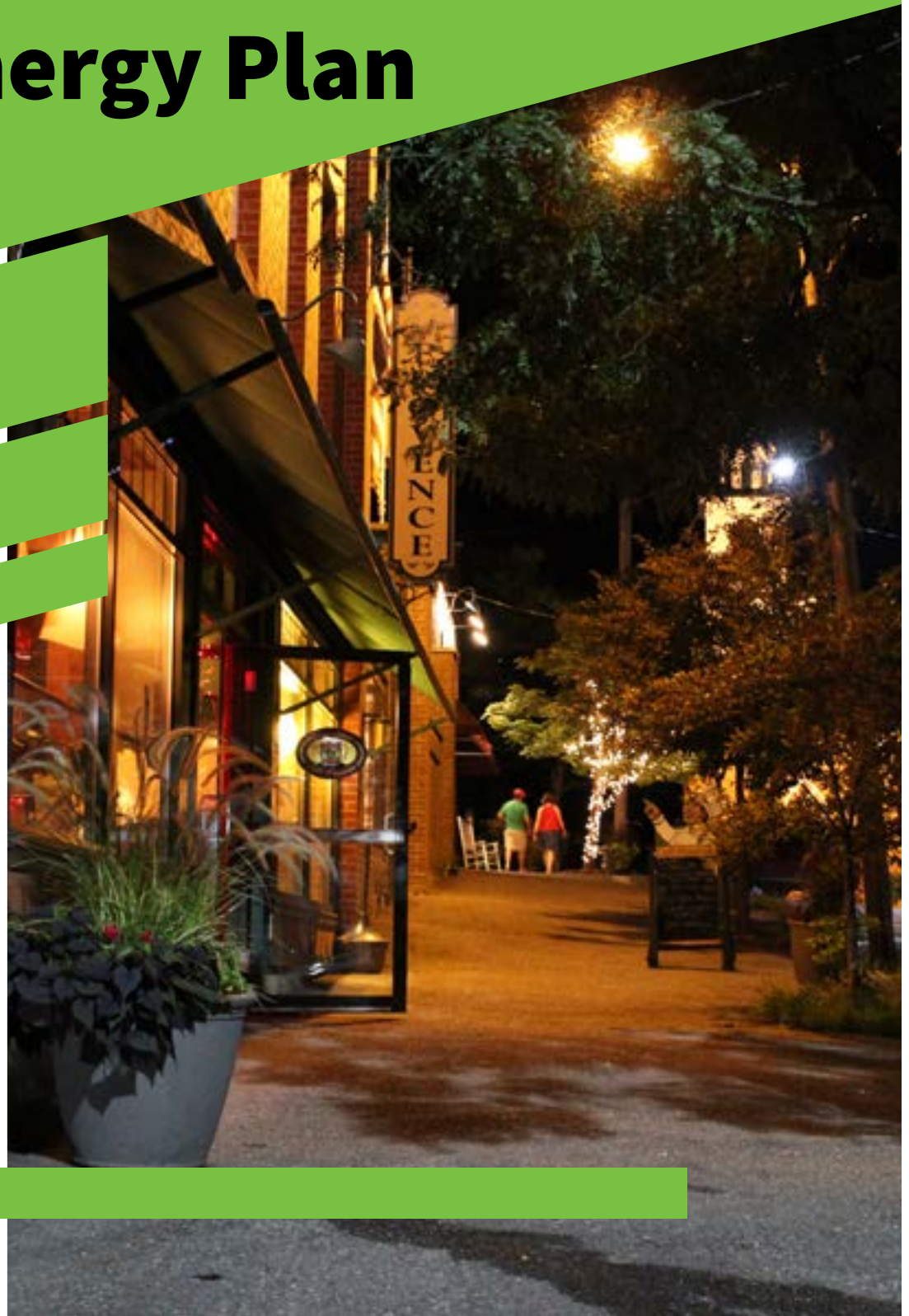


Brandon, VT Enhanced Energy Plan



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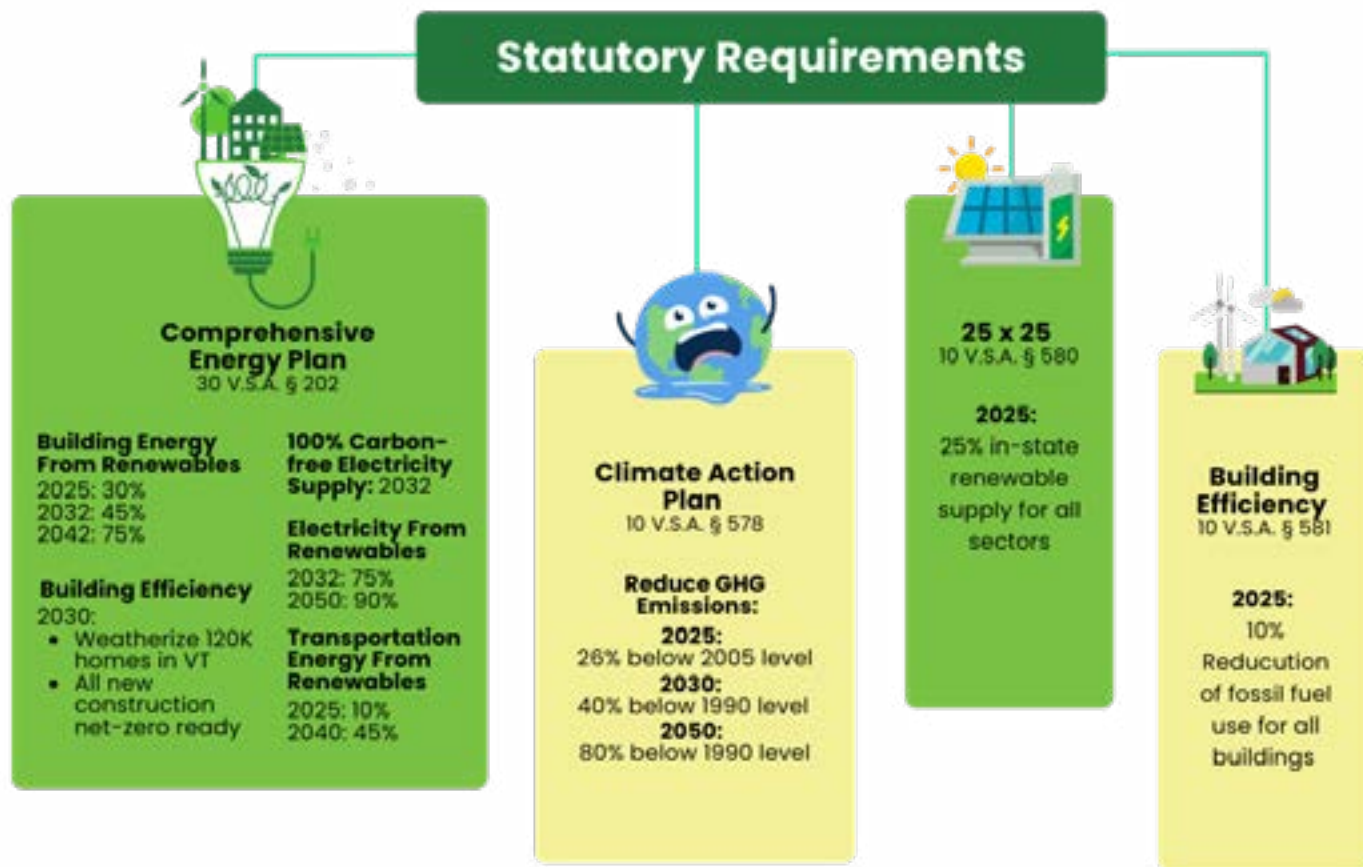
Introduction

The town of Brandon has written this Enhanced Energy Plan to create a pathway for the town to encourage appropriate growth, save money, and ultimately improve the quality of life for residents. We believe in the value of meeting the state energy statutes required in Act 174 as a means to improve the local economy while decreasing pollution. Graphic A below outlines the state statutes and their component goals which the town must meet in this plan. The two primary drivers of these targets are the Comprehensive Energy Plan (CEP) and the Climate Action Plan (CAP).

To make this plan a valuable tool for the Town of Brandon, we have developed a systematic plan of review outside of the statutory review requirements. This plan is required to be updated every 8 years. However, regulations and technologies

in the energy fields change very rapidly. In addition, action implementation is better assessed on a bi-yearly basis. This will avoid waiting 8 years to discover that we are not on target with our actions. For these reasons, we will review this Enhanced Energy Plan every 2 years to make sure we are meeting our targets. These 2-year reviews will be recorded and then compiled to assess and update this plan in 8 years.

