.

The Clarina Howard Nichols Center is a nonprofit agency with the mission to end violence against women and their children. They provide shelter and support services to survivors of domestic and/or sexual assault, and offer preventive education outreach programs.

## **D. Public Safety**

For a community of its size, Stowe provides an excellent level of emergency services. Presently, emergency services include the Stowe Police Department, Stowe Volunteer Fire Department, Stowe Rescue Squad and Stowe Mountain Rescue. Facilities for each of the four providers, described below, are concentrated on South Main Street in Stowe Village. At the 2008 Town Meeting, voters approved a \$7.2 million bond to construct a new public safety facility that will house all of the emergency services at the same location. Construction is scheduled to begin in spring 2009.

### **Stowe Fire Department**

The Stowe Fire Department's duties include providing immediate response on a 24-hour basis, in addition to providing community education, including school programs during Fire Prevention Week. The department also participates in the with the Morrisville Fire Department and Waterbury Fire Department mutual aid groups to provide back up services for the neighboring communities. The department responded to approximately 200 calls in 2007.

The department has nearly 40 volunteer members. The Fire Chief, 1st and 2nd Assistant



Chiefs, two captains, and a training officer all receive annual stipends. Department personnel are paid for time on calls and training. Special training both in and out of state is provided for volunteers. The training facilities in Stowe are the former Vermont Department of Forest, Parks & Recreation shops in Nebraska Valley, now owned by the Town of Stowe.

As of 2009, the department had seven vehicles, including two tankers, a reel truck a ladder truck and two pumper trucks, all fully outfitted with radio systems. In fiscal year 2010, the Fire Department's budget was \$247,899.

### **Stowe Police Department**

In addition to serving the entire town, the Stowe Police Department provides back up services for neighboring communities. The department functions 24 hours a day from its headquarters located on South Main Street. Law enforcement functions include crime prevention; protection of life and property, recovery of stolen property, location of missing persons, traffic control and assisting at special events.

Police Department personnel include 14 full-time officers (including a Chief, Sergeant and Detective) and one full-time administrative assistant. Since 1993 there has been an officer assigned to a summer bike patrol of the Recreation Path. Currently that officer also serves as the Animal Control Officer.

In 2009, the department had 9 cruisers. The cruisers and the office are equipped with radios and all officers have portable radios. A radio tower was added in 1997. The office has appropriate operating equipment. In 2008 there were **5,366** calls. Of these 367 were related to major felonies, 412 were related to miscellaneous misdemeanors, and 384 were for accidents.

The Department has participated in recent years in the DARE drug education program, and has instituted both bicycle and ski registration programs. When arrests are made males are transported to St. Johnsbury and females to Burlington for incarceration. In fiscal year 2010, \$1,599,103 was budgeted for the Police Department, which is the largest municipal department budget.

#### **Emergency Medical Services**

Stowe Rescue Squad (SRS), chartered in 1975, is also located in the Public Safety Building Complex. It serves all incorporated areas in the Town of Stowe. SRS also maintains a mutual aid agreement with the neighboring towns of Morristown and Waterbury.

Duties include responding to all 911 medical and trauma calls and accompanying the Fire Department to fires. Calls are serviced to Copley Hospital in Morrisville 24 hours a day. A limited number of Stowe resident calls, or doctor ordered calls, involve transports to the Fletcher Allen Hospital in Burlington. The emergency phone system that serves the Ambulance District 4 includes Stowe, all of Lamoille County and parts of Caledonia and Orleans counties. In FY2008, the Rescue Squad responded to 706 calls, as compared to 591 calls in 2000. Of the 706 responses, 492 patients were transported to the hospital

In 2008, there were 36 active members, including 2 volunteer paramedics, 5 per diem paramedics, one paid part-time paramedic (36 hours per week) and one paid full-time Director who is also a paramedic. The Rescue Squad uses two fully outfitted vehicles, purchased in 1995 and 1999. Each ambulance is equipped with two-way radios, stretchers, defibrillators and necessary medical equipment and provisions.

In addition to emergency coverage, Stowe Rescue offers CPR and first aid courses open to all community members. In the spring and fall the SRS sponsors the American Red Cross Blood Drive, to give those in the community a convenient, local place to donate blood. Similar to the Fire Department, the annual budget for the Rescue Squad is a combination of Town general funds, fees for services and private fundraising. In FY2010, the town's contribution to the Rescue Squad was \$355,100.

### **Stowe Mountain Rescue**

Stowe's Mountain Rescue team consists of a maximum of 12 members. They are licensed by the Vermont Department of Health as an Advanced Life Support First Responder Agency, with SRS as the transporting rescue squad. The team is also an accredited member of the Mountain Rescue Association.

Team members are specialists in back country and high angle search and rescue operations, and respond to reports of injured and lost hikers, skiers, snowmobilers and other outdoor enthusiasts. They are also trained in water rescue. In 2008 the team responded to 24 incidents. Response times vary considerably, from an hour or less up to several days for some searches. Equipment includes two vehicles, a snowmobile with trailer and specialized technical rescue equipment. The team provides mutual aid assistance within the county at the request of the Lamoille County Sheriff's Department, and throughout Vermont at the request of the Vermont State Police.

### **Dispatch Services (E-911)**

All 911 calls are handled by the Lamoille County Sheriff's Department, which provides dispatch service for the police, fire and rescue departments. Dispatch services are subject to an annual agreement between the town and sheriff's department.

### **Emergency Management**

Stowe Emergency Management is responsible for writing and maintaining the town's emergency plan, which addresses preparation for and response to natural and man-made disasters. In 2000, the town received a grant to purchase and outfit a mobile emergency communications trailer that provides for enhanced on-scene communications during major emergencies.

## **E. Recreation**

Access to diverse, high-quality recreation opportunities helps to set Stowe apart from other communities of its size, and enhances the town's reputation as a full service resort community.

The Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for the maintenance and management of most of the town's recreation programs and facilities. Winter duties of the Department are focused on the operation of the Jackson Ice Arena and maintaining recreation path parking lots; summer duties include maintenance of the arena, the Recreation Path, various ballfields and the Mayo Farm Special Events Field. In addition, the department runs the summer youth recreation program. The Recreation Commission, a five-member board appointed by the Selectboard, is responsible for long range planning of the recreational facilities and programs. In 2005, the Commission hired a consultant to develop a Ten-Year Recreation Plan for the Town. The Commission prioritized the consultant's recommendations, which have been incorporated into Chapter 5 of this plan.

The Parks and Recreation Department has a staff of thirteen full and part-time employees, who administer the recreation programs and maintain the Town's recreation areas and buildings as well as its cemeteries. Department operations are supported by both tax dollars and user fees. Over 130 acres are kept mowed weekly.

The Town of Stowe's principle recreational facilities include:

**Memorial Park**

Memorial Park consists of two 60' and one 90' fields located adjacent to the Stowe Elementary School which are used by the school's baseball, softball and soccer teams; the Jackson Ice Arena; the Gale Recreation Center; playground equipment; tennis courts and basketball courts.

**Jackson Ice Arena**

Completed in 1974, the 26,400 square foot arena with a 500-seat capacity operates year round. From October-March, the Arena supports skating for the Stowe Youth Hockey, Inc., Stowe Skating Club and 13 adult hockey teams and provides public skating daily throughout the season. During the summer, it is host to special events such as "For Art's Sake" sponsored by the Helen Day Art Center, and the Rotary Club's Oktoberfest fundraising event. The arena is also used as a back up location for Stowe Performing Arts in the event of rain during their summer concert series. In 2005, Town voters approved a bond in the amount of \$2 million to go towards the complete renovation of the arena. Additional funds for the project are to be raised through private fundraising.

