

# Economics & Livelihoods

## 5.1 The Local Economy

### Current Employment

Central Vermont is comprised of 23 communities and home to approximately 64,094 people. Montpelier is in a unique position, serving as both the geographic center of Central Vermont and an economic and social hub for surrounding communities in partnership with Barre and Berlin. The regional Chamber of Commerce reports that Central Vermont has 2,672 employers, providing jobs for approximately 33,000 residents. In 2008 there were approximately 676 employers that provided positions for approximately 10,208 individuals in Montpelier (Table 5-1).

**Table 5-1: Employers and Employees in Central Vermont Communities, 2008**

Town	Number of Employers	Number of Employees*
Barre City	430	4,730
Barre Town	168	1,667
Berlin	223	5,146
East Montpelier	68	620
Middlesex	44	325
<b>Montpelier</b>	<b>676</b>	<b>10,208</b>
Waitsfield	206	1,367
Waterbury	288	4,793
Central Vermont	2,672	33,511

\* Total number of jobs, including Government  
 Source: Central Vermont Chamber of Commerce (2008 Data)

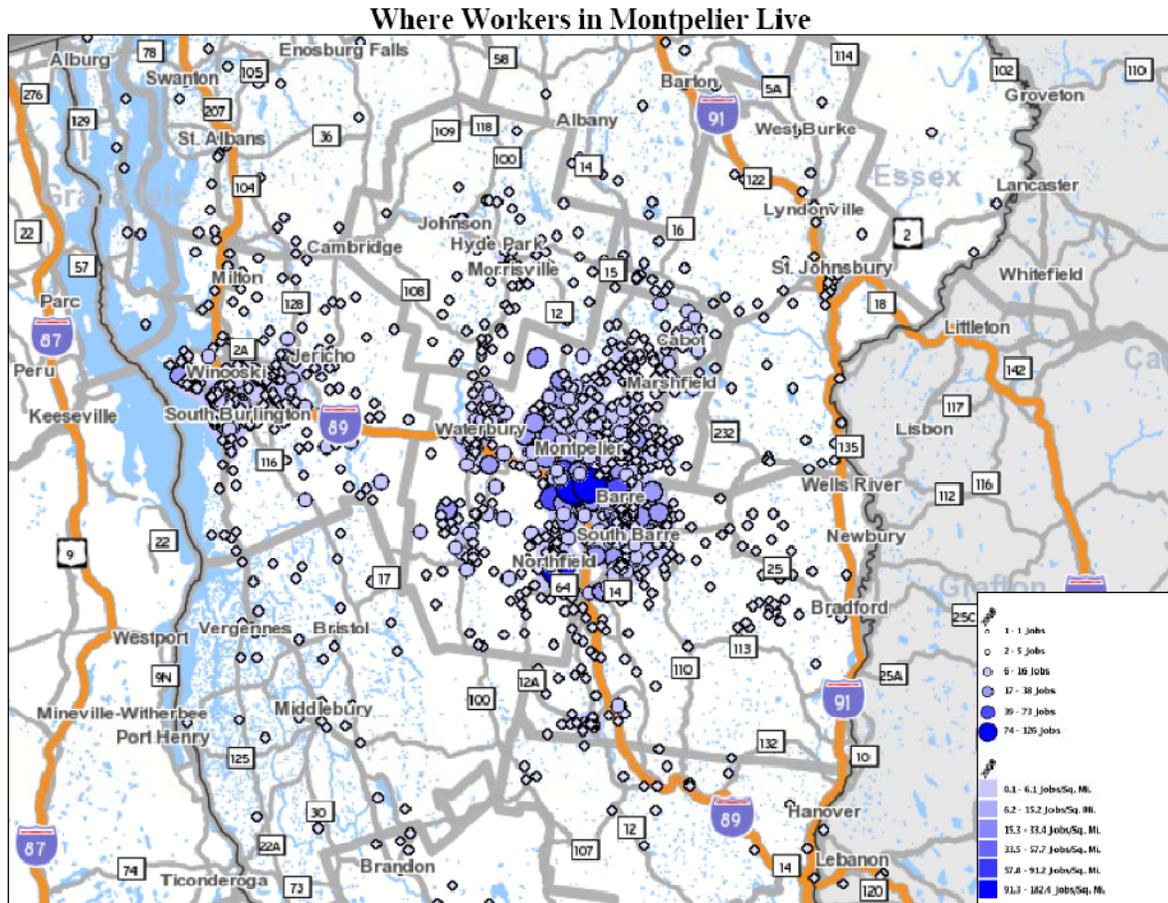
Montpelier is the capital of Vermont, home to the State legislature and the Governor's office, and a wide array of administrative and regulatory agencies. The State of Vermont is one of the single largest employers in the City of Montpelier, employing 2,612 individuals and paying total wages of \$133,365,743. Those individuals employed by the State constitute 29% of the city's total work force, and 32% of the all wages paid reflecting the higher-paying nature of state positions.

The location of the state capital in the city has a profound influence over the character and economy of Montpelier. This is illustrated in both the proportion of administrative and managerial jobs in the city, and the relatively high incomes enjoyed by residents. It is apparent in the variety and number of professional services that work with government and/or desire a location in the state capital. Montpelier is a significant source of employment for Washington County. The Montpelier Community Development Plan (1987) found that Montpelier provides employment for approximately eighty percent of the communities in Washington County. The MCDP estimates that Montpelier serves, on average, a daytime influx of approximately 10,000 people although more current estimates suggest a weekday population of over 15,000 people.

**Earth Charter Principle III.10:** *Ensure that economic activities and institutions at all levels promote human development in an equitable and sustainable manner.*

Montpelier is host to a number of Federal offices and agencies, among these Vermont's Congressional field offices, the Internal Revenue Service, and the Small Business Administration. In 2008 the Federal government employed 145 individuals in Montpelier, paying \$9,315,444 in total annual wages. Vermont Department of Labor statistics reflect that federal

jobs paid \$64,097 on average, a sum \$19,026 greater than the overall average wage, and \$21,083 greater than average private sector wages. The number of federal employees in Montpelier has slowly decreased from 178 in 2000 to 145 in 2008.