One can see that the core focus of these goals is to decrease total energy use and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. To achieve these reductions, we will focus on broad efficiency measures and a comprehensive program of fuel switching. The specific analysis and targets for the town of Brandon are described in the following sections.



Graphic A.

Universal Analysis

Equity Analysis

An early signer of the Declaration of Inclusion, Brandon is committed to ensuring all residents receive fair and equal treatment. This includes the principle that all residents should have access to reliable and affordable sources of energy; should be protected from deleterious effects of energy production and distribution; share equally in distribution of the benefits provided by town-supported generation and conservation projects; and no one group should bear the brunt of the costs of the energy system. The updates to the town enhanced energy plan are intended to address energy inequities and positively

impact every segment of the community.

We feel it is important to acknowledge that there are significant inequities in our governments and communities. This has been especially true in the production, regulation, and benefit/cost distribution of the energy sector. The recognition of historical and systemic inequities provides us with the opportunity to do better. For these reasons, the Town of Brandon will work diligently to identify the inequities and inequalities within our town energy planning. Please see the Universal Pathways section for our plan to combat these issues.

“We have a two-pronged approach of both seeking input from, and providing access to, historically excluded members of our community.”

As a part of the 2024 Town Plan review process, town residents have had the opportunity to provide input on the Enhanced Energy Plan. However, we realize that this process has excluded many people from participation in the past. We would like to acknowledge that we can no longer expect marginalized residents to seek participation through traditional channels. Moving forward, the town will work to identify the people that have been historically excluded from participating in town planning. Additionally, we will develop an outreach plan to meet residents where they are. We aim to increase engagement with all

residents, businesses, and community partners; with extra focus on historically excluded residents.

Increased engagement and inclusion have already been of importance to the Town of Brandon. We now plan to build upon our existing outreach techniques to reach all residents of the town. We have hosted Town Hall forums, booths at local events, and traditional planning meetings. The Brandon Energy Committee has held multiple events with key topics such as conservation and weatherization. These events were organized for a wide range of local citizens including homeowners, landlords, tenants, and town businesses.

We also recognize that participating in the major infrastructure changes listed in this plan is not an option for people with limited income. We therefore have been working to develop programs to provide more inclusive opportunities. The town purchased two electric bikes and offers a local bike share program to reduce transportation related GHG emissions. The electric bikes are free to use by checking them out at the library. The Brandon Energy Committee has developed a free Energy Book Lending library and is working on a community solar project for the “missing middle”. This is aimed at providing solar for people who make too much to qualify for subsidized solar, but do not have enough income to install their own solar. These programs enable people without financial means to participate in healthy alternatives, save money, and reduce pollution.

The Town of Brandon has begun a path towards a more inclusive and equitable local energy system. We have a two-pronged approach of both seeking input from, and providing access to, historically excluded members of our community. Ultimately, all residents’ needs must be incorporated into town planning. Finally, marginalized residents need access to the tools and resources required to participate in town planning.



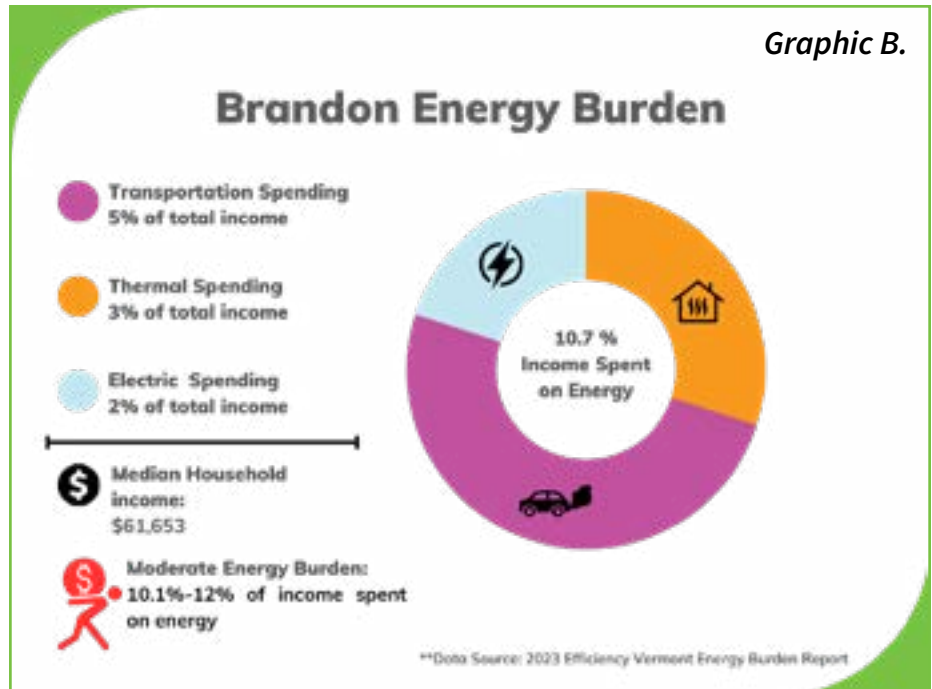
Total Energy Analysis

The residents of Brandon currently use approximately 551,000 million (MMBtu) Btus of energy to power their homes, businesses, and vehicles. This creates significant GHG emissions. In addition to emissions, the residents of Brandon spend significant income on energy. According to the 2023 Efficiency Vermont Energy Burden Report, we spend an average of 10.7% of our income on energy related expenses. The breakdown of this spending is shown in Graphic B.

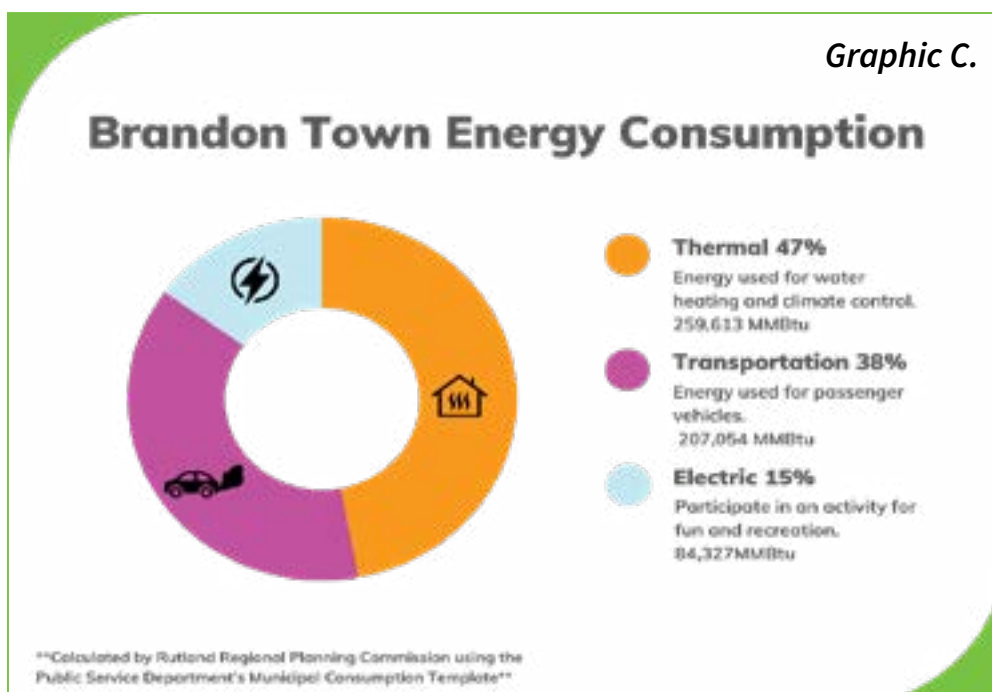
Total energy usage can be divided into three primary categories: Thermal, Transportation, and Electric. Graphic C. shows the composition of current energy consumption for the town in each sector. As shown in Graphic

D. (page 7), the greatest amount of energy is consumed by the Thermal sector followed closely by Transportation. The Electric sector consumes the smallest portion of energy in town.