**The Gale Recreational Center**

The Gale Recreation Center is the headquarters for the summer recreation program. In addition to maintaining and operating recreation facilities, the Parks and Recreation Department manages an 8-week summer playground program. Approximately 140 children are involved in the games, arts and field program. The program is staffed by a full-time director and an assistant director, and up to 12 counselors who work 12-40 hours per week.

**Village Tennis and Basketball Courts**

Open to the public, there are two tennis courts and one basketball court. These courts are lighted and remain open from May through the end of October.

**Stowe Recreation Path**

A community-created greenway completed in 1989, the paved Recreation Path is 5.3 miles in length beginning in Stowe Village and ending at Brook Road and Topnotch Meadow. Funded through a variety of sources, the award winning Recreation Path provides a source of enjoyment for residents and visitors alike and is used for walking, biking, inline skating, jogging and cross country skiing.

Additional extensions of the Recreation Path have been discussed for years, although no specific plans have been developed to date. Potential extensions include:

- To the base of Mt. Mansfield at Stowe Mt. Resort;

- Across Mayo Farm to the Polo Fields; and
- Along Luce Hill Rd. and Barrows Rd. to the Stowe High School.

Such extensions would not only expand recreational opportunities, but would also support the town's land use and economic development goals and enhance the function of the Path as a transportation facility.

### **The Mayo Farm**

The Town-owned Mayo Farm is a 235-acre parcel of land, purchased in 1989, located in the center of Stowe. As stated in the deed, the town purchased the farm "primarily as open green space and will continue to use it primarily for agricultural purposes." The deed also indicates the purchase was for "conservation for public purposes" and for "recreation." The Farm is managed by the Town as open green space and is currently used for agriculture, ball fields and dispersed recreation, and community events.

In 2002, Town voters agreed to subject the Farm to a 25-year term conservation easement held by the Stowe Land Trust. The easement calls for development of a Management Plan for the property, which was prepared by the Conservation Commission and adopted by the Selectboard in 2006.

The conservation easement establishes a hierarchy of purposes that guide management and use of the Farm. The primary purpose is to "provide for and conserve open space values, non-commercial, dispersed recreational opportunities, and scenic resources". The secondary purpose is to "conserve agriculture, soil productivity, wildlife habitat, and public open space". The tertiary purpose is to provide dedicated "zones" that permit ball field recreation, community events, cemetery purposes, and possibly new municipal building(s).

A majority of the Farm remains in agricultural use. The easement permits only agricultural use on 135-acres or 59% of the Farm. Currently a local farmer leases the acreage. Farm operations are subject to Accepted Agricultural Practices as established by the Vermont Agency of Agriculture.

The Community Events Field consists of a 19-acre Main Events Field and two smaller adjacent fields for parking or other activities. The Events Fields are subject to a 1995 Act 250 Land Use Permit. The fields are adjacent to the West Branch of the Little River, and as such can be subject to wet conditions. The Town has tried to improve the drainage characteristics of the Events Field, but the presence of Class Three wetlands has made that task difficult.

The easement provides for a 35-acre Recreation Zone on the fields north and east of Weeks Hill Rd., where organized ball field activities are permitted. This is also the location of the Stowe Bike Park, a mountain bike skills park developed by the Stowe Mountain Bike Club.

Dispersed recreation is permitted on the entire Farm and is currently done in a manner that does not conflict with other uses. A Quiet Path was established in 1996 along the edge of agricultural and recreational fields for the purpose of providing a low-impact walking path along the West Branch. Additionally, the field adjacent to the cemetery is frequently used for various recreational purposes such as dog walking, as well as for agriculture.

As specified in the easement, a 2-acre zone surrounding the Mayo Farm homestead can be used for construction of municipal buildings, subject to approval of Town voters.

#### **Quiet Path**

The Quiet Path, located on Mayo Farm, was completed in 1996. It is approximately 5,200 feet long with a natural grass base. The Quiet Path was created for walkers and joggers as an alternative to the more heavily traveled Recreation Path. No bikes are allowed on the Quiet Path.

#### **Moscow Recreation Field**

Town of Stowe and Stowe Land Trust acquired the Moscow Recreation Field in 1996 through funds granted by the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board and private donations. Consisting of 4.5 acres, there are two 60' fields used by the school's softball and baseball teams as well as a canoe access to the Little River.

#### **Sterling Forest**

At over 1,500 acres, the town-owned Sterling Forest, offers extensive outdoor recreation opportunities for hikers, skiers, hunters, mountain bikers, snowmobilers (on designated trails) and other outdoor enthusiasts. Access and parking to the forest were improved in 1998, and current plans call for trail improvements including the creation new "Sterling Traverse" ridgeline trail. The Sterling Falls Gorge Natural Areas Trust distributes a map of the area free of charge as a community service.

The Trust also manages the adjacent Sterling Falls Gorge Interpretive Trail, which, is owned and managed by the Trust and open to the public on a year-round basis.

#### **Sunset Rock**

Purchased in 1999 with the assistance of the Stowe Land Trust, Vermont Land Trust, Vermont Housing & Conservation Fund and Freeman Foundation, Sunset Rock is a 23-acre parcel that serves as the scenic backdrop to Stowe Village. The property contains two scenic vistas, Sunset Rock itself and the Upper Overlook, which is handicap-accessible.

#### **Macutchan Forest**

The Macutchan Forest is a 60-acre town forest located above the Golden Eagle Resort. The Stowe Mountain Bike Club has developed and maintains a system of trails suitable for mountain biking.

## **F. Arts and Cultural Resources**

Since the founding of Stowe's first public library in 1829, town residents have actively supported local arts and culture. Local arts and culture have long contributed to Stowe's economy. Stowe's first winter carnival, held in 1923, brought over 2,000 spectators to town. Special events, now held on a nearly weekly basis throughout the year, have been critical to the success of Stowe's evolution as a four-season tourist economy. Residents and visitors benefit from the town's vibrant cultural scene. Cultural facilities and events are actively supported by the town, by local businesses and organizations, and by the volunteer efforts of many Stowe area residents.

The Akeley Memorial Building, built as a war memorial in 1902, was once the home of the Stowe Free Library (as reorganized in 1866). The second floor contained a ticket office, gentlemen's and ladies' coat rooms at either end of the corridor, an auditorium with space for 472 opera chairs, a stage with scenery designed by David Richards of Boston, and four dressing rooms. The second floor now houses, along with town office space, the Stowe Theatre Guild. Town-funded building improvements were made in the 1990s to accommodate Guild productions. In return, the Guild provided the main stage curtains, window drapes, comfortable seating for the audience, sound and lighting equipment, and the air conditioning system. Since its first season in 1995 in this historic space, the volunteer-based Guild has been producing four to five shows from summer to fall, which are attended by over 6,000 residents and visitors each year.

The former Stowe High School was renovated in 1981 to house the Helen Day Art Center and the Stowe Free Library. The Montanari Trust, which funded the building renovations, stipulated that space be made available to an arts organization. This encouraged the formation of the Helen Day Arts Center, a nonprofit membership organization that sponsors visual art exhibits and events and educational programs. Since 1982 Helen Day has presented over 100 art exhibitions to an average annual audience of 10,000, including over 6,000 visitors each year. The Center also sponsors an outdoor art exhibit, and a number of special events each year, including For Arts Sake! and A Taste of Stowe.

The town enlarged the library portion of the building in 1993-94, which doubled the space for the arts center above it. The Center then launched its own capital campaign to create additional gallery and studio space, which was completed in 1998. Over 200 businesses and individuals contributed to upgrading the new wing. In 1998 the Arts Center also began a new film program under the auspices of the Stowe Film Society.

The Stowe Free Library is a venerable local cultural institution with a long history. Established in 1866 as a successor to the town's first public library, which closed in 1849, the Stowe Free Library was the first library in the state to receive a town appropriation under the 1865 enabling legislation.