Jobs in Counties Where Workers Live		
	2008	
	Count	Share
Washington County, VT	5,867	57.5%
Chittenden County, VT	1,257	12.3%
Orange County, VT	711	7.0%
Caledonia County, VT	340	3.3%
Rutland County, VT	336	3.3%
Lamoille County, VT	270	2.6%
Windsor County, VT	253	2.5%
Franklin County, VT	212	2.1%
Orleans County, VT	207	2.0%
Addison County, VT	196	1.9%
All Other Locations	550	5.5%

Jobs in States Where Workers Live		
	2008	
	Count	Share
Vermont	9,949	97.5%
New York	110	1.1%
New Hampshire	102	1.0%
Massachusetts	17	0.2%
Connecticut	10	0.1%
All Other Locations	20	0.2%

**Figure 34 – Montpelier’s Labor Shed (courtesy of Central Vermont Chamber of Commerce)**

While the presence of state government is extremely important to Montpelier's economy, private sector employment provides the lion's share of positions. According to 2008 Department of Labor figures, total private sector employment was 5,876 and accounted for \$252,764,398 in total wages. This constituted 64% of total employment and 61% of total wages. Of the components of private sector employment, major employment providers are Finance and Insurance (24%), Retail Trade (15%), Professional and Business Services (13%), Health Care and Social Assistance (10%), Leisure and Hospitality (10%), and Educational Services (7%). Between 2000 and 2008, the Health Care and Social Assistance sector increased 20%, in contrast to Real Estate and Wholesale Trade, which lost 29% and 20%, respectively (Table 5-2).

<b>Table 5-2: Annual Job Growth in Montpelier, 1990-2008</b>											
<b>Economic Sector</b>	<b>1990</b>		<b>1995</b>		<b>2000</b>		<b>2005</b>		<b>2008</b>		<b>Emp. '90-'08 (%)</b>
	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Emp</b>									
Total Private Owners	499	5,600	537	5,518	551	5,840	551	5,709	578	5,876	4.9%
Ag., Forest, Fish, Mining	n/a	n/a	n/a								
Const.	35	n/a	18	n/a	16	n/a	22	n/a	23	124	n/a
Manuf.	21	267	20	249	18	198	15	129	13	n/a	n/a
Wholesale	20	198	15	Na	14	79	21	38	22	63	-68.2%
Retail	93	722	92	728	86	841	76	842	79	875	21.2%
Transp. & Util.	5	n/a	10	145	7	n/a	9	n/a	8	n/a	n/a
Finance, Insurance, Real Est.	49	1,851	48	1,553	53	1,571	53	1,395	53	1,434	-22.5%
Education	8	353	9	312	15	376	18	382	24	408	15.6%
Health care & Social Assist.	52	388	55	468	60	487	59	543	55	586	51.0%
Leisure & Hosp.	33	519	40	553	35	553	41	596	44	570	9.8%
Service*	183	1,013	231	1,252	246	1,455	237	1,461	257	1,486	n/a
Local Gov.	18	446	17	456	18	517	19	521	18	506	13.5%
State Gov.	23	2,319	24	2,387	37	2,610	46	2,548	59	2,612	12.6%
Fed. Gov.	16	167	20	148	18	178	20	142	18	145	-13.2%
<b>Total Emp.</b>	<b>556</b>	<b>8,531</b>	<b>598</b>	<b>8,509</b>	<b>624</b>	<b>9,144</b>	<b>636</b>	<b>8,920</b>	<b>673</b>	<b>9,139</b>	<b>7.1%</b>
/1 Units refers to the number of businesses paying unemployment insurance. Emp is the number of people employed in the sector.											
/2 n/a (not available) data is confidential but included in subtotals											
*Includes Information, Business and Professional Services, and Other Services except public administration.											
<i>Source: Vermont Department of Labor, Covered Employment and Wages</i>											

According to Table 5-3, a large proportion of the city's residents are employed in white collar jobs--a higher proportion than reported for either Washington County or the state as a whole. This corresponds to the high proportion of governmental and professional offices located here and suggests that many professional Montpelier residents both live and work here.

<b>Table 5-3: Employment of Montpelier Residents by Occupation, 2000 (Percent of Total Employed)</b>						
	<b>Montpelier</b>		<b>Washington County</b>		<b>Vermont</b>	
<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Persons</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Persons</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Persons</b>	<b>%</b>
Management, Professional, and Related	2,141	49.2	12,246	39.2	115,136	36.3
Service	712	16.4	4,629	14.8	46,384	14.6
Sales and Office	1,055	24.2	8,308	26.6	77,608	24.5
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	21	0.5	189	0.6	4,160	1.3
Construction, Extraction, and Maintenance	176	4.0	2,668	8.5	29,562	9.3
Production, Transportation, and Material Moving	249	5.7	3,236	10.3	44,284	14.0
<i>Source: 2000 U.S. Census</i>						

National Life is one of Montpelier’s largest employers, and the insurance company places a great importance on giving back to the community through employee volunteerism and a grant program. New England Culinary Institute (NECI) employs many people, provides Montpelier with excellent service opportunities, and aids in promoting the tourism industry by supplying area restaurants with world-class chefs and food service workers. The Vermont College of Fine Arts, Union Institute, and Community College of Vermont also offer high level employment opportunities. Montpelier Alive! enables downtown businesses to organize themselves and promote their products by teaming up to create events that bring community members into the downtown, such as the Thursday Brown Bag Lunches, where singers and bands perform at a downtown location.

Yet despite all of these opportunities, there are gaps. There are still problems with the local employment system. Youth find it difficult to find well-paid part-time jobs and full-time summer jobs. Many adults have a hard time finding well-paying jobs with adequate health benefits and flexibility, and childcare expenses are oppressive for many.

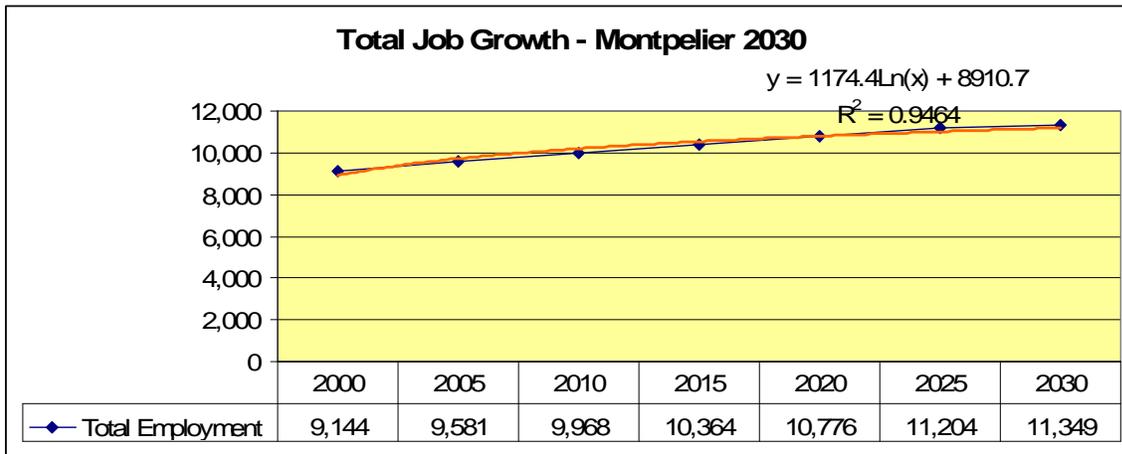
### **Employment Projections**

Local level employment projections were created in February 2005 as part of a Fiscal Impact of Growth Model that was completed for the City by Crane Associates. Total job growth in Montpelier is projected to grow to from 9,891 in 2009 to 11,349 by the year 2030. As can be observed from Table 5-4 and Figure 35, the City’s employment is increasing at a decreasing rate of growth. The City suffered significant job losses from 1989 to 1992 and then returned to its traditional rate of employment growth. Table 1-4 also shows the regional share of employment that the City is expected to receive. Montpelier’s regional share of total employment in Washington County has been on a steady decline from 27.6% in 1978 to 20.1% in 2009.