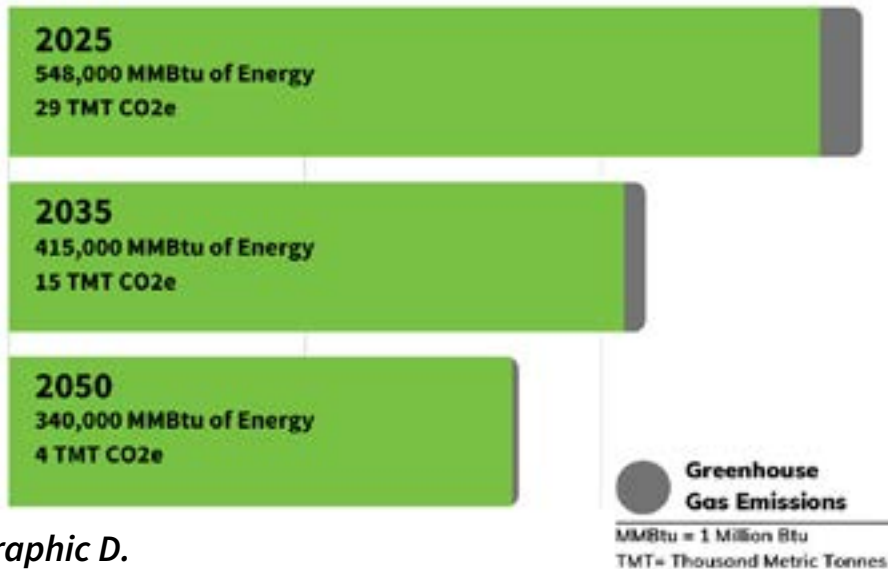
Graphic B.



Graphic C.



Total Energy Usage & GHG Emissions



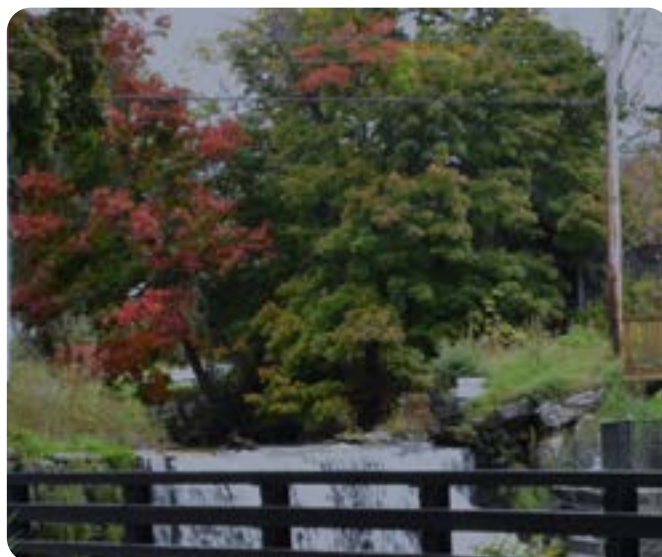
Total energy use and CO2 emissions dramatically decrease.

Graphic D.

Rutland Regional Planning Commission (RRPC) was able to provide Energy consumption targets using modeled data from the Low Emissions Analysis Platform (LEAP). Using the provided data, we are able to create targets for reducing total energy consumption in town. While the town does not have a GHG inventory, LEAP modeling was used to create GHG emissions targets based on the energy consumption data. Graphic D. describes these energy targets and shows the GHG emission reduction impacts. For

perspective, our long-term goals are to decrease total energy consumption roughly 62% from current usage.

In the next section, we outline Universal Pathways which describe our actionable steps to achieve overarching plan goals. Following the Universal Pathways, we provide an in-depth look at the composition of each sector, including future targets, to understand our capacity to meet the statutory goals that drive this plan.



Universal Pathways

Below is a list of the Objectives, Policies, and Actions developed to implement this plan.

OBJECTIVE

Prioritize development in compact mixed-use centers to reduce sprawl.

POLICY

Maintain a land use pattern of densely settled villages and clustered development radiating from the town center.

ACTION

Update the Brandon Land Use Ordinances to conform with development goals and priorities. Bring them into compliance with the Vermont HOMES Act of 2023.

ACTION

Require future development to include the cost (borne by the developer) of infrastructure, sidewalks, and streetlights.

OBJECTIVE

Evaluate the equity impacts of this plan.

POLICY

Engage marginalized communities impacted by this plan.

ACTION

Create a Brandon Equity Plan by 2026. Include:

- Identify priority populations
- Determine inclusive outreach methods

ACTION

Designate an Energy Equity Coordinator to oversee Brandon Energy Equity Plan.

OBJECTIVE

Meet Energy & GHG reduction targets for Thermal, Transportation, and Electricity.

POLICY

Sponsor 5 annual outreach activities that will educate the public about energy conservation.

ACTION

Coordinate and conduct annual public outreach campaign including 1 training, 1 educational mailing and 2 articles in local media outlets to encourage conservation of resources.

ACTION

Brandon Energy Committee will offer 1 annual weatherization and alternative energy educational event for individuals, homeowners, businesses, and nonprofits to educate and inspire them to weatherize, adopt renewables, and install heat pumps.

POLICY

Provide financial incentives for homeowners to reduce energy consumption.

ACTION

Apply for grants to provide incentives for homeowners to weatherize, adopt renewables, and install heat pumps.

OBJECTIVE

Demonstrate Municipal leadership.

POLICY

The Town of Brandon will adopt all efficiency and fuel switching actions in this plan for municipally owned infrastructure

ACTION

Participate in the MERP Program through building energy assessments and fund implementation of assessment recommendations for all town buildings.

ACTION

Implement weatherization activities at the town offices, police station, Town Hall, Fire/water district and the wastewater treatment plant.

ACTION

All new Municipal buildings will be built in accordance with the highest level of net-zero building efficiency standards.

ACTION

Develop a plan to support the town schools, fire district, rescue squad and other such entities in taking advantage of Efficiency Vermont sponsored energy assessments and weatherization programs.

ACTION

Produce 100% of town government electric demand from locally produced renewable sources.

ACTION

Investigate the purchase of EVs for Brandon Police Dept.

ACTION

Create and adopt municipal telecommuting policy in 2024.

ACTION

Convert town lawncare equipment to battery-operated as soon as feasible.

ACTION

Enforce the Green Fleet policy for all municipal vehicles.

ACTION

Publish an annual "report card" detailing Brandon's progress towards state GHG emission and renewable energy mandates.

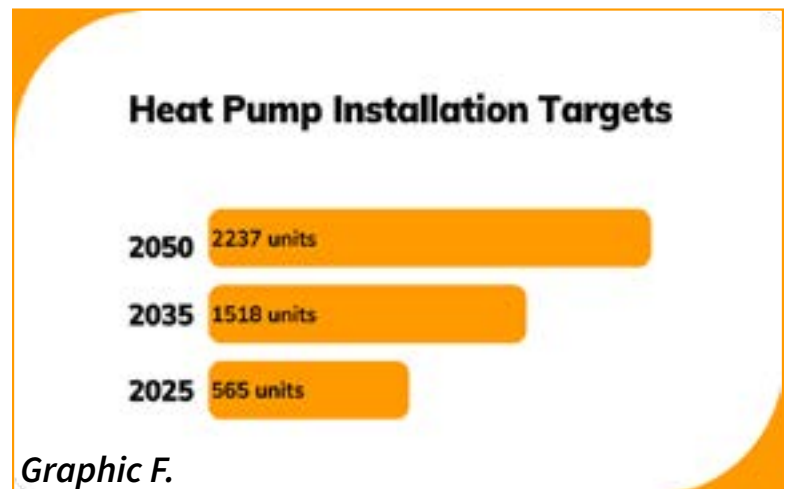
Thermal Sector Analysis

Thermal energy represents our largest use of energy. It is crucial that we significantly lower the amount of energy used to heat & cool our homes and businesses. Conserving energy is typically the most cost-effective strategy to do so, resulting in decreased pollution and increased financial savings. The town of Brandon will therefore prioritize weatherization and adopting higher efficiency appliances. We aim to use less energy to perform the same level of heating and cooling. We must therefore increase the insulative capacity of our existing building stock to decrease our reliance on fossil fuels. Graphic E. shows the number of residential units that must be weatherized to meet our thermal energy targets.

In concert with weatherization, we will conserve energy through adoption of high efficiency appliances. We can dramatically decrease energy use through the high efficiency of heat pumps and solar hot water collectors.

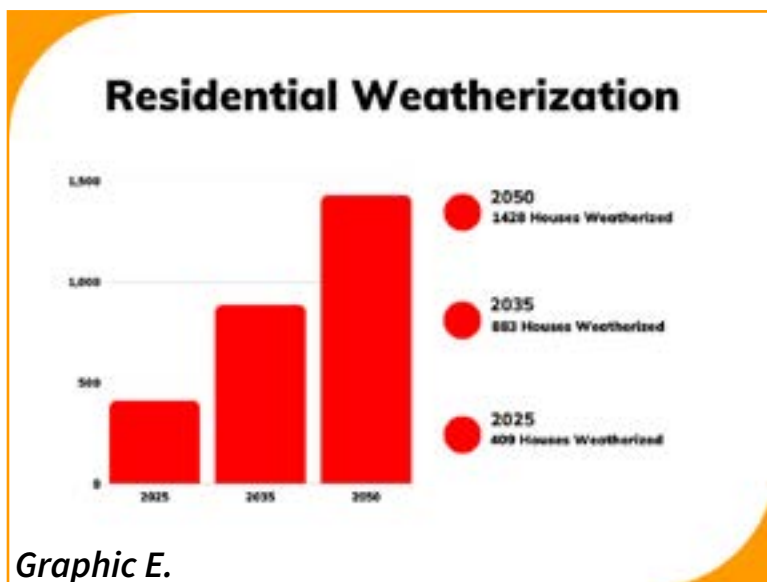
Heat pumps are basically heat transfer devices which move heat either in or out of an area. They can include air, ground, and water/wastewater sources for heat transfer. Heat pumps can both heat and

cool spaces, and heat pump water heaters can heat water. Heat pumps provide between 3-5 units of heating for every unit of energy they consume. In comparison, typical high efficiency oil boilers provide 0.84 units of heating for every unit they consume. Simply by switching appliances we can dramatically decrease energy consumption due to the extremely high operational efficiency.