The Library provides public information, education, recreation, cultural, and Internet resources to the larger Stowe community. The demand for library materials and services

has grown significantly in recent years. Borrowing rates now exceed 100,000 checkouts annually and continue to increase. Nearly 140,000 people come through the doors a year, many of whom do not always borrow materials. They might do homework or research, read magazines and newspapers, use the Internet, meet tutors or attend programs. As of January 2009, there were approximately 5,500 registered borrowers.

The local collection is approaching 30,000 items, including books, audio books, DVDs, and periodicals, with thousands added each year. Many of the services the Library offers can be accessed at home through our online catalog, downloadable audio book program, and online resources for searching magazines, newspapers, and other sources. Library facilities include the Community Meeting Room, which is available for use by local groups.

The Library is overseen by a seven-member Board of Trustees, appointed by the Select Board, and currently has staff of six assisted by 25 volunteers. The Library's budget is a mix of endowment income, gifts and grants, and town tax-based support. Other organizations that promote local culture include Stowe Performing Arts, a community-supported nonprofit that has presented musical programs and outdoor concerts for over twenty-five years. Programs include the summer concert series performed in the Trapp Family meadow, the noon Music in May held at the Community Church, and the Gazebo concerts held in front of the Helen Day Art Center in August. These programs are made possible through community fundraising and Trapps' "Music in the Meadow" concert ticket sales.

The Stowe Historical Society was founded in 1956 to help record and maintain the town's cultural heritage. The Society maintains a small museum in the Akeley Building, as well as the Bloody Brook School, a restored 1825 one-room schoolhouse located next to the Helen Day Center. In 2007, Town voters approved \$100,000 to assist in relocating and restoring the former West Branch School house (more recently the St. John's Episcopal Church) for use by the Historical Society, at a location next the Bloody Brook School. The organization is currently supported by nominal membership dues, an annual appropriation from the town, and income from its publications.

Other town facilities also are made available for special events. These include the Jackson Arena, and the 35-acre Mayo Farm Community Events Field. The Moscow Recreation Fields are also available for small events.

Special events also are held at a number of privately owned outdoor venues throughout the community. The Town has a Special Events Ordinance to help manage the increased traffic, sanitary and public safety needs associated with public and large private events.

The promotion of arts and culture in Stowe, because of their importance to local and seasonal residents and the business community, has benefited over the years from strong public-private partnerships. It has been suggested that this relationship continue with the identification and evaluation of future cultural facility needs, which may include a centrally located center for the performing arts. Such a center, if feasible, could add

much to the civic, cultural and economic vitality of Stowe Village, and the larger Stowe community.

## **G. Cemeteries**

The Cemetery Commission oversees the management of the Town's cemeteries, while the Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for the maintenance. There are seven cemeteries in the Town of Stowe:

- Riverbank
- Old Yard
- West Branch
- Sterling Valley
- Luce Hill Road (2)
- Topnotch field

A small shed located at the Old Yard Cemetery is used to store equipment as well as two antique hearses. The Commission acquired an additional five acres of land to expand the Riverbank Cemetery into the Mayo Farm.

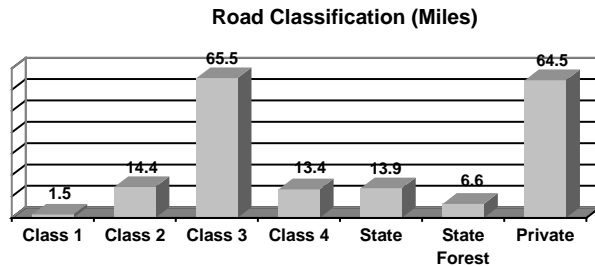
A cremation garden was recently installed in the Riverbank Cemetery. The Commission also has a landscaping plan and an old monument restoration plan. Finally, a Cemetery Book project was completed to coincide with the 200th anniversary of the interment of Willie Utley, the first person buried in the Old Yard Cemetery. This book lists everyone buried in a Stowe cemetery and those whose remains are outside of cemeteries but in Stowe.

## **H. Transportation**

Providing and maintaining a transportation system that can accommodate growing numbers of residents and visitors has been one of Stowe's most important public functions since local taxes were first enacted to fund road improvements in 1797. Unlike the horse and foot power relied upon during Stowe's early years, the private automobile is now the primary mode of transportation in town. This reliance on the automobile has shaped the town, and continues to influence local settlement patterns, the provision of public facilities and services and, ultimately, the town's capacity to accommodate growth in a safe and efficient manner.

### **Public Roads**

There are nearly 160 miles of private and public roads in Stowe, of which the town provides year-around maintenance for over 81.4 miles, or almost 51%. In addition to town roads, there are almost 14 miles of state-maintained roads, approximately 64 miles of private roads, and 6.56 miles of state forest roads. See Map #5 in the appendix for the location of the town's public highways.



**Town Highway Department**

The Highway Department maintains over 80 miles of local roads. Currently, the department is staffed with 11 full-time positions and has a fiscal year 2010 budget of \$1,551,413, the largest of any town department except for the police.

The Town Garage located on the River Road, next to the Wastewater Treatment Plant, is the principle transportation facility. The garage was constructed in 1979 and houses the Highway Department’s vehicles and equipment, as well as providing office and employee areas. The space is limited because of the increasing number of town vehicles required to provide road services to the town. A mechanic’s bay was completed in 1999.

The Moscow Garage, located on the Moscow Road, is used to store busses for the area’s public transportation needs. The town dog kennels are also located here.

**Town Highways**

Town highways are generally considered to be in good shape, although an ongoing program of reconstruction is necessary to maintain a high level of service and correct minor deficiencies. Paving projects are regularly scheduled in the Town’s yearly capital budget. The Town uses the MicroPAVER road pavement maintenance management system to manage road management activities.

Since the Mayo Farm Road was constructed in 1994, and the Moscow and Barrows roads were designated as an alternative route from Route 100 south to the Mountain Road, Stowe has pursued a program of creating an interconnected network of minor collector roads as an alternative to major capacity increases to existing state highways. The most recent road connection was made when Depot Street was extended to Thomas Lane in 1998. Initially developed as a private road, the Town took over ownership in 2008.

**State Highways**

Two state highways, Route 100 and Route 108, provide the primary accesses to Stowe from neighboring communities, and carry the town’s highest traffic volumes. Responsibility for maintaining Route 100 and Route 108 rests with the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans). The section of Route 100 from the Stowe Police Department north to just before Shaws grocery store is designated as a class 1 town highway, as is the

section of Route 108 from its intersection with Route 100 north to the historic Village boundary. Consequently, the town is responsible for the maintenance of these roads.

Route 100 is a north/south highway running the length of the state parallel to the Green Mountain Range. In Stowe, the highway runs through the center of town, linking the community to Waterbury and I-89 to the south, and to Route 15 to the north in Morristown. This route has served as a principle local transportation corridor since the arrival of the town's first settlers.

### **Public Transportation**

Among the most important of Stowe's traffic management strategies is the support of operation of the local public transportation network. The Green Mountain Transit Agency (GMTA), a nonprofit public transit provider serving Lamoille and Washington counties, operates four separate routes in the Stowe area:

- Mountain Road Shuttle
- Morrisville Shopper
- Morrisville Loop
- Route 100 Commuter from Morrisville to Waterbury

The Mountain Road Shuttle runs from Thanksgiving to Easter providing daily service from the Lower Village, through Stowe Village, to Stowe Mountain Resort. The Stowe Selectboard appoints a Stowe Transit Advisory Committee to make recommendations about local services and appoints a representative to the GMTA Board of Directors.