<b>Table 5-4: Total Employment 1978 to 2030</b>			
	<b>Total Jobs Washington County</b>	<b>Total Jobs Montpelier</b>	<b>Regional Share</b>
1978	27,822	7,685	27.62%
1979	28,607	7,650	26.74%
1980	29,203	7,902	27.06%
1981	29,438	7,681	26.09%
1982	29,850	8,231	27.57%
1983	30,383	8,193	26.97%
1984	31,087	8,324	26.78%
1985	31,981	8,652	27.05%
1986	33,157	9,095	27.43%
1987	34,371	9,244	26.89%
1988	35,879	9,583	26.71%
1989	37,108	8,785	23.67%
1990	37,383	8,531	22.82%
1991	36,783	8,199	22.29%
1992	37,031	8,147	22.00%
1993	37,860	8,344	22.04%
1994	39,312	8,486	21.59%
1995	39,626	8,509	21.47%
1996	39,832	8,541	21.44%
1997	40,718	8,527	20.94%
1998	41,288	8,597	20.82%
1999	42,078	8,994	20.37%
2000	43,136	9,144	21.20%
2001	43,399	9,266	21.35%
2002	43,696	9,261	21.19%
2003	44,866	9,294	20.72%
2004	46,036	9,434	20.49%
2005	47,206	9,581	20.30%
<b>2009</b>	<b>49,664</b>	<b>9,891</b>	<b>20.14%</b>
2010	50,279	9,968	19.83%
2015	53,424	10,364	19.40%
2020	56,766	10,776	19.30%
2025	60,316	11,204	19.40%
<b>2029</b>	<b>63,335</b>	<b>11,320</b>	<b>19.50%</b>
2030	64,089	11,349	19.50%
<b>Net New Jobs</b>		<b>1,430</b>	

The employment projections maintain this steady decrease in regional share unless action is taken to promote new jobs. Without new strategies to increase employment, Montpelier’s growth will have less of a regional impact on a comparative basis than it did in the past three decades. Neighboring municipalities are increasing their impacts on the region and are able to attract their own array of employers.

Figure 35: Employment Forecast to 2030



The same Fiscal Impact of Growth Model mentioned above also determined the City’s need to accommodate new jobs. Total employment was separated into four major employment categories: Manufacturing/Industrial/Transportation; Office; Retail; and Government. Employee square footage needs were estimated based on existing square footage usage patterns in the City.

Table 5-5: Square footage needs by Employment Type					
Employment Growth	Total jobs		1,430		
Projection Year 2029	Manu/Indus/Trans	Office	Retail	Gov't	Total
Job Type Ratio	0.03000	0.40000	0.10000	0.47000	1.00
New Employees/ Job Type	43	572	143	672	1,430
SQFT per employee	667	333	400	333	
<b>Total New Square Feet</b>	<b>28,605</b>	<b>190,477</b>	<b>57,181</b>	<b>223,735</b>	<b>499,997</b>
<b>51% for Growth Center</b>	<b>14,588</b>	<b>97,143</b>	<b>29,162</b>	<b>114,105</b>	<b>254,999</b>

Total square footage needs are shown in Table 5-5. This analysis suggests that the City will need approximately 500,000 square feet of new employment space over the next 20 years. If the growth center absorbed 51% of this growth, that would be 254,999 square feet of interior employment space. Given current trends in the city, where we have more jobs than our population, and more people are telecommuting to distant employers from home offices, even though this level of employment growth would indicate a need for new space for employees, it is our contention that the new *housing* growth in the city will accommodate a higher percentage of the employment growth than in the past. This means that the new employment space will not necessarily translate into new commercial construction, even though we have included these space needs in our analysis.

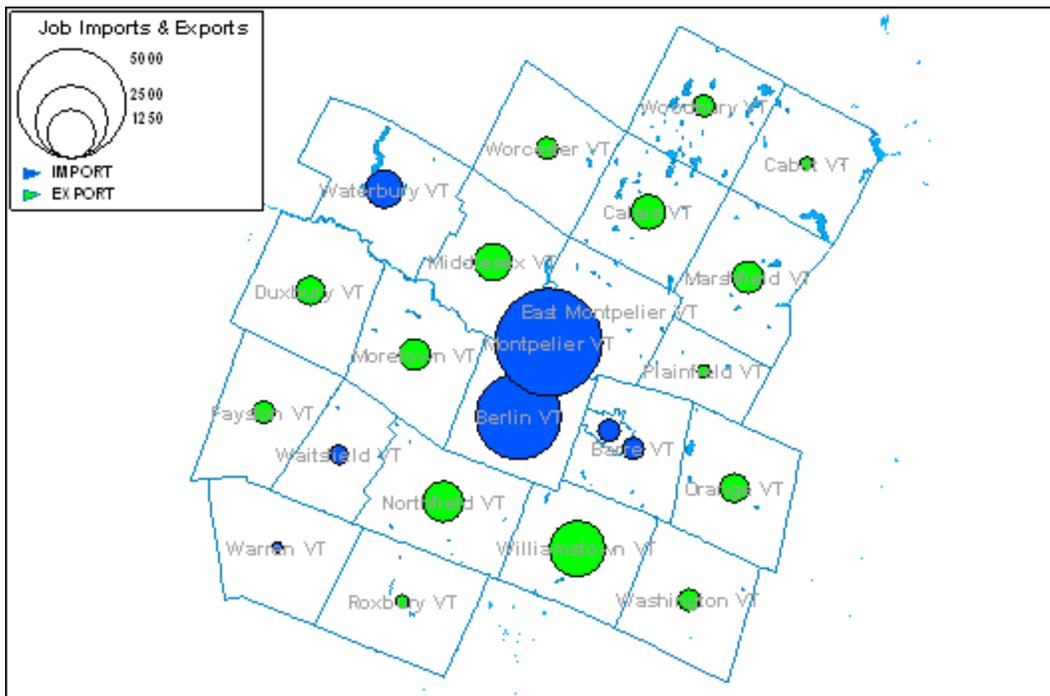
### Regional Employment

Montpelier, Barre and Berlin all serve as regional destinations for specific services, retail, and employment types. The three municipalities act symbiotically as regional partners each with their own niche. A 2004 market study comparing Barre to Montpelier, Berlin and Burlington

with respect to visitation and shopping patterns indicated the following: Barre is more dominate in manufacturing employment and hardware/garden retail; Berlin is the region’s top employer in the medical industries, and serves as the region’s retail center for groceries, clothing and automobile dealerships; and Montpelier is the regional employer in government, insurance, financial, and professional services. With respect to retail, Montpelier is a regional destination but is not dominate in any one category of retail. Rather, Montpelier is a destination for a wide variety of smaller shops in a pedestrian friendly environment with entertainment and restaurants complementing the shopping experience.