Solar hot water collectors look like solar photovoltaic panels but circulate water through them to capture heat from the sun. According to the U.S. Dept of Energy, "Solar Hot Water can serve up to 80% of hot water needs—with no fuel cost or pollution and with minimal operation and maintenance (O&M) expense." It is our strong belief that these technologies are key to achieving our energy goals most affordably.

One can see that heat pumps and solar hot water technologies produce significantly more energy than they consume, ultimately lowering total fuel consumption. Graphic F. shows heat pump installation targets between now and 2050.



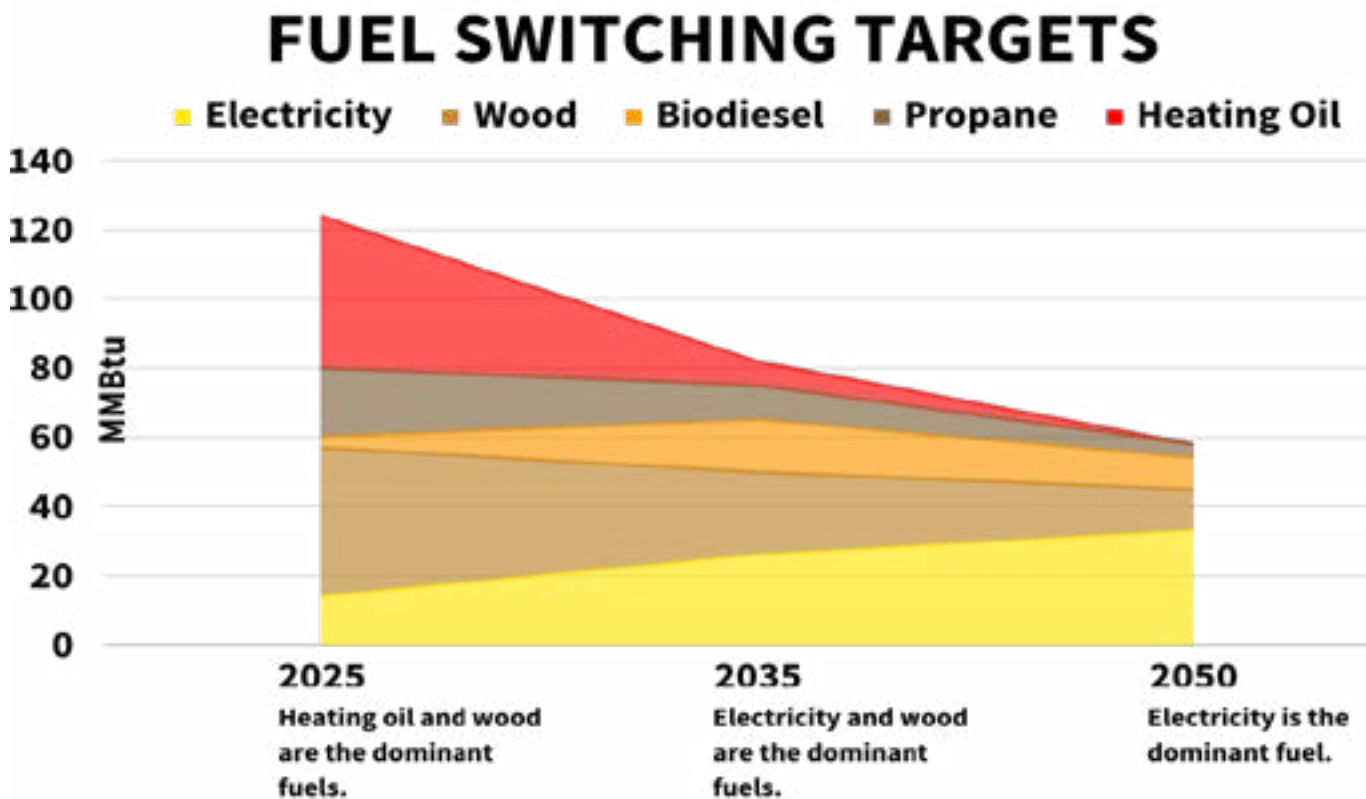
While we have so far outlined how to address the existing housing stock it is of utmost importance to consider new construction. We believe that adopting State building standards for energy efficient buildings is necessary to develop Brandon in an affordable manner that lowers energy demand.

An outcome of increased weatherization, alternative appliances, and building standards, will be our ability to promote a robust fuel switching program. As we use less energy and convert appliances to electricity, we will significantly lower our reliance on fossil fuels (see Graphic G). The charts below outline our goals for decreasing fossil

fuel usage while increasing use of low emission fuels for thermal demand. One can see that there is an increasing reliance on electricity to meet our total energy demand.

Green Mountain Power (GMP) is the sole electric utility in Brandon. The electric supply from GMP is 100% carbon-free and they are on target to achieve 100% renewable power supply by 2030. The town is consequently confident that this increased reliance on electricity will significantly lower our GHG emissions.

Please continue to the next section to see how we will implement this plan through our Thermal Sector Pathways.



Graphic G.

Thermal Sector Pathways

Below is a list of the Objectives, Policies, and Actions developed to implement this plan.

OBJECTIVE

Decrease use of Fossil Fuels for Heating and Cooling.

POLICY

Evaluate options for fuel switching and beneficial electrification.

ACTION

Host 1 annual workshop on heat pumps, networked heating and cooling, and upcoming renewable technologies.

OBJECTIVE

Increase building efficiency, climate resilience, and safety.

POLICY

Adopt the most up to date building codes.

ACTION

Adopt state building code standards for energy efficient permits.

ACTION

Identify buildings and facilities that serve critical community functions and evaluate each for climate resiliency and permits.

ACTION

Provide educational material about efficient building standards to all parties who are issued construction permits.

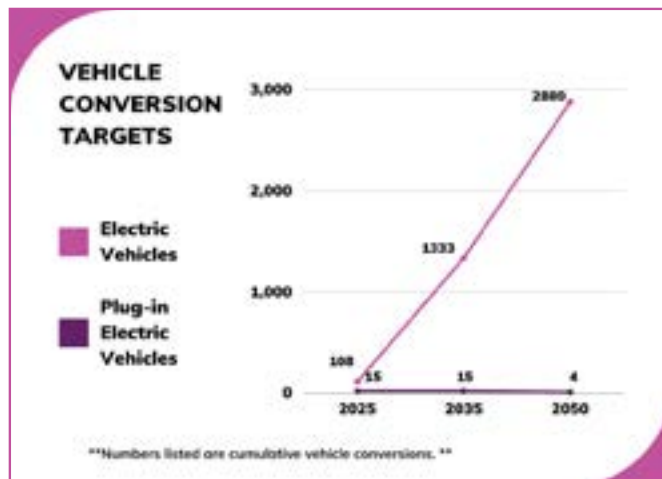
Transportation Sector Analysis

Transportation energy is a close second to that used for thermal. The most readily available options for the residents of Brandon to decrease transportation energy and pollution are increased efficiency, fuel switching to electricity, and decreasing vehicle miles traveled. This will require us to adopt vehicles capable of being powered with renewable fuels and using alternatives to single occupancy vehicle trips.

With energy conservation as our driving principle, we will need to adopt highly efficient modes of transportation. Cars and trucks are becoming increasingly more efficient, and electric vehicles (EV) are the most efficient. According to the US Dept. of Energy, EVs convert 77%-100% of energy consumed into power to move a vehicle. Comparatively, standard gasoline engines only convert 12%-30% of the fuel consumed into power for locomotion.

For this reason, we will need to convert our town's fleet to EVs and/or PEHVs (plug-in electric hybrid vehicles) to achieve efficiency and fuel reduction targets. (shown in Graphic H.)