These local public transportation services are funded through a combination of contributions from the Town's operating budget (\$34,000 in 2008), Stowe Mountain Resort (\$40,000 in 2008), a special assessment levied by the Stowe Area Association (\$19,000 in 2008,) and state and federal subsidies. As mitigation for traffic impacts associated with the development of Spruce Peak, Stowe Mountain Resort has committed to increasing their annual financial support to a total of \$50,000 after 10 years and to initiating a management program requiring employees to commute using the trolley.

The Mountain Road Shuttle is the most successful route in GMTA's entire service area. In 2005, a decision was made to provide the service free of charge. As a result, the number of riders has increased from approximately 30,000 per season to nearly 40,000. The route provides a valuable service to skiers and to Stowe's seasonal workers, many of whom do not have their own transportation. The Route 100 Commuter, established in 2005, provides a valuable commuter service linking Morrisville to Waterbury, with connections available to Montpelier and Burlington.

### **Sidewalks & Paths**

Stowe's desired land use pattern of compact settlement surrounded by rural countryside is reinforced by the presence of adequate pedestrian paths and sidewalks. The greatest concentration of sidewalks is in Stowe Village, where recent improvements have expanded pedestrian opportunities. Additional sidewalks are needed in several locations, and the Town has prioritized the following sidewalk projects:

- Extending the School St. sidewalk in Stowe Village to the library;
- Extending the sidewalk along Route 108 from Weeks Hill Rd. to the Rusty Nail;
- Extending sidewalks along Route 100 south to Sylvan Park Rd. and north to Shaws grocery store; and
- Constructing sidewalks along Mountain Road in the Mountain Road Village as well as extensions along Cape Cod Rd. and Cottage Club Rd.

The Stowe Recreation Path provides an important bicycle and pedestrian transportation route from Stowe Village to the Topnotch meadow, providing access to the service establishments along Mountain Road. The Riverwalk path provides an important bicycle/pedestrian link from Stowe Village to the Lower Village. Any extension of the Recreation Path would be an excellent enhancement to the Town's transportation and recreation infrastructure.

In 2006 the Lamoille County Planning Commission(LCPC) completed a Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Improvement Plan for the Town of Stowe. The recommendations of that plan are listed at the end of this section.

#### **Traffic Calming**

Traffic calming is a term used to describe a variety of design techniques intended to reduce the speed of motor vehicles along roadways and improve pedestrian safety. Several traffic-calming techniques were included as specific recommendations in the 1995 Route 100/108 intersection study. These were included in recognition that slow traffic speeds through the Village not only improve pedestrian safety, but also contribute to frequent gaps in traffic that would allow many of the Route 100 intersections with side streets to function more efficiently.

#### **Air Service**

Stowe residents and visitors are served by the Burlington International Airport, approximately 45 miles away in the City of South Burlington, and the Morrisville-Stowe State Airport, immediately north of the Stowe/Morristown boundary on Route 100.

The Morrisville-Stowe Airport is primarily used by area residents and businesses, as well as providing a recreational amenity, gliding, for visitors to the region. A 1999 Demand/Benefit Analysis of the Morrisville-Stowe Airport, prepared by the LCPC, estimated that the annual economic impact of the airport on the surrounding region exceeded \$1,000,000. It was further estimated that Stowe benefited to a greater extent than other towns in the region. That same study identified facility constraints that might limit expansion of airport operations. The most limiting constraint is the relatively short (3,700') runway. While such a runway length is safe and efficient for small planes, a runway of between 4,000 feet and 5,000 feet could accommodate unmet demand for larger commercial plane service. The study concludes that improvements to the airport, including an extension of the runway, should be explored further due to the projected economic benefits of such expansion.

**Rail Service**

Rail service is available in Waterbury, with lines running through the Winooski Valley, and Morrisville, where lines parallel the Lamoille River. Amtrak's "Vermonter" service to New York and Washington D.C. is available in Waterbury.

**Parking**

Improving the availability of parking in Stowe's village centers is important for several reasons. Better parking supports business development and the vitality of villages, encourages more efficient land use patterns, decreases traffic congestion by eliminating circling in search of available spaces, supports pedestrian circulation, and better integrates uses on adjacent parcels.

The most pressing parking needs are found in Stowe Village. The LCPC sponsored a Parking Improvement Study for Stowe Village in 2003. The study identified over 600 available parking spaces in the Village. Based upon current user patterns, the study identified the potential for significant improvements in the availability of short term parking through better parking management (e.g. signage, pedestrian facilities, designated employee parking areas, etc.). The recommendations of the study are found in the next section on Transportation Planning. As attempts to increase the vibrancy of Stowe Village are successful, the Town may need to examine the possibility of constructing a parking garage in the Village.

**Transportation Planning**

The town has been actively engaged in transportation planning for several decades. Below is a summary of the recommendations of the main transportation planning initiatives that have been conducted since 1993 and the status of those recommendations.

**RTE. 100 CORRIDOR STUDY (1993)**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Status</b>
Construct and pave the Mayo Connector	Completed
Upgrade Moscow Rd/Barrows Rd/Luce Hill roads	Completed
Extend Depot Street to Thomas Lane	Completed
Provide curbs and sidewalks through Stowe Village and Lower Village	Village Completed
Provide signage for alternative route to Rte. 108 from Moscow Rd.	Completed
Add turning lanes and traffic light at 100/Moscow Rd. intersection	Not Completed
Channelize River Rd. intersection to eliminate conflicting movements	Not Completed
Provide turning lane on Rte. 108 at Rte. 100	Not Completed
Add turning lanes at West Hill Rd./Rte. 100 intersection	Not Completed
Reconstruct Stagecoach Rd. intersection to a standard "T"	Not Completed
Reconstruct Randolph Rd. intersection to a standard "T"	Not Completed

**ROUTE 100/108 INTERSECTION ACTION PLAN (1995)**

<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Status</b>
Construct new sidewalk on School St.	Partially Completed

Improve alternate routes (Mayo Farm, Barrows Rd.)	Completed
Direct connection from 108 to 100 from the Stowe Inn across the Little River to 100 near Macs.	Not Completed
One-way southbound circulation on Park St.	Not Completed
On-street parking on Park St.	Not Completed
Neck-downs on Main St.	Not Completed
Additional parking behind Town Hall to be accessed by church	Not Completed
Extension of sidewalks past the IGA into Lower Village	Not Completed
Curbing in front of Macs and redesign of its parking lot	Not Completed
Improve turning radius at intersection	Not Completed
Improve Sunset St. intersection	Not Completed

### STOWE PARKING STUDY (2003)

#### Recommendations

#### Status

Route trolley past parking areas	Complete
Promote parking options in conjunction with SAA	Ongoing
Encourage employees to use less utilized parking areas	Ongoing
Provide a safe, direct pedestrian connection to Rec Path parking lot	\$47,000 budgeted
Improve parking signage	Completed
Enforce time limits	In progress

### RTE. 100 ACCESS MANAGEMENT PLAN (2003)

The Access Management Plan reaffirms the recommendations of the Rte. 100 Corridor Plan, with the following modifications:

Moscow Rd./100 intersection: Consider roundabout instead of a light
Rte. 108/100: Traffic light recommended
Stagecoach Rd./100: Roundabout should be considered
100/West Hill Rd.: Traffic light recommended

### BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENT PLAN (2006)

#### Recommendations

- Construct Mountain Road (VT108) Sidewalk: Weeks Hill Road to Town Farm Lane.
- Construct Weeks Hill Road Sidewalk: Recreation Path to Mountain Road (VT108).
- Construct Main Street (VT100) Lower Village Sidewalk: Thomas Lane to Sylvan Park Road.
- Monitor Mountain Road (VT108) repaving for appropriate shoulder striping
- Construct Maple Street (VT100) Sidewalk from Cemetery Road to West Hill Road.
- Design and construct pedestrian connection to Recreation Path parking lot in Stowe Village.