### Job Imports and Exports

Data for job imports and exports were compared for all the towns located in the Central Vermont region. The difference between the two sets of data was calculated and diagramed, as shown in Figure 36. The dark circles represent the quantity of jobs imported into the municipality while the light circles represent the quantity of jobs exported.



**Figure 36: Job Importers and Exporters in Washington County**

The size of the circle is directly proportional to the number of jobs. As can be seen from the map, there are six towns that can be considered ‘job-importing’ towns. Montpelier City is the largest job importer in the region. Berlin is second. Barre City, Waitsfield, Warren and Waterbury form the remaining areas of job importation. The remaining seventeen towns are ‘job-exporting’ towns, as the employment by place of residence is much greater than the employment by place of work. The job-importing towns contain the bulk of the employment, while the job-exporting towns contain the bulk of the people who fill these positions.

## Green Jobs

While it's not always easy to isolate the jobs that contribute to a sustainable city through their promotion of environmentally friendly technologies and practices from the larger categories, a Pew Charitable Trust report found that in 2007, Vermont as a whole had 311 clean energy businesses, 2,161 clean energy jobs, and a 15.3% growth rate from 1998-2007.

Nationally, the emerging clean energy economy is creating well-paying jobs in every state for people of all skill levels and educational backgrounds. This emerging sector is poised to expand significantly, driven by increasing consumer demand, venture capital infusions, and federal and state policy reforms. Between 1998 and 2007, jobs in the clean energy economy grew at a national rate of 9.1 percent while traditional jobs grew by only 3.7 percent. By 2007, more than 68,200 businesses across all 50 states and the District of Columbia accounted for more than 770,000 jobs, despite a lack of sustained government support in the past decade.

**Earth Charter Principle I.3(b):** *Promote social and economic justice, enabling all to achieve a secure and meaningful livelihood that is ecologically responsible.*

The private sector views the clean energy economy as a significant and expanding market opportunity. Venture capital investment in clean technology reached a total of about \$12.6 billion by the end of 2008. In 2008 alone, investors directed \$5.9 billion into American businesses in this sector, a 48 percent increase over 2007 investment totals.

In Montpelier, there are many employers who provide jobs in this area: Solar Works, Stone Environmental, The Institute for Sustainable Communities, the Green Mountain Institute for Environmental Democracy, Global Community Initiatives, the Vermont Natural Resources Council, and the Nature Conservancy.

## Jobs in the Creative Economy

The creative economy, which is made up of artists, graphic designs, architects, and other professionals who are able to work both remotely from distant urban areas and from home using communications and design technology, is a growing sector of Montpelier's economy. A community can promote its creativity and uniqueness to attract innovative businesses. Cultural expressions can help to build a sense of place. A strong creative community can help strengthen the downtown and improve community events, which supports the local economy.

One barrier to supporting the creative economy is our current zoning regulations, which were created when the economy was largely based on industrial manufacturing. The art community also lacks a central organizing body to help its members promote their trades. As the creative economy grows, zoning must be changed to allow for professionals to work and live in Montpelier and to promote incubator space for new businesses.

The companies and organizations central to the creative economy in Montpelier include Black River Design, The Vermont College of the Fine Arts, Lost Nation Theater, The Savoy and Capital Theaters, The Green Mountain Film Festival, the New England Culinary Institute, all the

area restaurants and music venues, the Wood Gallery, The Drawing Board, Cool Jewels, the Artisan’s Hand, Global Gifts, etc.

## Income

Montpelier's population consists of a substantially better educated labor force than the county or the state. This is particularly noticeable in the 19.9% of residents over 25 years old holding advanced degrees, nearly double the statewide level (Table 5-6).

	Montpelier		Washington County		Vermont	
	Persons	%	Persons	%	Persons	%
<b>No High School Degree</b>	275	4.9	4,540	11.6	54,896	13.5
<b>High School Graduates (or equivalent)</b>	1,223	21.6	12,353	31.5	130,804	32.4
<b>College Degree*</b>	2,040	36.0	10,946	28.0	105,182	26.0
<b>Advanced Degree</b>	1,127	19.9	4,825	12.2	44,901	11.1

\*Includes both Associate and Bachelor Degrees  
 Source: 2000 U.S. Census, SF3

The quality of jobs in the city and high levels of education are reflected in elevated median family incomes (Table 5-7). The median adjusted gross income is defined as married filing jointly and head of household returns. These figures do not include persons or families who did not file a tax return or who are unrelated people sharing a dwelling. The median family income for Montpelier and the surrounding communities is showing a steady increase over time. These income levels for Montpelier and the surrounding towns are substantially higher than the state average and may be partly attributed to the number of relatively higher wages of the state and federal jobs available in Montpelier.

**Earth Charter Principle III.9(b):** *Empower every human being with the education and resources to secure a sustainable livelihood, and provide social security and safety nets for those who are unable to support themselves.*

Some of these conclusions may be based on changes to the tax laws and filing requirements rather than any significant improvement in their economic situation.

While education levels and median adjusted gross income for families may be higher than the state average, the percent of people in Montpelier living below the poverty level is higher than many of the surrounding towns (Table 5-8). In 1999, 9.8% of Montpelier’s population (all ages) was living below the poverty level.