While new technology is available for this transition, it is much more difficult to change the historic development patterns of our town. The most difficult action will be decreasing the number of vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by residents. Brandon residents commute an average of 24.9 miles. As is common to rural areas, many people do not work where they live. Many people in Brandon must commute to work, so decreasing the VMT is not as simple as suggesting people work closer to home. However, increased use of shared transportation can decrease the VMT in our area.



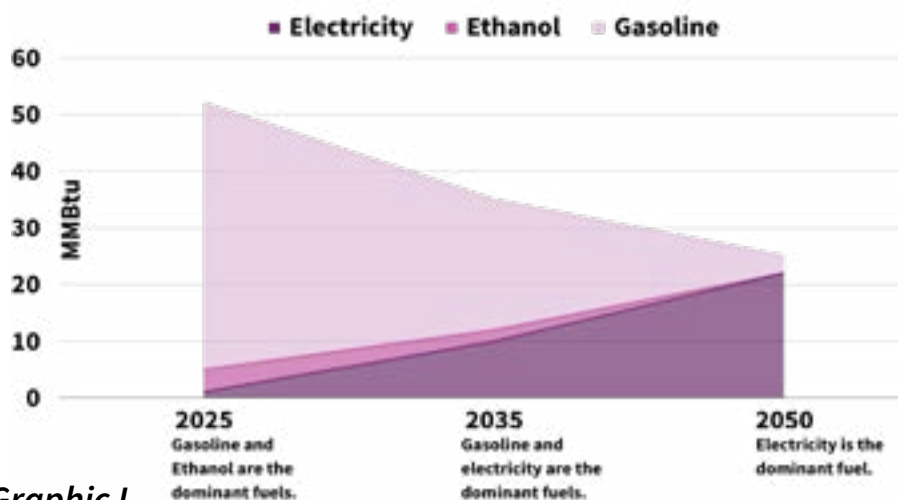
Graphic H.

Using carpooling and public transportation residents can meet our goals while still commuting as necessary.

Within town it will be much easier to decrease vehicle trips for activities like shopping and social events. Our town will promote walking and biking as viable alternatives to driving. Through the use of electric vehicles, shared transportation, walking, and biking Brandon will transition away from reliance on fossil fuels (see Graphic I.).

Please review the Transportation Pathway section of this plan for actionable steps to achieve these targets.

TRANSPORTATION FUEL SWITCHING



Graphic I.

Transportation Sector Pathways

Below is a list of the Objectives, Policies, and Actions developed to implement this plan.

OBJECTIVE

Decrease Single Occupancy Vehicle trips
through Active, Public, and Demand
Managed Transportation

POLICY

Provide public outreach and education
on Active, Public, and Demand Managed
Transportation

ACTION

Work with Go! Vermont to provide 2
annual public presentations about
Public Transportation and Ridesharing.

ACTION

Coordinate with Marble Valley Transit
to market The BUS, commuting on
public transit, and the town

ACTION

Provide 2 outreach & education actions
to businesses about telecommuting
opportunities.

ACTION

Provide public educational material
about the cost, environmental, and
health benefits of using bikes for local
travel and recreation.

POLICY

Connect public transit bus stops to
sidewalk network.

ACTION

Design and build ADA accessible side-
walk connection to all public transit
bus stops and the town park & ride.

OBJECTIVE

Convert primary transportation fuel to electricity.

POLICY

Provide opportunities to fuel switching from fossil fuels to sustainable alternatives.

ACTION

Support electric school bus trial for OVUHS and replacement of Drivers Ed car with an all-electric model.

ACTION

Work with RRPC to create an EV Charger Master Plan by 2026.

ACTION

Install EVSE in town as outlined by EV Charger Master Plan.

ACTION

Host 1 annual educational public events describing available tech, costs, and incentives for EVs.

ACTION

Recruit EVSE provider to install DC Fast Charger in town.

ACTION

Attract innovative electric transportation businesses (EV Bus, EV Taxi, EV bike rental, etc...) to operate in Brandon.

OBJECTIVE

Make active transportation a viable option for in-town travel.

POLICY

Maintain existing and develop new walking and biking infrastructure.

ACTION

Prepare a long-term plan to enhance walkability to the downtown center with a focus on safe walking and biking paths to schools, by 2026.

Include details on:

- Connecting trip generation centers with walk/bike network
- Developing a safe biking network
- Snow/ice maintenance
- Adequacy of existing bike parking

ACTION

Develop long-term capital plan to maintain existing and future walk/bike infrastructure.

Electric Sector Analysis

Currently, Electric usage represents the smallest portion of energy use in Brandon. The town has already met the goal of 100% carbon-free electricity and is well on its way to meeting the goals for renewable electric power supply. As previously stated, GMP, our sole electric utility, provides 100% carbon-free power. Consequently, our town is able to meet all electric demand without carbon emissions.

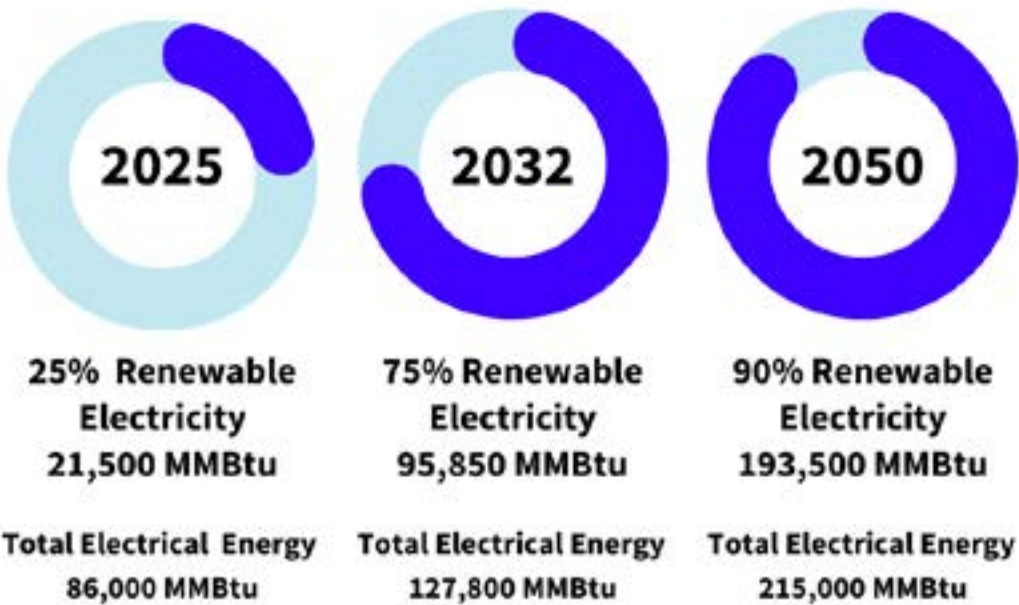
In addition to consuming carbon-free electricity, the town will need to increase the amount of renewably generated energy it uses. GMP is working towards 100% renewable electric power supply by 2030. It is important to recognize that this renewable electricity generation will require a partnership between Brandon and GMP. Our town is excited to participate in meeting our renewable energy goals by encouraging appropriate siting of renewable power sources in town.

It should be noted that as we switch

fuels in the thermal and transportation sectors, we will consume significantly more electricity. Total electrical energy consumption by 2050 will increase approximately 2.5 times the current amount. This will require substantially more renewable electric supply. Graphic J. below demonstrates these increases in projected total electricity consumption and the amount of renewable energy Brandon will need.

This dramatic increase in electricity consumed will need to be coupled with the major conservation and efficiency improvements made in the thermal and transportation sectors. While increases in heat pumps, building weatherization, and EVs will increase total electrical usage there will be a significant decrease in total energy consumption and overall GHG emissions. In the next section of this plan, we have outlined actionable steps to meet all electric sector goals listed.