- Implement signage and marking improvements at all Recreation Path highway crossings.
- Plan, design, and construct Depot Street / Thomas Lane Sidewalks from existing to VT100
- Plan, design, and construct sidewalk on VT108 in the Mountain Road Village.
- Plan, design, and construct Cape Cod Road sidewalk.
- Plan, design, and construct Cottage Club Road sidewalk.
- Implement bicycle and pedestrian education efforts: awareness materials, maps, informing visitors of the preferred bicycle loops, walking loops and so forth
- Conduct Secondary Corridors (town highway) shoulder condition audit.
- Conduct Recreation Path conceptual alignment analysis for extension to Stowe Mountain Resort.
- Continue discussion with landowners and business owners re: Recreation Path VT108 crossing relocation.
- Investigate potential for bridge connection from Palisades Park to Palisades Street.
- Develop new town standard for sidewalk surfaces to avoid heaving pavers.
- High School connection to Recreation Path via turf path adjacent to Barrows / Luce Hill Roads.
- Develop an official policy for Class IV town highways.
- Elementary School connection to play fields.
- Incorporate bicycle-use of Secondary Corridors into paving prioritization process.
- Identify possible connections to the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail via roads and/or off-road facilities.
- Install bike racks, benches, and other bicycle and pedestrian amenities throughout Pedestrian Centers.
- Primary Corridor (state highway) pavement marking monitoring.
- Design and construct traffic calming improvements in Pedestrian Centers.

## **I. Sewage Disposal**

Stowe's original wastewater collection system was comprised of clay sewer lines, built in the 1800s to serve Stowe Village, which discharged sewage directly into the Little River. Several studies regarding the construction of a treatment facility and collection system were initiated in the early 1960s. During the 1970s, new water quality standards for the Waterbury River required the removal of phosphorus, resulting in the construction of an advanced wastewater treatment facility.

### **Existing Facilities**

Stowe's first municipal Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) came on line in 1980 serving a service area encompassing Stowe Village and limited surrounding areas. Funding for the original plant (\$1,514,000 for the plant; \$2,661,000 for the sewer lines) came from local, state and federal sources. The Town of Stowe, through its general funds, retired the debt for the locally financed portion in 1998.

When first built, the WWTP was permitted to process 167,000 gallons per day. In 1988 a new discharge permit was obtained permitting up to 250,000 gallons per day. A flow equalization tank was constructed in 1997 to allow for better processing of peak flows into the plant. The current capacity is 1 million gallons per day. The present wastewater collection and treatment facility consists of:

- The plant located along the Little River between the Village and Lower Village;
- A pumping station located behind the Stoware Commons in the Lower Village that receives the village waste water to be pumped up to the treatment plant;
- A pumping station on Weeks Hill Road at the Mayo Farm that receives Mountain Road waste water to be pumped to the treatment plant;
- A pumping station at Stowe Mountain Resort; and
- The sewer lines throughout the village and adjacent areas up to the Stowe Mountain Resort and Trapp Family Lodge.

Sewer lines were extended to the Sylvan Park area of the Lower Village in 1997 to service failed septic systems in the area. Likewise, a sewer line was extended up along Mountain Road to Cottage Club Road in 1998 and up to Stowe Mountain Resort in 2002. The treatment plant discharges into the Little River. The wastewater management zone from the plant currently extends to the confluence of the Little River and Gold Brook (at the Nichol's campground).

### **Sewer Department Operations**

The sewer system is under the control of the Selectboard who act as Sewer Commissioners. The Commissioners establish sewer policies and fees and are responsible for the allocation of treatment capacity. While authority is vested with the Commission, voter input is sought on issues related to expansion. Wastewater ordinances are part of the Town's codebook and include the Wastewater Capacity Allocation Ordinance. Adopted in 1989, this ordinance establishes the process by which uncommitted treatment capacity is allocated.

The six full-time employees handle daily operations of the sewer department. Staff is at the plant seven days a week (half time on weekends.) An alarm system that direct-dials the dispatchers at the Lamoille County Sheriff's Office operates 24 hours a day. Sewer Department personnel are always on call in case of an emergency. Two national awards from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency have honored the exemplary operations of the Stowe Sewer Department. The Sewer Department's operating costs, including some capital replacement needs, are covered by user fees. Rates are established in accordance with the municipal sewer ordinance. Connection fees are intended to cover the cost of new lines and plant improvements.

### **Septage and Sludge Disposal**

All properties in Stowe not connected to the municipal sewer system must rely on on-site septic systems. State permits are needed for these systems. Though not required, periodic pumping of all septic tanks is recommended for proper operations of an onsite system. This septage must be hauled off for treatment to a wastewater treatment plant or land applied. Over 3,000,000 gallons of septage is generated annually in the area. It is estimated that roughly 50% of this is disposed of by direct land application. The other half is brought to either the Stowe WWTP or other plants for processing.

A by-product of all wastewater treatment plants is dried sludge. The town is permitted to land apply its sludge on fields of the town-owned Mayo Farm. As part of the permitting process for land application of sludge from the municipal plant, a detailed Sludge and Septage Management Plan is maintained. The Town is in the process of having its sludge classified from "Class B" to "Class A", which is regulated much less stringently and can be used commercially or by homeowners.

### **Municipal Sewer Expansion Efforts**

Based on the recommendations of the 1990 Town Plan, concerns about failing on-site septic systems, and the desire to protect water quality both for recreational and drinking purposes, a study committee was formed in 1994 to explore options for expanding the municipal sewer system. A first priority of the committee was to correct the situation in the Lower Village. On-site systems in Sylvan Park were determined to be polluting waters of the state and remedial action was needed. The decision to extend a new sewer line in this area and build the flow equalization tanks at the plant to better handle the increased volumes was approved by voters in 1995.

Hoping to avoid such crisis situations for other parts of town, the committee turned its attention to redefining the municipal sewer service district and to explore expansion options for the wastewater treatment plant. Voter approval was given to an expanded sewer service district at Town Meeting in 1995. The new district focused on the Village and Lower Village area, the developed areas along the Mountain Road and the two ski-PUDs (Trapp Family Lodge and Stowe Mountain Resort.) The total acreage included in the new district is less than 3,000 (while Ski-PUDs are included, sewer service to the PUDs is limited to small nodes within the total land holdings). The 3,000 acres comprise 1/16th of the total acreage in Stowe.

At the 1995 Town Meeting, voters also gave conceptual approval to the construction of a 1.0 mgd wastewater treatment plan. In 1985, an assimilative capacity study of the Little River conducted by Aquatec, Inc. concluded that a 1.0 mgd plant could operate without adversely affecting water quality. Subsequent analysis and the issuance of a new discharge permit for a 1.0 mgd WWTP from the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources affirmed this conclusion.

The expansion of the municipal sewer system fits into the overall growth management strategies of the community. The new sewer facilities will enable the Town to guide future development in a manner more in keeping with local land use goals whereby growth is directed towards areas of compact development surrounded by more rural countryside. In numerous votes Stowe citizens have expressed their preference to treat wastewater with a municipally owned and operated plant rather than rely on individual on-site systems in our more densely developed sections of town.

## **J. Water Systems**

The Stowe Water Department operates the municipal water system, which currently serves Stowe Village, the Mountain Road to Stowe Mountain Resort, and, through a cooperative agreement with Fire District #3, the Lower Village. Approximately 520 properties are connected to the municipal system. The majority of properties in Stowe obtain drinking water from on-site wells.

Numerous public water systems operate within Stowe, including the municipal system. A public water system is defined as one serving 10 or more connections, serving 20 or more people year round. A study commissioned by the Stowe Water Department titled Study and Report for Water Source and Supply for Stowe Water Department prepared in March of 1997 by Leach Engineering identifies most of the systems in Stowe.