**Table 5-7: Median Adjusted Gross Income for Families by Town and State, 1997 & 2007**

Town	1997	2007	% Change (1997-2007)*
Barre City	31,261	41,310	32%
Barre Town	44,053	63,356	44%
Berlin	40,485	58,509	45%
E. Montpelier	47,685	65,820	38%
Middlesex	48,952	72,897	49%
Montpelier	43,742	64,725	48%
Waitsfield	45,210	69,764	54%
Waterbury	46,264	68,812	49%
State Total	39,408	57,433	46%

\*Area median income increased 20% over the same period but is not accounted for in the percent change.  
 Source: U.S. Census

**Table 5-8: Number of People Living Below the Poverty Level in Central Vermont Communities, 1999**

Town	Number	%
Barre City	1,175	13.0%
Barre Town	395	5.2%
Berlin	191	7.1%
E. Montpelier	93	3.6%
Middlesex	107	6.2%
Montpelier	767	9.8%
Waitsfield	97	5.9%
Waterbury	298	6.1%
Washington County	4,442	8.0%
Vermont	55,506	9.4%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

### Complementary Currencies

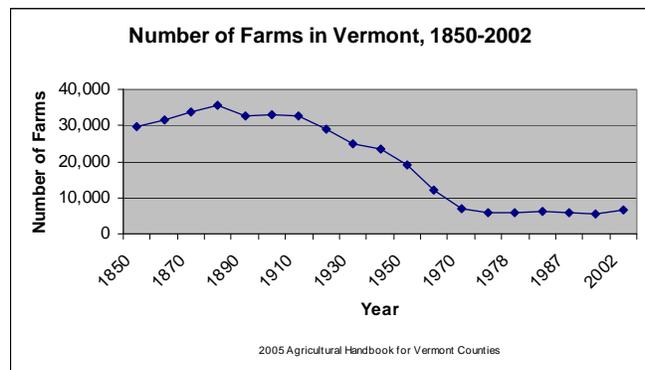
Complementary currencies are an increasingly important part of Montpelier’s economy by providing residents with an additional source of income, goods, and services outside of the traditional monetary system. The Onion River Exchange (ORE) was launched in April 2008. ORE is a Time Bank, a complimentary exchange system that enables people to meet their needs using their time and skills, rather than their money. In a Time Bank, everyone’s time is equal, no matter what service is being offered. Only two years later, there are over 350 members, and over 6,000 hours have been exchanged.

In September of 2009, the City of Montpelier received a \$1 million grant from the U.S. Administration on Aging to expand the Time Bank so that it provides elders in our community with an affordable and reliable service to help them continue to live in Montpelier and surrounding communities even as they grow older. Called the REACH project, for Rural Elder Assistance for Care and Health, it is a program that creates new jobs and offers people in the community with a meaningful way to continue to contribute to our well-being.

### Local Food

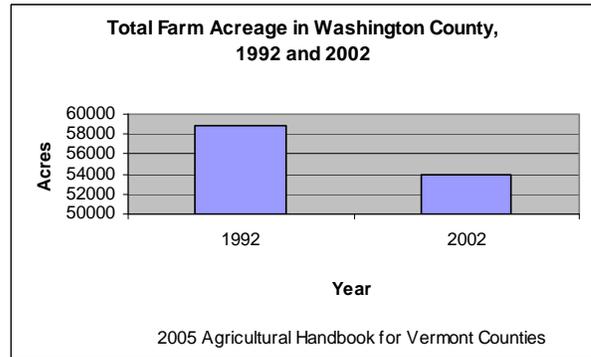
Vermont’s total land area is 5.92 million acres. In 2003, approximately 1.34 million acres, about one quarter, was devoted to agricultural use<sup>6</sup>. Over the past 130 years, Vermont has experienced a nearly 75 percent decline in total farmland acreage, from 4,882,588 acres in 1880 to 1,244,909 in 2002<sup>7</sup>.

**Figure 37**



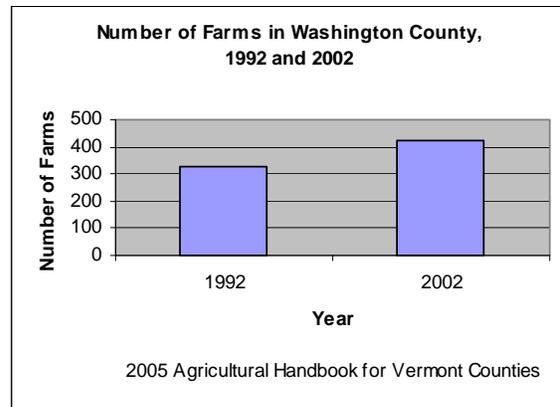
In 2002, Washington County had 53,942 acres in farmland and was home to 425 farms. When compared to other Vermont counties, this is a higher than median number of farms. Between 1992 and 2002, Washington County experienced an 8.4 percent decline in farmland acreage, from 58,891 acres in 1992 to 53,942 acres in 2002.

**Figure 38**

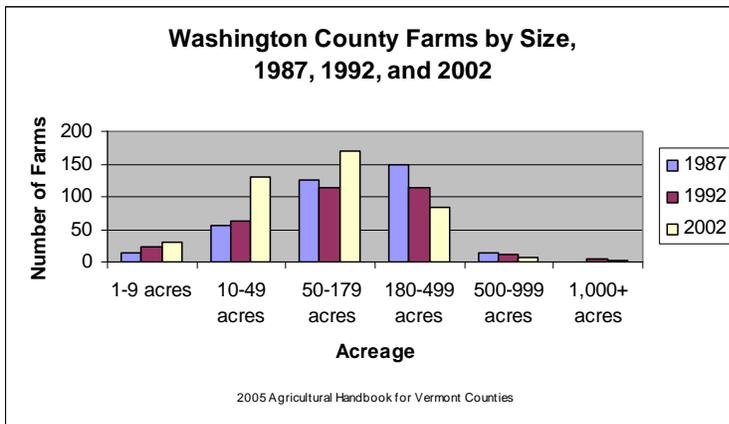


While total farm acreage has decreased, the *number of farms* in Washington County increased between 1992 and 2002, indicating that the number of small farms in Washington County is on the rise.

**Figure 39**



**Figure 40**



In recent years, the average size of Washington County farms has decreased. At 127 acres, Washington County has the lowest average farm size among the Vermont counties. The highest average farm size is held by Addison County, at 286 acres. Washington County follows the pattern established statewide with regard to farm size: smaller farms (1-79 acres) are increasing, while larger farms (180-1,000+ acres) are decreasing.

According to the Vermont Sustainable Agriculture Council, Vermont has the highest per capita direct sales (farmers' market, farm stands, and other forms of direct sales from farmers to consumers) of the 50 United States. In 2001, farmers reported \$9.6 million in direct sales from farmers to consumers, a 41 percent increase from 1997. Vermont has 46 active farmers'

markets, earning an estimated \$3.51 million annually. The five largest markets—Brattleboro, Burlington, Montpelier, Norwich, and Stowe—contribute nearly 60% of total state farmers’ markets sales.

Although Central Vermont boasts many successful area farms, the local food system is under-utilized and needs improved infrastructure including processing and storage facilities, and an enhanced market area. While the Montpelier school systems grow much of their own food and Food Works at Two Rivers Center is an asset, education of local food systems and how to prepare and store food needs to increase. Many farmers are aging, and it is important that their knowledge is passed down to future generations of food producers. The Economics & Livelihoods Committee held many discussions on the topic of food and supported the creation of a Central Vermont Food Systems Council in March of 2009. The food systems council is tasked with identifying baseline data and supporting projects that grow our local food system. There are many opportunities to grow our local food system and use it as a tool for economic development.