RENEWABLE ELECTRICITY CONSUMPTION

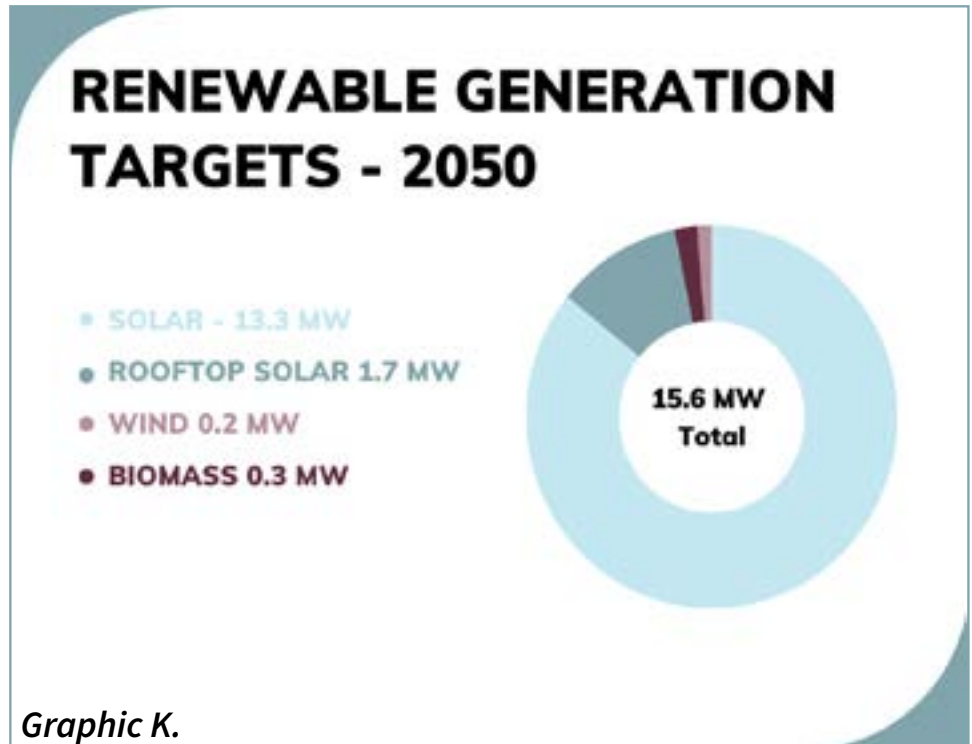


Graphic J.

Renewable Generation

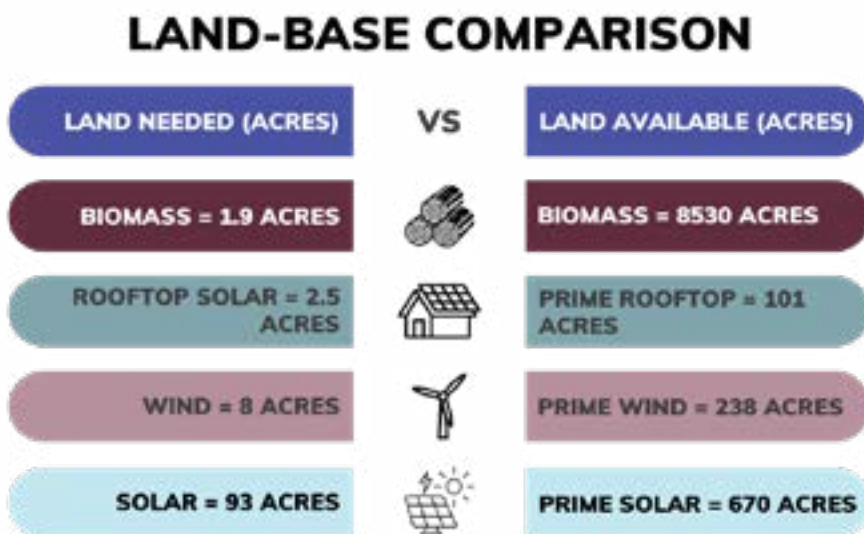
In addition to meeting the targets of decreased total energy usage and GHG emissions, the town will need to increase the amount of renewable energy generated and consumed. Therefore, the Town of Brandon must consider its amount of existing renewable energy consumed and generated. Within the town border there are currently 3.24 MW of installed solar generation. This is 4251 MWh produced on average each year, or 14505 MMBtu. This is approximately 2.6% of total energy consumption in town and 17% of electric consumption.

Graphic K. shows the total energy generation needed to meet CEP and CAP targets. These figures were calculated using data provided from the Public Service Department based on statewide LEAP modeling. We would like to note here that biomass targets are for use with



advanced wood heating appliances and not for electricity generation. A second note is that wind generation is for small-scale wind not an industrial scale. It is important to discuss our capacity to meet these renewable generation targets and discuss whether we have enough land base to install the needed generation. Graphic L.

describes the amount of land we need to host the above-mentioned facilities. The great news is that we have more than enough land in town to meet these goals. As one can see, Brandon can easily meet its renewable generation goals.



Numbers Calculated by Rutland Regional Planning Commission using Vermont Open Geoportal Data.

Graphic L.

Electric Sector Pathways

Below is a list of the Objectives, Policies, and Actions developed to implement this plan.

OBJECTIVE

Determine the most suitable locations for renewable development.

POLICY

Provide renewable generation siting guidance.

ACTION

Provide renewable siting maps showing prime through constrained areas.

ACTION

Provide a renewable siting questionnaire that references the towns' siting preferences based on the mapping details.

ACTION

Create Siting Guidance that will accompany the siting questionnaire by 2026.

OBJECTIVE

Maximize the potential for renewable generation on preferred locations.

POLICY

Maintain a non-exclusive list of preferred renewable generation sites and allow for inclusion of new sites.

ACTION

Develop a list of preferred sites and include these parcels in an appendix of this plan.

ACTION

Incorporate a list of existing preferred sites into the renewable generation maps of this plan.

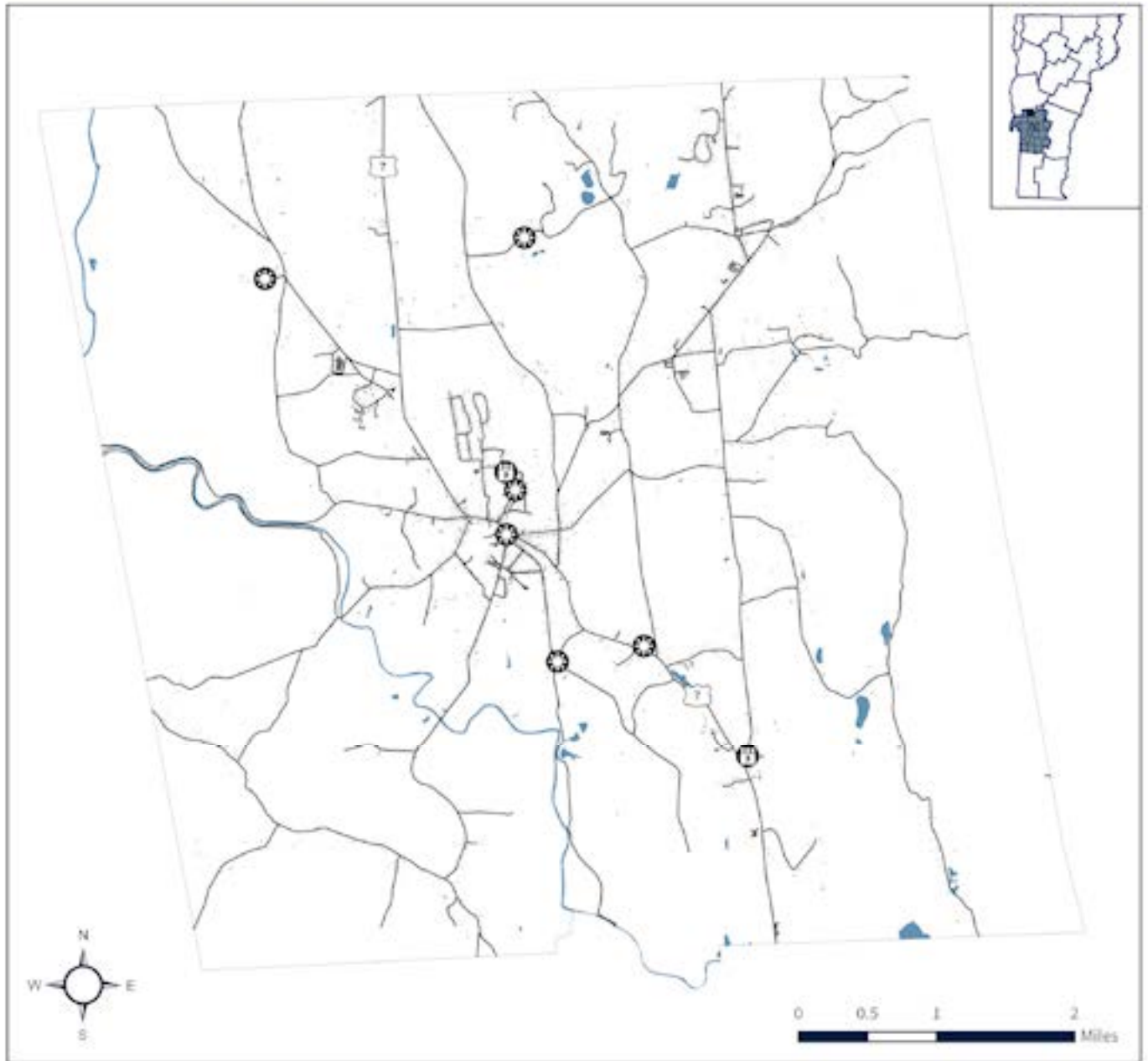
ACTION

Include option (on renewable siting questionnaire) to have proposed development designated as a Preferred Site.