### **Current System Operations**

The original municipal water system dates back to 1904. The various springs used to supply water to the system have been abandoned in light of regulatory restrictions on the use of surface waters. The system consists the Edson Hill and Village Green wells, eight reservoirs with a total capacity of 1.7 million gallons, seven booster stations that transfer the water from pressure zone to pressure zone and more than 10 miles of distribution piping.

The Water Department is staffed with two full-time employees. Per the Town Charter, the Selectmen serve as Water Commissioners. The Commissioners establish water policies and fees and are responsible for the allocation of water for new connections. The Stowe Electric Department provides billing services.

### **Municipal Water System Expansion**

In the summer of 1997 a study committee was organized to develop a long-range plan for the municipal water system. Demand for new connections is high as operators of the many on-small systems serving residential or commercial establishments are anxious to

get out of the water business. The 1997 Leach Engineering report outlined a two-phase municipal system improvement and expansion plan. The first phase, the construction of a water treatment plant for the Village Green Well and the replacement of the main transmission line along the Mountain road to the village reservoirs, was approved at Town Meeting in 1998. Funded through a no-interest loan for \$2,000,000 from the State's revolving loan program, construction of Phase I was completed in 1999.

Phase II called for new water transmission lines to serve existing establishments further up the Mountain Road and spur lines to existing development throughout the water district. Phase II efforts began in 2001 and have been completed up to the Stowe Mountain Resort and Trapp Family Lodge. Also included in Phase II was the replacement of the Sunset Hill reservoirs in 2004 with a 1,000,000-gallon reservoir. In 2007, the Notchbrook residential area was added to the municipal water system to improve the quality and quantity of the water supply for area residents.

The expansion of the municipal water system is designed to serve the core development areas of Stowe. This important infrastructure is being planned to serve roughly the same area as the Sewer Service District. Similar to the sewer expansion plans, the water expansion effort will allow for moderate growth to be channeled into the targeted growth nodes as called for in the town zoning regulations.

#### **Fire Districts**

Fire Districts have statutory authority and powers similar to municipalities. Four such districts were established in Stowe and provide for the operation of water systems as well as other purposes.

Fire District #1 was established in 1982 to serve the needs of properties along the Mountain Road. The District is not active and no services are being provided.

Fire District #2 was formed in 1987 to purchase the privately owned Goldbrook 1 and 2 water systems. The Fire District, operated by a five member Prudential Committee, completed system improvements in 1988 to comply with state orders to improve the water quality provided to users. Two wells, each with a reservoir, serve the District. There are no plans to extend service that now includes the areas of Goldbrook Circle, Wood Road and portions of Gold Brook and Dewey Hill Roads

Fire District #3 was formed in 1995 to purchase the private system that originally served Sylvan Park. A major system overhaul was completed in 1997. New water lines were installed, the reservoir improved and a pump house constructed on Thomas Lane that ties into the municipal line via Depot Street Extension. A cooperative agreement between the Fire District and the town water department has been executed whereby the department supplies water to the system during off-peak hours and maintains the system for the Fire District.

Fire District #4 was formed in 1993 to serve the needs of the residents in the Glenbrook area of Mansfield View properties. The District is served by a well that has not been very reliable during dry summers. Efforts to increase the well's production are underway.

## **K. Solid Waste**

The Lamoille Regional Solid Waste Management District (LRSWMD) is empowered to "provide for the treatment and management of solid waste generated or disposed of within the geographical boundaries of member municipalities" and is comprised of the towns of Belvedere, Cambridge, Eden, Elmore, Hyde Park, Johnson, Morristown, Stowe, Waterville, Wolcott, Craftsbury and Worcester. The solid waste district is a union municipal district.

Solid waste is defined as any discarded garbage, refuse, or material (solid, liquid or contained gaseous material), as well as septage or sludge from a waste or water supply treatment facility, but does not include hazardous waste. (Hazardous waste is defined as any material or substance by reason of its composition is considered toxic, reactive, ignitable or corrosive). However, in the State of Vermont, asbestos and infectious wastes are considered to be solid waste and must be addressed in the regional solid waste plan. The LRSWMD issued a Solid Waste Implementation Plan in 2006.

### **Waste Facilities**

The solid waste transfer station, located off Route 108 in the Village, is operated by contract with the LRSWMD. All LRSWMD residents and businesses may drop their waste into an open compactor trailer that is hauled to the landfill when it is full. There is a separate trailer for construction debris. In addition, residents contribute reusable clothes and items to a collection box beside the shed. A recycling station is located at the Transfer Station. A "stump dump" in Moscow located on the Barnes Hill Road was closed in 2000.

### **Waste Disposal**

Waste in Stowe is disposed of outside the District in a lined landfill. The district negotiates disposal with private landfill operators. A "pay as you throw" system is in place. Disposal fees pay for the District's operations, along with a surcharge on the District's haulers. The five unlined landfills once operating in Lamoille County are now closed.

### **Recycling**

A new recycling program began in December 1989 and was made mandatory in 1994. First begun by a dedicated group of volunteers, the Stowe recycling program has become very successful with over 288 tons of materials recycled annually. The Recycling building was built in 1992 with assistance from the State's Solid Waste Implementation Grant Program.

## **L. Energy**

Local growth and development, quality of life, and quality of the environment all depend on the availability of clean, affordable energy. Stowe's energy use has changed over time in response to growing demand, new energy sources, and new technologies.

Town residents and businesses historically relied on local wood, water and horsepower to fuel their energy needs. Mills grew up around dam sites, and settlements grew up around mills. With the coming of the first steam powered lumber mill -established by the Burt Company in Stowe Hollow in 1883, and later moved to Stowe Village in 1895 - direct access to hydropower was no longer required for production operations.

Wood served as the primary heating and cooking fuel for much of the town's history - wood fueled cook stoves were first introduced to Stowe in 1820. As the nineteenth century progressed, other imported fuels such as coal, kerosene, and gas came into wider use.

For many years, horses and oxen provided both power for field and domestic work, and transportation. In 1847 an electric line, the Mt. Mansfield Electric Railroad, was constructed and carried freight, mail and passengers from Waterbury to Stowe into the next century. Horses, however, were not supplanted as the primary form of local transportation until the advent of the automobile.

Stowe Village was incorporated in 1896 in part to finance the installation of electric power in the village. The Village of Stowe Electric Light & Power System was established in 1911 as a public utility, and electric lighting was installed soon thereafter.

During the twentieth century, the use of electricity, which was considered a much cleaner, more adaptable and convenient energy source, grew in importance for power, lighting and heat. The twentieth century also heralded the widespread application of the internal combustion engine, and as a result, increasing local and national dependence on relatively cheap supplies of fossil fuel for power, heat and transportation.

The availability of alternative energy sources fueled Stowe's transition from a primarily resource to a tourist based economy, including the development of the town's commercial ski industry, which relies heavily on electric energy and fossil fuel supplies to power its operations.

### **Energy Use & Demand**

Today Stowe continues to rely on three major sources of energy: oil (heating, diesel, kerosene, and gasoline), propane gas, and electricity. Wood and solar power are also used for residential heating, but to a much lesser extent.

At present, Stowe accounts for approximately 1.59% of the state's total electric power consumption. The town continues to own and operate one of Vermont's fifteen small

municipal electric utilities, the Stowe Electric Department (SED), which serves over 92% of local residents and businesses.

A portion of Stowe along Route 100, from the Stagecoach Road to the town border, is served by the Morrisville Water & Light Department. This service area includes approximately 280 customers. The Vermont Electric Cooperative (supplied by the Central Vermont Public Service Corporation or CVPS) delivers electricity to approximately 70 residential customers in sections of the Sterling Valley.