**Table 5-9: Comparison of VT & US on imports**

Comparison of VT & US Dependence on Imports		
Commodity	Imports as a % of Production	
	VT %	US <sup>13</sup> %
Chemicals & chemical products	955	9
Miscellaneous manufacturing	467	42
Textile, apparel & leather	353	8
Rubber & plastic	350	11
Primary metal	314	15
Stone, clay & glass	180	11
Transportation equipment	179	21
Food & kindred products	147	5
Paper & allied products	142	8
Machinery & equipment	125	24
Printing & publishing	108	2
Instruments	94	15
Lumber & wood	89	10
Fabricated metal	75	8
Furniture & fixtures	75	13
Coal, & petroleum products	---	7
Tobacco	---	1
Other <sup>14</sup>	---	---
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>17</b>
Electrical & electronic components <sup>15</sup>	37	34
<b>Total</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>18</b>

The table to the left illustrates both a challenge and an opportunity for Vermont, and Central Vermont in particular. From a study done in 2000,<sup>8</sup> it illustrates how much of a gap there is between what we produce locally and what we import. In the country as a whole, food imports represent only 4% of total production, whereas in Vermont, they represent 147%. As a result, Vermont ranks 36 out of 50 in its ability to feed itself. In 1997, Vermont imported \$1.8 billion in food and kindred products from other states and Canada, meaning that, on average, every resident annually spent \$3,064 on food grown and/or processed

elsewhere. If Vermont substituted local production for only ten percent of the food imported (10% of the \$1.8 billion = \$181 million), it would result in \$376 million in new economic output, including \$69 million in personal earnings from 3,616 new jobs. The same holds true of all of the commodities listed in the study. This presents a problem if there is a disruption in transportation, but it also presents opportunities for other kinds of production.

Montpelier has 1,658 acres of prime agricultural land, though much of the prime agricultural land within Montpelier’s Growth Center is already developed. Several farms in the community are currently underutilized. This includes Goldman’s Farm on the west side of town, the Gidney

Farm off of North Street, and a farm which is under a conservation easement on the southern side of town. The properties are currently owned by people who for one reason or another are not farming the land as actively as it once was. This is in part due to the low value of agricultural products and the high value of residential land in the city, and part due to the changing face of the U.S. economy. A food security plan would put in place steps that could be taken to protect productive agricultural soil within the city limits, to insure that future generations will have the resources needed to feed themselves.

The active Farmer’s Market in the city provides area farmers with a venue to sell their products directly to consumers, and Vermont Compost Company plays an important role in composting area food waste and producing valuable soil supplements for farmers and gardeners. Vermont Compost also has an active poultry farm on their property, supplying local stores with eggs.

The figure below describes the local food system in more detail, and identifies some of the gaps to be filled to make it more vital and productive.

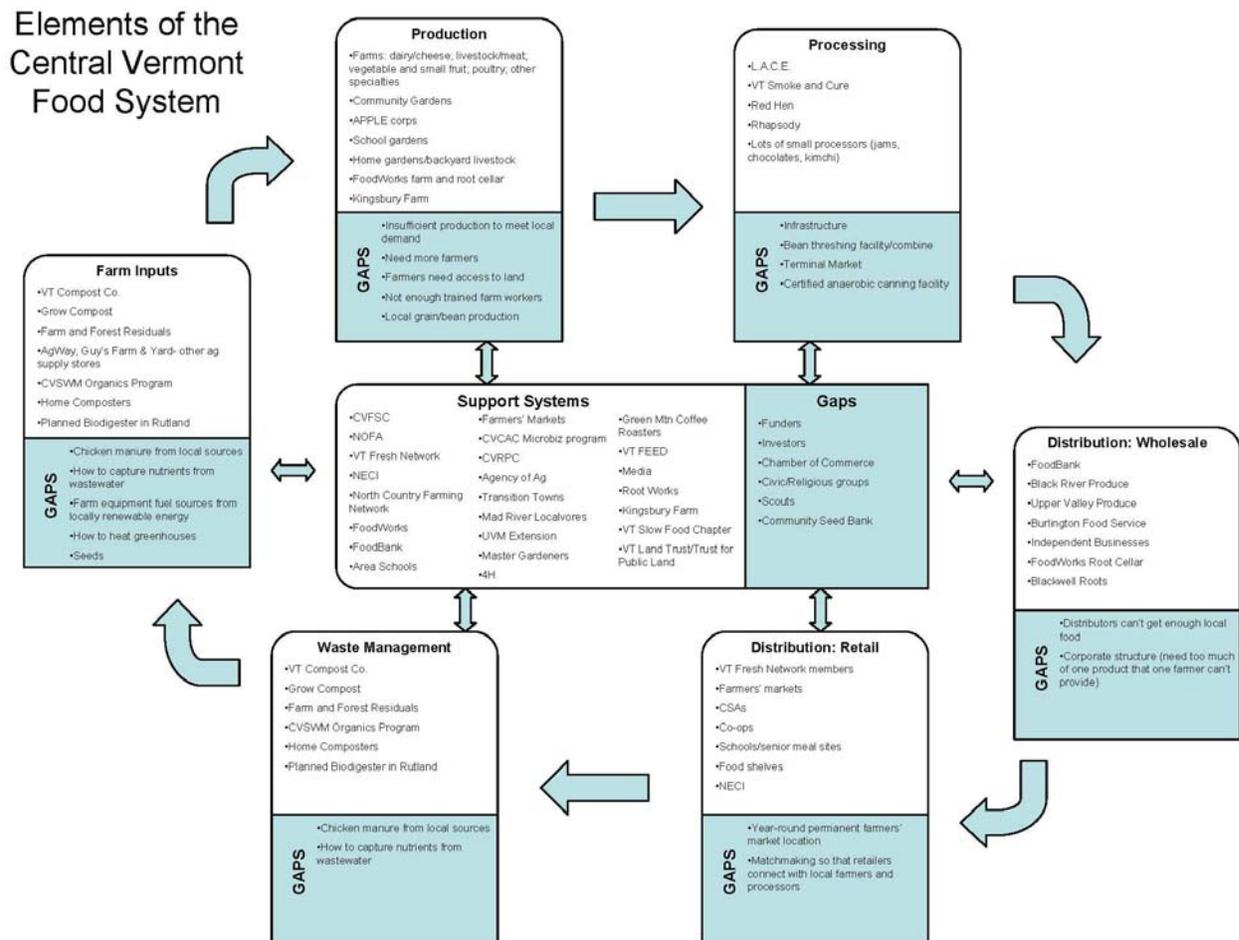


Figure 41 – Elements of the Central Vermont Food System

## 5.2 Goals for the Montpelier Economy

Citizens of Montpelier developed six long-range goals for Montpelier's economy. The goals are meant to reflect the vision that the city has for the long-term. People were asked what kind of city they wanted to leave to their grandchildren and future generations. All the goals reflect the real needs people have for a level of economic security and a way to contribute to their own and the community's prosperity.