Maps

Existing Energy Sites

Brandon, Vermont



-  VT Renewable Energy Sites - Geothermal
-  VT Renewable Energy Sites - Solar
-  VT Renewable Energy Sites - Wind
-  Electric Substations
-  Buildings
-  Roads
-  Lakes & Rivers
-  Streams

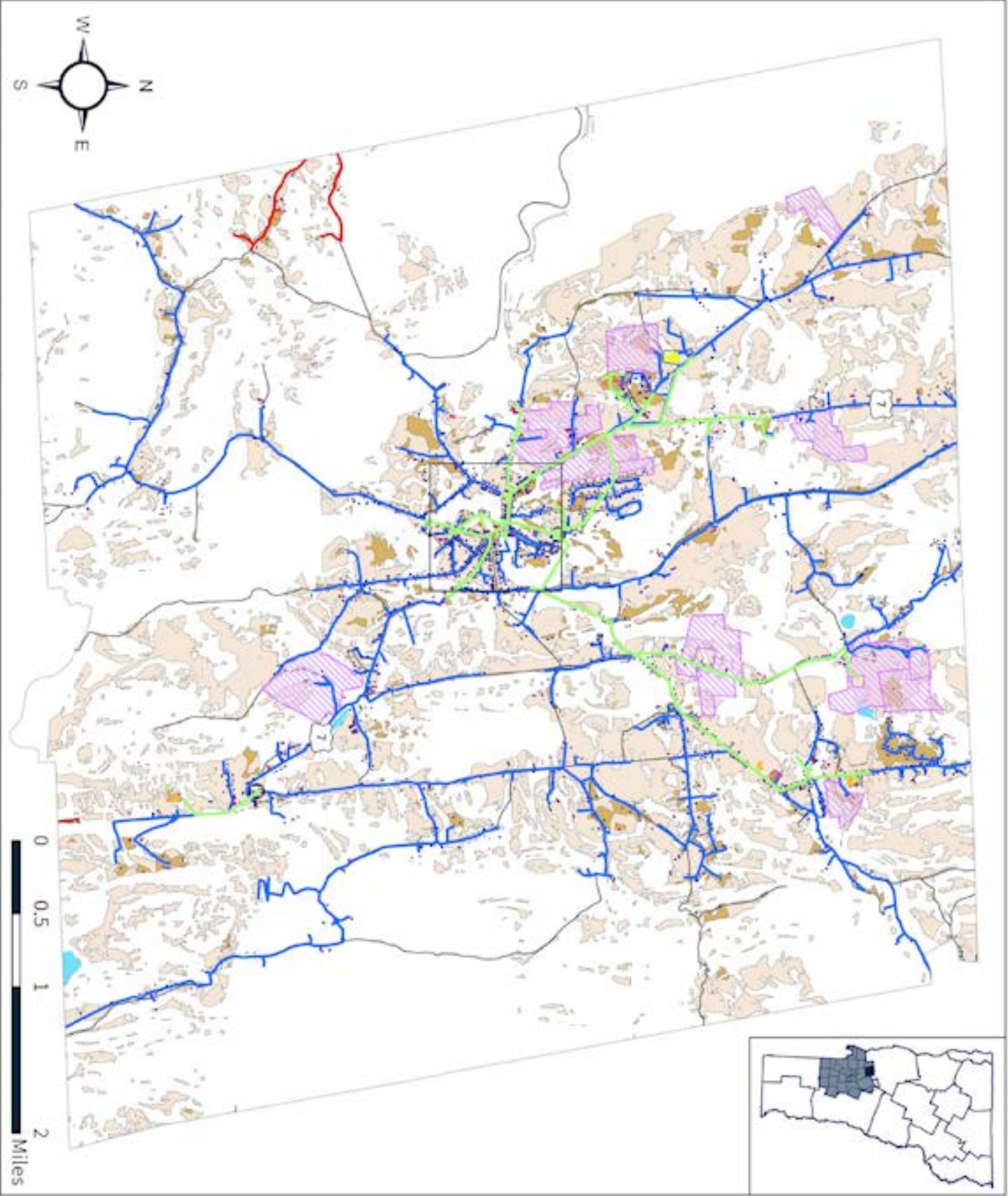
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RUTLAND REGIONAL
PLANNING COMMISSION

Solar Energy Potential

Brandon, Vermont



ROOFTOP SOLAR POTENTIAL
Downtown Brandon



LEGEND

Ground Mount Solar Potential

- Prime Location
- Secondary Location

Rooftop Solar Potential

Electric Productivity (kWh)

- 1,000 +
- 400 - 999
- 200 - 399
- 100 - 199
- 50 - 99
- 20 - 49
- 1 - 20

Grid Capacity

- 3-Phase Power with at least 20% capacity remaining
- At least 20% capacity remaining
- Less than 10% capacity remaining

Preferred Locations

- Roads
- Buildings
- Lakes & Ponds

Electric Substations

Description: Based on Public Service Department Requirements

Produced by: Nic Stark for the Rutland Regional Planning Commission

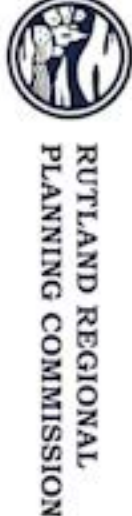
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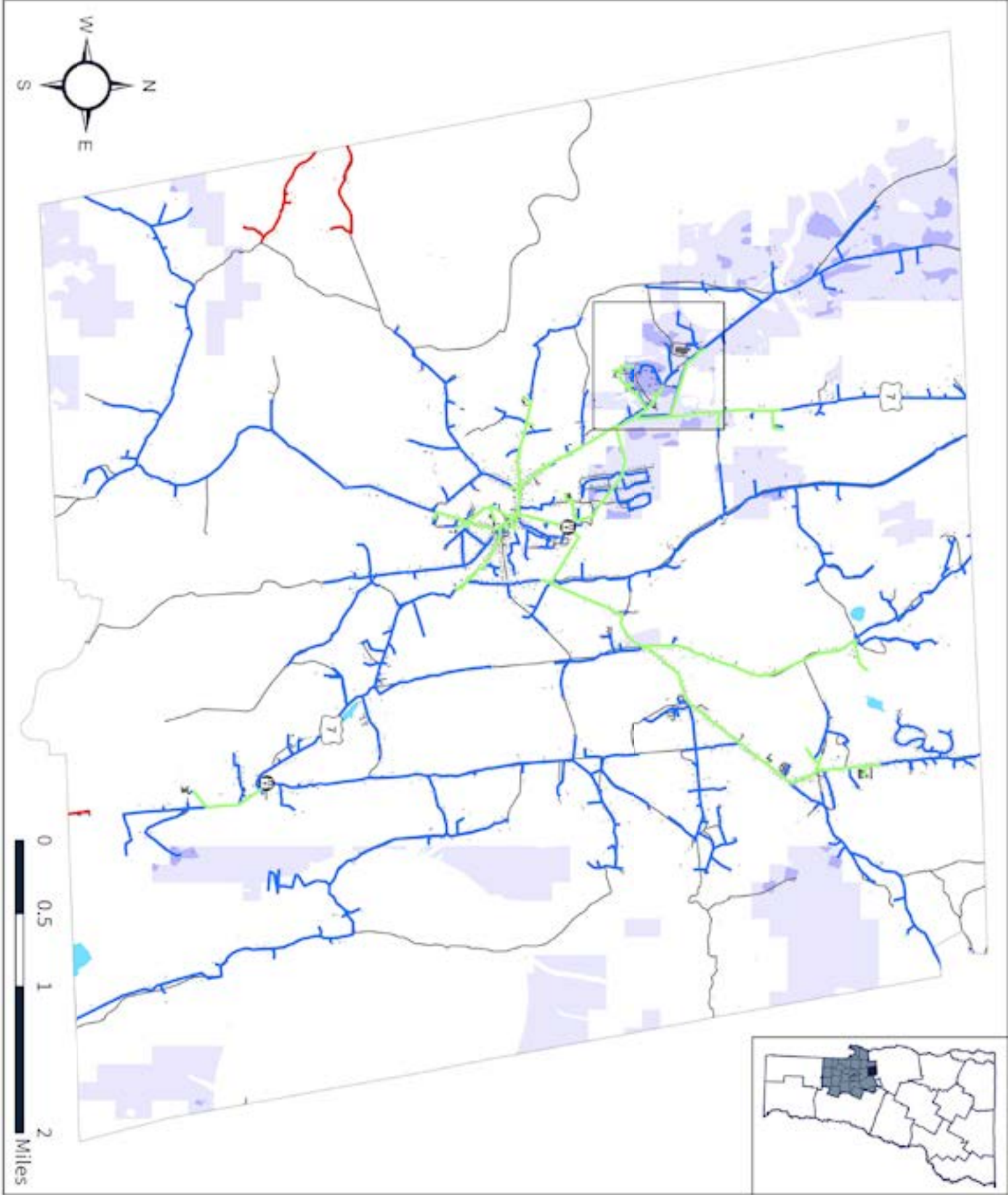
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Wind Energy Potential