In 2007, SED's total customer base numbered 3,923, up from 3,083 in 1994 (an average annual increase of 2.1% or 65 customers per year). In 2007, 34.9% of the customer base was residential. The highest electric use however, came from the commercial/industrial sector, which represents about 66% of the customer base.

Stowe's peak load has been managed with a self-imposed artificial cap of 15.5 megawatts (MW) of power in conjunction with its largest customer using an interruptible snowmaking contract to achieve this. This is the eighth year in a row SED has been able to impose an artificial peak given the transmission constraints faced in Lamoille County.. The SED distribution system is set up to serve 30MW to their customers and can support continued growth within the town and county. Stowe's firm or mature load today is 12.5 MW. Peak electric demand occurs in winter months due to higher heating and lighting demands, and energy loads associated with ski area operations. The consumption of oil, gas and wood follows the same seasonal patterns.

Locally, the rate of growth in energy use will depend on:

- The amount of residential, commercial and industrial growth;
- The effectiveness of state and local conservation programs; and
- The local substitution of alternative technologies.

For local utility planning, electric energy load is assumed to grow at 1.5% per year (CVPS Flow Analysis, 1999). Stowe Mountain Resort, however, anticipates the need for an additional 13.8 MW to support its Spruce Peak development at build-out. In order to meet this demand, other projected load growth and to improve the reliability of the power grid, substantial infrastructure upgrades have been approved by the State. A new 115 kV line is in the process of being built in 2009 from Middlesex to Stowe. The new line will be installed in the same right-of-way as the existing 34 kV line. The SED completed infrastructure improvements in 2008 to accept and distribute the power upgrade.

### **Energy Infrastructure**

The SED maintains system distribution lines and six substations, including three primary metering points - the Moscow Substation, the Lodge Substation and the underground Wilkins Substation. Right now, SED receives its power through the "Northern Loop" - a 44-mile, 34.5 kV sub-transmission system which extends from Green Mountain Power's Marshfield Station to the Little River Substation.

The primary purpose of the loop is to feed local utilities, including Stowe, Morrisville, Hardwick, and the Washington Electric Cooperative. Sources of power feeding the loop include GMP hydro stations in Marshfield and Little River, and five other smaller generating stations within the loop.

SED also purchases power from wholesalers and utilities under contractual or joint ownership agreements - including the Hydro-Quebec Agreement. (The vast majority of energy purchased by the utility is generated out-of-state.) SED has an A1 credit rating which enables Stowe to negotiate supply contracts at the most favorable rates.

Local generating capacity is limited, as is the potential for widespread substitution of alternative energy sources (e.g., solar, wind, fuel cells, biofuels), given the current state and relative cost of these technologies. There are two local generators available to support SED. One is the WCAX 2.0 MW generator on Mount Mansfield. The second is a 750 kW unit at the Stoweflake Resort. Both units may be used to 'shed load' when requested by ISO New England, but will in turn benefit SED operational needs.

SED has benefited from many net-metering solar applications that its customers have installed over the last few years. These solar, net-metering customers are reducing the load on the system and a few are actually feeding into the grid. The Electric Department supports all net-metering projects that its customers would like to explore.

In 2003, the Vermont Electric Power Company (VELCO) along with SED submitted an application for a Certificate of Public Good to build a new 115 kV line from Middlesex to Stowe. The Public Service Board reviewed the application from 2003 – 2006 with participation from citizens in Middlesex, Waterbury and Stowe. The Certificate of Public Good was approved for \$43M project in 2006. Construction is scheduled for 2009. SED's upgrades to the Wilkins Substation in order to connect to the new 115kV Substation were completed in 2008.

In an effort to maintain system reliability, right-of-way clearing remains a continuing on-going initiative. In 2007, voltage conversion within the SED system from 4160 kV lines to 12,470 kV lines was completed. SED's oldest substation, the Village Substation, was decommissioned in 2007 and additional system modifications were made to provide greater flexibility in support of system reliability and cost-efficiency through reduction of line losses.

### **Energy Conservation**

In recent years, growing concern over the nation's dependence on imported, non-renewable sources of energy and the local and global impacts of their extraction and consumption, have resulted in new policies and programs that emphasize energy efficiency and conservation. These include utility "demand side management" (DSM) programs of the last decade, and most recently, the creation of a statewide "Energy Efficiency Utility ("EEU").

Although overall energy demand has increased, the energy demand per customer user has decreased, due in part to various demand side management programs and local conservation initiatives. While these have proven effective, utility and customer participation in DMS programs has declined since 1993. Given this trend, and the inevitability of utility restructuring, the Public Service Department in 1998 proposed the creation of an energy efficiency utility.

The EEU, organized as an independent, non-profit entity, will assume the responsibility for operating core statewide energy efficiency programs, which are supported (but not implemented) by regulated utilities through local fees. The EEU will take over current demand side management programs by providing a range of services to residential, commercial, industrial and agricultural users.

Although local utilities no longer have the expense of operating their own demand side management programs, they are responsible for efficiency programs that are targeted to avoid specific transmission and distribution system investments.

Under Stowe's current agreement with the Department of Public Service, SED has agreed to contribute an average of \$403,287.74 for the year 2008 in support of EEU programs. The current VEEU rates for residential customers is \$0.00670 per kWh; \$0.00575 per kWh for commercial non-demand customers; \$0.00359 per kWh plus \$0.6671 per kW/month for commercial demand customers; \$0.00409 per kWh for industrial customers, \$0.00294 per kWh plus \$0.5612 per kW/month for industrial demand customers and \$0.00575 per kWh for street and area lights.

Other statewide initiatives of local importance include new energy standards for development. Energy standards that apply to most new residential development already have been enacted. These standards are currently administered and enforced through private builders.

Stowe does not have building codes, but energy conservation is encouraged under local land use regulations through the application of provisions that protect renewable energy resources, and support good site design and layout. These include standards for the clustering and location of buildings for passive solar benefits, shared infrastructure, and the preservation of existing vegetation.

#### **Energy Affordability**

Stowe's electric utility rates are competitive with other Vermont utilities - the high cost of energy locally reflects high energy costs throughout the northeast. Under the Hydro-Quebec Agreement, and agreements with other independent power producers (IPPs) Vermont utilities are now paying above market rates for energy.

Local prices for gasoline, propane, kerosene and heating oil are also typically higher than the national average. The price of heating fuels follows the turbulent international market that can double or halve in a single year. Many homes have wood or pellet stoves to supplement winter heating needs as a hedge against high costs of traditional fuels.

The high cost of winter fuels represents a real danger to local residents with low incomes. There are assistance programs available, including the government funded Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and Weatherization Program, and the utility- sponsored WARMTH program.

### **Purchase Power Contracts**

#### Master Supply Agreement

SED has granted Energy New England, located in Foxborough, MA, the authority to acquire various sources of capacity and energy and other ancillary services and related products on behalf of SED, with an emphasis on purchasing power contracts that consist of clean, renewable energy such as wind, solar, wood and hydro electric power.

#### McNeil Project

The McNeil wood-fired generating facility is located in Burlington, Vermont. The facility has a maximum generating capability of 53,000 kW. SED expects the generation to be mostly composed of wood, but gas and oil can be used to fuel the unit if pricing is appropriately set and available.

Pursuant to the McNeil Project Sales Agreement, and net of resale's to other utilities, SED was committed to purchase 1,434 kW of output for the year ended June 30, 2007, a 14.24% ownership share of the 53 megawatt facility output.