### ***Sustainability***

All economic activities in the city enhance the natural environment, celebrate the rivers and watersheds, and build the natural, social, cultural, human, financial, and institutional capital base for future generations.

### ***Economic Well-Being***

Montpelier, Barre, and other adjacent communities cooperate as an economic, social, and cultural center of the Central Vermont region and provide jobs, income, housing, cultural activities, recreation, health care, goods, and services to area residents.



### ***Entrepreneurial Opportunities***

The city of Montpelier is a healthy environment for new ventures; businesses, schools, and other organizations find the support they need to initiate entrepreneurial ideas that create meaningful, creative, and livable wage jobs.

### ***Human Needs***

There are adequate income and human and social services in place so that over their lifespan, residents are able to meet their needs within the community regardless of age, abilities, employment, income level, and health, and involuntary poverty is a thing of the past.

### ***Meaningful Work***

Work, both paid and unpaid, in the community is life-enhancing, meaningful, and satisfying, and residents have opportunities throughout their lifetimes to improve their skills and advance to new challenges. The work available offers creative, recreational, and cultural opportunities in addition to those in the traditional sectors of government, financial services, public and private education,

### ***Vibrant Downtowns***

The Montpelier and Barre area has vibrant downtowns with a range of housing and activities in addition to many locally-owned businesses which offer a wide variety of affordable goods and services within an accessible distance



### ***Food***

Food sources derive from local, sustainable practices that provide us with a high quality, healthy, affordable, and secure supply of food. Neighborhood gardens and farms grow local, seasonal, and fresh food for all our residents, and neighborhood food storage facilities ensure local food in all seasons.

### Key to Recommendations (next page)

**Goals** are long-range visions for the community. Goals are identified by letters (A, B, C, etc.) at the top of each page.

**Targets** are measurable benchmarks toward the goals. Targets are identified by numbers (1, 2, 3, etc.) at the top of each table.

**Recommended Strategies** are action steps toward the targets. Recommended strategies are listed by number/letter (1a, 1b, 1b.1, etc.) within each table.

## 5.3 Economics & Livelihoods Recommendations

### Goal A: Sustainability

All economic activities in the city enhance the natural environment, celebrate the rivers and watersheds, and build the natural, social, cultural, human, financial, and institutional capital base for future generations.

<b>1</b>		<b>By 2015, the number of jobs that reduce total energy use and environmental impact on the planet has increased.</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
<b>Recommended Strategies</b>	<b>1a</b>	<p><b>Create opportunities in fields such as, but not limited to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renewable biomass district energy;</li> <li>• Energy efficiency;</li> <li>• Energy efficient and low-impact building;</li> <li>• Public transit;</li> <li>• Waste reuse and recycling.</li> </ul>	<b>Stakeholders, Private Businesses</b>
	<b>1b</b>	<b>Measure the number of jobs of this type in the local economy so that we have an understanding of their impact.</b>	<b>Planning Department</b>

<b>2</b>		<b>By 2020, 90 percent of Montpelier businesses regularly practice and report sustainable business practices in a manner consistent with the Global Reporting Initiative</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
<b>Recommended Strategies</b>	<b>2a</b>	<p><b>Support sustainable business practices.</b></p> <p><b>2a.1</b> Develop a program that helps Montpelier businesses adopt environmental practices that are both sustainable and profitable. Encourage these businesses to report regularly on their progress. Recognize businesses for their sustainable practices.</p> <p><b>2a.2</b> Once a national or state carbon cap on emissions is in place, promote carbon trading as a means to reduce carbon dioxide emissions so that we become a net exporter of carbon credits and foster a trading system within our local region.</p> <p><b>2a.3</b> Develop ways to adopt full-value accounting—including life cycle, environmental, social, health, and other “costs”—in economic decision-making.</p>	<b>Montpelier Alive!, Chamber of Commerce, Private Businesses, Stakeholders</b>
	<b>2b</b>	<b>A Genuine Progress Indicator (GPI), is examined and, if appropriate, applied in order to measure the sustainability of Montpelier’s activities.<sup>9</sup></b>	<b>Planning Commission</b>

## Goal B: Economic Well-Being

Montpelier, Barre, and other adjacent communities cooperate as an economic, social, and cultural center of the Central Vermont region and provide jobs, income, housing, cultural activities, recreation, health care, goods, and services to area residents.

<b>1</b>		<b>By 2015, the City of Montpelier demonstrates leadership in promoting regional planning and economic development.</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
<i>Recommended Strategies</i>	<b>1a</b>	<p><b>Consider establishing a more focused regional planning and economic development entity which enables Montpelier and surrounding communities to retain and promote the prosperity of existing businesses, as well as to attract economic development appropriate to each community.</b></p> <p><b>1a.1</b> The City organizes annual regional meetings and cooperative discussions with surrounding municipalities.</p> <p><b>1a.2</b> Work with neighboring communities to determine what municipal services should be shared.</p> <p><b>1a.3</b> Work with regional and neighboring communities to ensure that the central communities are the primary growth center of the region, intended to prevent sprawl by absorbing a higher percentage of regional growth.</p> <p><b>1a.4</b> Work with regional partners to streamline and consolidate available resources so they can be focused appropriately on economic goals.</p>	<p><b>City Council, CVRPC, Central Vermont Economic Development Corporation (CVEDC), Central Vermont Chamber of Commerce</b></p>
	<b>1b</b>	<p><b>Establish a regional redevelopment authority which has the authority to both inventory blighted property and direct their redevelopment and capitalize a revolving loan fund targeted to specific priority development.</b></p>	<p><b>City Council, CVRPC, CVEDC</b></p>

## Goal B: Economic Well-Being

<b>2</b>		<b>Montpelier builds upon its local advantages and gradually reduces non-essential imports*: a 10 percent decrease by 2015; a 40 percent decrease by 2025; and a 60 percent decrease by 2040.</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
<b>Recommended Strategies</b>	<b>2a</b>	<p><b>Encourage local purchasing and investment.</b></p> <p><b>2a.1</b> Encourage local buyers to purchase goods and services from local businesses.</p> <p><b>2a.2</b> Develop a searchable, online guide that lists where particular goods and services can be found and purchased locally.</p> <p><b>2a.3</b> Promote employee ownership and other approaches to increase local ownership.</p> <p><b>2a.4</b> Pursue municipal and cooperative ventures to increase local economic control.</p> <p><b>2a.5</b> Promote energy efficiency to reduce energy imports.</p>	<b>Stakeholders, Private Businesses</b>