Brandon, Vermont



PRIME WIND POTENTIAL AREA



LEGEND

- | Grid Capacity | Wind Potential |
|--|-------------------------|
| 3-Phase Power with at least 20% capacity remaining | Prime Location |
| At least 20% capacity remaining | Secondary Location |
| Less than 10% capacity remaining | Roads |
| Electric Substations | Buildings |
| | Lakes & Rivers |
| | Elevation Contour Lines |

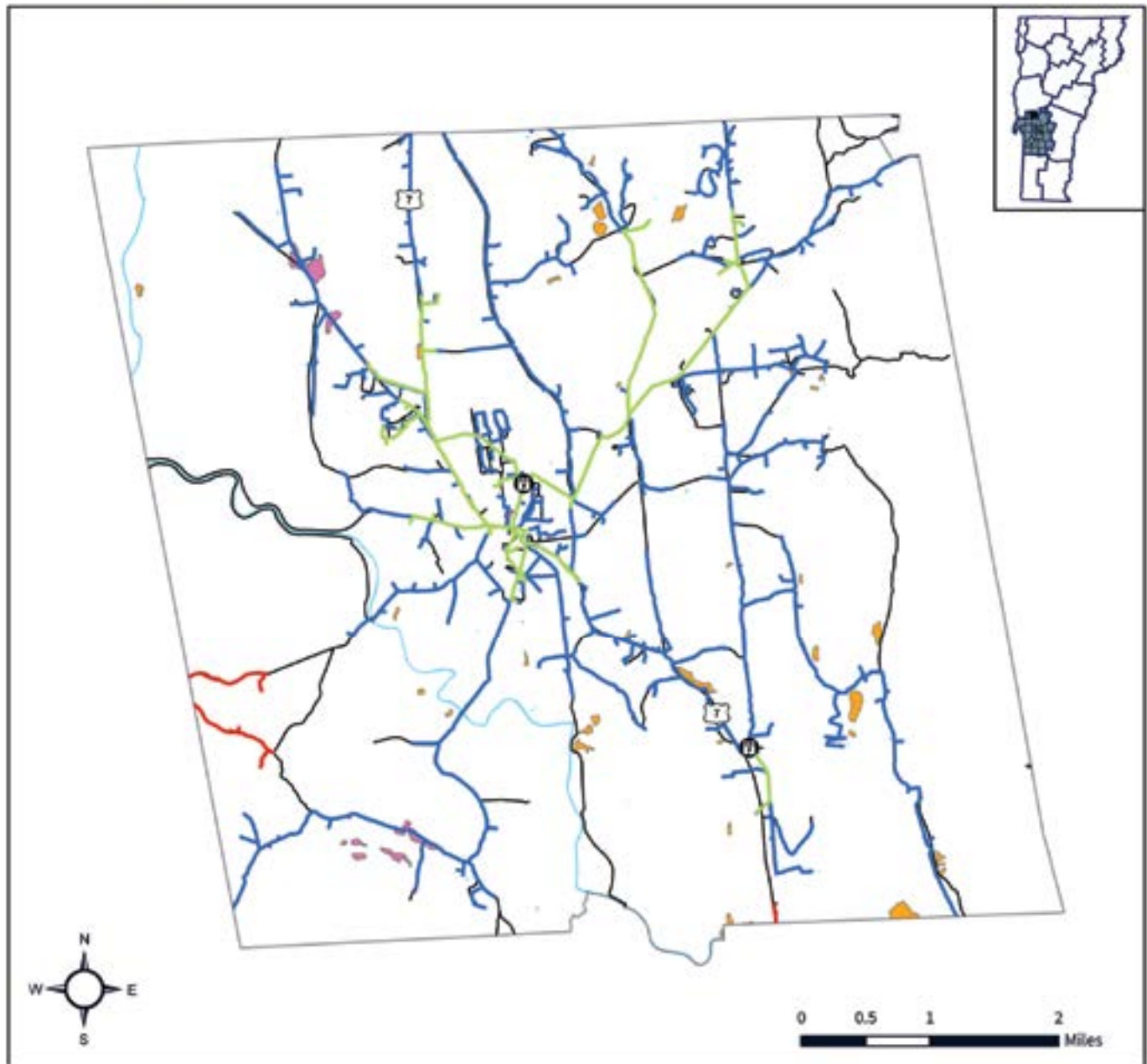
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RUTLAND REGIONAL
PLANNING COMMISSION

Geothermal Potential

Brandon, Vermont



- Potential Geothermal Closed Loop Pond Systems
- Potential Geothermal Closed Loop Horizontal or Vertical Systems
- Electric Substations
- Grid Capacity
 - At least 20% capacity remaining
 - Less than 10% capacity remaining
 - 3-Phase Power with at least 20% capacity remaining
- Lakes & Rivers
- Streams
- Roads

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**RUTLAND REGIONAL
PLANNING COMMISSION**

Appendix A.

Renewable Energy Developer Questionnaire

1. Owner Information

Name:

Address:

Email:

Telephone:

Name of proposed site:

Location of proposed site:

A. Owner intends to construct a __ kW

Sites greater than 15kW need to fill out the form below; completing the form is not necessary for sites under 15kW

B. This site is on:

☐ Public Land

☐ Private land

C. Is this a residential or commercial installation?

D. Does the site require local permits for improvements to public roads/infrastructure improvements to access/operate the installation?

If yes, please describe.

E. Has owner secured rights to use the above-mentioned site?

F. Please describe what benefits this project would bring to the Brandon community.

G. This installation will be:

☐ Net metered

☐ Grid tied

H. If net metered who will be receiving the generation credits?

I. How will security to the site be handled? Will emergency personnel be able to access this site?

J. Who owns the RECs (Renewable Energy Credits)? Will the RECs be sold?

2. Known and Possible Constraints

A. There are state and regional constraints on locating renewable energy installations. Please confirm this site does not conflict with these known or possible constraints.

1. Known Constraints: vernal pools; DEC river Corridors; FEMA floodways; State significant Natural Communities and Rare, Threatened and Endangered species areas; National Wilderness Areas; Class 1 and Class 2 wetlands.

2. Possible Constraints: Agricultural soils; FEMA Special Flood Hazard Areas; Protected lands (state fee lands and private conservation lands); Act 250 Agricultural Soil Mitigation Areas; Deer wintering areas; ANR's Vermont Conservation Design Highest Priority Forest Blocks; Hydric soils.

B. Please include a site plan that shows location of renewable energy project in relation to the parcel boundaries, the converters and necessary power infrastructure to access the grid from this location. Indicate here what utilities or services would be required from Brandon. Our infrastructure and population density plans strive to concentrate residential growth to limit the impact of service infrastructure required. Any commercial proposals within these targeted population centers would need to be weighed against the future use of these spaces for population and municipal needs.

Project will need to follow existing zoning procedures and practices.

3. Project Details

A. Type of generation: i.e. solar; wind; hydro; biomass.

B. Expected kW/kWh annual generation.

C. Will this project be done in phases? If so, what is the tentative timeline?

D Will a zoning variance be required?

F. If located on public land, has public approval been received?

G. Expected construction start date.

H. Expected completion date.

I. Site post-build maintenance plan.

J. Has a decommissioning plan and funding been established?

K. Town of Brandon project approval and ongoing monitoring timeline:

- o Completed review by developer. Town Manager, Planning Commission
- o Select Board review and approval
- o Pre-construction site visit
- o Final visit after PUC certificate of good issued and review of any scope changes
- o Mid-point construction visit
- o Final pre-operational visit

Appendix B.

Preferred Solar Locations

Grand List SPAN	Parcel ID
078-024-11369	0082-0343
078-024-10366	0144-0021
078-024-10407	0079-2085
078-024-10751	0143-0547
078-024-10787	0143-0543
078-024-10042	0082-0633
078-024-11902	0079-0817
078-024-11997	0070-0801A
078-024-12095	0082-1553A
078-024-12140	0001-0520A
078-024-11681	0101-0182
078-024-11718	0016-0074
078-024-11719	0079-0737
078-024-11832	0140-0035



This plan was written in collaboration between the Town of Brandon and the Rutland Regional Planning Commission.



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