#### Stony Brook

SED has entered into a Power Sales Agreement with the Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company ("MMWEC") for 5,864 kW of MMWEC's Stony Brook Project, an operating fossil fuel plant. MMWEC, a public corporation of Massachusetts, is a co-ordination and planning agency for the development of the bulk power supply requirements of its members and project participants. The Power Sales Agreement for each project requires each project participant to pay its share of MMWEC's costs related to the project which includes debt services on bonds issued by MMWEC to finance the project, plus 10% of debt service to be paid into a reserve and contingency fund. Under this Agreement, the aggregate amount of such payments, exclusive of the 10% reserve and contingency fund billings, for the year ended June 30, 2007 was \$848,842.

#### Hydro-Quebec

In April 1988 SED signed an in-state participation agreement exercising its rights to purchase a portion of additional power available under a December 1987 contract for 500 megawatts of Hydro-Quebec. The following is a schedule for SED's commitment under this agreement, which received voter approval March, 1991:

<b>Firm Commitment</b>	<b>Kilowatts</b>	<b>Term</b>
Schedule B	2,288	1998-2015
Schedule C-1	1,075	1990-2012
Schedule C-2	128	1992-2012
Schedule C-3	38	1995-2015

Kilowatt quantities above include the Washington Electric Coop (“WEC”) share of Schedule C power assumed by SED in May 1990.

#### Highgate Project

Under the Highgate Project Transmission Services Agreement as re-allocated in 1997, SED has agreed to purchase a 12.59% share of the capacity in the share of Highgate Converter Facilities, located in Highgate, Vermont

#### Phase 1

SED has entered into contracts with Vermont Electric Power Company to facilitate in Phase 1 of the Hydro-Quebec interconnection, a 450 kVHVDC transmission line directly connecting the Hydro-Quebec electric system with the NEPOOL system at the Comerford Generating Station. Under this agreement, SED provided capital for the cost of construction through purchase of VELCO Class C preferred stock and will provide support for the operation of the line.

#### New York Power Authority

The New York Power Authority (NYPA) provides power to utilities in Vermont under two contracts. SED’s share of the first contract is a 9 kW entitlement to the Robert Moses Project (a.k.a St. Lawrence). SED’s share of the second contract is a 467 kW entitlement to the Niagara Project. The contract for the St. Lawrence contract has been extended through April 30, 2017 and the Niagara Contract has been extended through September 1, 2025.

#### VEPPI

Stowe receives power from several independent power projects (“IPP”) through a state mandated arrangement. There are currently 20 IPP projects of which 19 are fueled by water and one by wood (Ryegate). Vermont Electric Power Producers, Inc. (“VEPPI”) assigns power to all Vermont utilities base on a pro-rata to their in-state retail sales. SED’s share of VEPPI allocated power for the period November 2006 to October 2007 is 1.11%. Contracts between VEPPI and its constituent power producers begin to terminate in 2008 with the last contract scheduled to the end of 2020.

#### **Sources of Energy**

The percentage of energy acquired from the above agreements for the year ended June 30, 2007, is as follows:

#### % of total resources

HQ Schedule B	19.44%
JARON 8	6.29%

McNeil	8.39%
CDA Purchases	9.49%
MMWEC Stony Brook	6.00%
VEPPI	5.17%
JA0407MFS	4.96%
Niagara	3.11%
Mirant Replacement	2.83%
JA0406MFS	1.31%
HQ Schedule C2	1.09%
HQ Schedule C3	0.32%
Moscow Mills	0.22%
St. Lawrence	0.08%
JARON0707	6.08%
JARON0709	1.84%
Morgan Stanley	14.21%
HQ Schedule C1	<u>9.17%</u>
	100.00%

The Stowe Electric Department maintains that it has established an adequate electric power system and supply for at least 20 years of development in Stowe.

## **L. Communications**

### **Telecommunications**

FairPoint Communications is the primary telephone service provider in Stowe, since purchasing the landlines and operations from Verizon in 2008. Within the past several years, fiber optic transmission lines have been installed to serve Stowe Village and much of the Mountain Road. Telecommunications technology is frequently cited as being among Stowe's most important infrastructure. Not only does access to state-of-the-art infrastructure enhance the local quality of life, it is a critical element of many strategies to diversify the local economy, and is increasingly important to the tourist industry.

### **Internet Access**

High-speed Internet access currently is not available throughout the town. Stowe Cablevision provides access via cable lines and FairPoint provides DSL access to those in close proximity to DSL (digital subscriber line) switching stations. DIRECTV provides satellite Internet service, which is not as fast as cable or DSL. While existing providers of these services were gradually extending service within the Town, no requirement existed prior to 2008 for any individual company to make these services universally available within Stowe.

The Stowe Selectboard concluded that universal high-speed Internet access was vital for economic development, opportunities for lifelong learning, public safety, and quality of life of Stowe residents. In light of this, the Selectboard created the Stowe Universal Broadband and Cell Access Committee to investigate, assess, and develop strategies to help achieve the objective of universal access in Stowe. As part of FairPoint's state approval to acquire Verizon's landline business within Vermont, they agreed to provide universal broadband access to one-half of the telephone exchanges within the state by December 31, 2010. In 2008, the Broadband Committee surveyed 3,129 residents regarding their current access and needs for broadband access. Fifteen percent of those surveyed responded of which 63% already had Internet access. Of those with no service or unhappy with service quality, 54% were interested in obtaining service. The Broadband Committee shared these and other findings with FairPoint Communication's staff and stressed the importance universal access to the general well being of the town. In September 2008, FairPoint announced that the Stowe telephone exchanges would be part of those exchanges to have universal access by the end of 2010. Since that time, FairPoint has increased the availability of broadband access to several neighborhood areas and continues work needed to make universal access available by the deadline.

In order to provide complete coverage in these exchanges, FairPoint will continue to expand the existing wired network and will also integrate wireless technology (WiMax) to extend the reach of its network to less densely populated areas. To enable this integrated approach, FairPoint is also building a new IP-based next generation network. This 100 percent fiber-based core network is extremely flexible and capable of integrating multiple access technologies including DSL, WiMax and fiber to the premise.

This means that FairPoint will be able to meet the broadband needs of its customers into the future and be able to offer multiple services across the same secure network platform

### **Cell Phone Coverage**

Stowe has only partial cell phone coverage. Multiple cell phone companies provide cell phone service to varying degrees within Stowe. Rough terrain and the rural nature of Vermont makes it difficult for companies to physically and economically provide universal cell coverage in the state. In 2007, the state created the Vermont Telecommunications Authority (VTA) whose goals included the ubiquitous availability of mobile telecommunication services including voice and high-speed data throughout the state by the end of the year 2010. VTA was given the authority to make investments in telecommunications infrastructure to assist with this goal. The major obstacle for cell phone coverage is the expense of building the required towers. For the build-out of the cellular network, VTA has partnered with Williston-based Earth Turbines, to build personal 112-foot wind turbines that generate about 2.5 kilowatts of energy, or enough to power a single-family home. The VTA will then piggyback on the technology with an antenna to broaden the state's cellular network. The turbine locations need to be very site specific, providing enough elevation for the antennas to be effective and enough wind to power the turbines. Such wind turbines could be located in Stowe to help broaden cell phone coverage. In addition, cell phone companies continue to search for opportunities to co-locate antennas on existing towers and higher structures such as silos and church steeples.

### **Television**

Stowe Cablevision is franchised to provide cable television Town of Stowe. The Company serves the village, the Route 100 corridor, and properties along Route 108. The service area is relatively small, given Stowe's population, and no local access channel currently operates. DIRECTV provides satellite television service to the area.

### **Newspapers**

Two daily Vermont newspapers, the Burlington Free Press and the Barre-Montpelier Times Argus serve Stowe, although neither provides much coverage of the Stowe area. The Stowe Reporter is a weekly newspaper providing more extensive coverage of local news and events. The Stowe Reporter is designated as the Town's newspaper of record for the publication of official notices. The News & Citizen and Transcript, published in Morrisville, is also available in Stowe.