<b>3</b>		<b>By 2015, employment clusters that provide the bulk of jobs in Montpelier report that they are supported by the local community.</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
<b>Recommended Strategies</b>	<b>3a</b>	<p><b>Create and maintain an environment in which existing and new businesses are welcome. Encourage community investments, such as educational, health care and municipal services, that will aid in attracting economic development opportunities while strengthening and improving viability of existing business with new businesses that complement Montpelier’s quality of life.</b></p>	<b>Stakeholders, Private Businesses</b>
	<b>3b</b>	<p><b>Invest in new and existing infrastructure to support additional growth and development in the designated downtown and the Growth Center.</b></p>	<b>City Council, State of Vermont</b>
	<b>3c</b>	<p><b>Given that the State occupies a large part of downtown, look for opportunities to collaborate and work with the State, and encourage it to be a partner in the community.</b></p>	<b>City Council, State of Vermont</b>

\* In this case, “non-essential import” refers to goods and services that could be produced locally but currently are not.

## Goal B: Economic Well-Being

<b>4</b>		<b>By 2040, there are mechanisms in place that support government, non-profit, and for-profit businesses and their employees during economic downturns.</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
<b>Recommended Strategies</b>	<b>4a</b>	<p><b>Develop mechanisms to support businesses in times of economic stress.</b></p> <p><b>4a.1</b> Enhance the City’s loan program for businesses under stress.</p> <p><b>4a.2</b> Develop a regional value exchange that allows businesses to exchange goods and services with one another using complementary currency. Use the Swiss WIR as a model.*</p> <p><b>4a.3</b> Explore and implement economic development projects that boost the local economy. Use other cities as a model.†</p> <p><b>4a.4</b> Establish a Smart Card system which encourages both businesses and consumers to take advantage of local goods and services.‡</p> <p><b>4a.5</b> Promote an economic mix deep and broad enough to mitigate downturns in specific sectors.</p>	<p><b>Planning Department, CVEDC, Montpelier Alive!, Private Businesses</b></p>

\* WIR is a cooperative association of small to medium size, independent Swiss businesses for the purpose of mobilizing their own credit potentialities, i.e., without using commercial banks as intermediaries, to facilitate business transactions within their own circle.

† Many cities have developed innovative methods for boosting their local economies. For example, the City of Lancaster, California, developed “Shop&Drive Lancaster,” an incentive program that rebates vehicle registration fees in the form of “Shop&Dine” dollars when a consumer buys or leases a vehicle from a participating Lancaster dealer. “Shop&Dine Lancaster” rewards local shoppers who spend \$300 or more with any Lancaster business with a \$30 “Shop&Dine Lancaster” gift card to be used at local businesses. These programs support consumers and local businesses and help create a stronger bond between citizens and local government.

<http://www.cityoflancasterca.org/index.aspx?page=20>.

‡ A Smart Card system would encourage businesses and consumers to shop locally. Businesses could earn credit for engaging in sustainable practices, such as recycling, green purchasing, etc., and then use its credit to exchange goods and services with other local businesses. Consumers could earn credit for shopping locally and eventually redeem credit in local stores.

## Goal C: Meaningful Work

Work, both paid and unpaid, in the community is life-enhancing, meaningful, and satisfying, and residents have opportunities throughout their lifetimes to improve their skills and advance to new challenges. The work available offers creative, recreational, and cultural opportunities in addition to those in the traditional sectors of government, financial services, public and private education, non-profit, professional services, social support, manufacturing, food business, and retail.

<b>1</b>		<b>By 2020, jobs in the creative, knowledge-based economy, which are high quality and well-compensated positions, increase.*</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
<i>Recommended Strategies</i>	<b>1a</b>	<b>Foster an environment that attracts and retains talented and creative people by:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting and encouraging existing innovators, such as local artists, creative institutes, and entrepreneurs;</li> <li>Providing access to the kind of technology that facilitates communication and creativity;</li> <li>Respecting and celebrating diversity; and</li> <li>Increasing affordable studio space.</li> </ul>	<b>Stakeholders</b>
	<b>1b</b>	<b>Measure the number of creative, knowledge-based jobs in the local economy so that we have an understanding of their impact.</b>	<b>Planning Department</b>

<b>2</b>		<b>By 2020, 90 percent of retirees report that they are engaged in fulfilling activities that contribute to the economy and/or the community.</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
<i>Recommended Strategies</i>	<b>2a</b>	<b>Create flexible work schedules, seasonal work and volunteer opportunities for retirees, and promote a change in attitude toward hiring older workers.</b>	<b>REACH, Stakeholders</b>

\* A recent theory, put forth by economist and social scientist Richard Florida, suggests that the creative, knowledge-based economy is a key driving force for economic development in post-industrial U.S. cities. The “Creative Class” is made up of knowledge workers, intellectuals and various types of artists.

## Goal C: Meaningful Work

<b>3</b>		<b>By 2025, the number of programs that provide employment experience and skill development for all ages has increased.</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
<i>Recommended Strategies</i>	<b>3a</b>	<b>Provide more “place-based,” experiential, and out-of-school educational opportunities for all ages, including internships, work-study programs, and community service requirements.</b>	<b>School Board, Chamber of Commerce, CVEDC, Private Businesses</b>
	<b>3a.1</b>	Assist businesses in utilizing local labor, community services, and community facilities by coordinating educational and employment needs to ensure a highly skilled and professional workforce.	
	<b>3a.2</b>	Support and enhance existing community service and service learning programs in the school systems.	
	<b>3a.3</b>	Create a central database listing internships, fellowships, apprenticeships, and service programs available in the Washington County region.	
	<b>3a.4</b>	Encourage local businesses and non-profits to offer internships, work-study programs, and volunteer opportunities.	

<b>4</b>		<b>By 2040, 85 percent of employees report a high degree of job satisfaction and feel like their work is meaningful.</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
<i>Recommended Strategies</i>	<b>4a</b>	<b>Develop an online job database that helps people match their skills to available jobs in the area.</b>	<b>Stakeholders, Private Businesses</b>
	<b>4b</b>	<b>Explore and promote ways to encourage people to value all occupations and educational achievements and recognize each contributes to the overall needs of the community. Consider:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting cross-training as a means to enrich work and increase productivity;</li> <li>• Adding responsibility to jobs;</li> <li>• Engaging people in more problem-solving; and</li> <li>• Exploring ways to shift the mindset that values higher education and certain occupations more than other educational achievement levels and occupations.</li> </ul>	<b>Local Employers, Stakeholders</b>
	<b>4c</b>	<b>Continue to promote volunteerism, creative work, and community service as alternative ways to obtain meaningful work.</b>	<b>REACH, Stakeholders</b>

## Goal C: Meaningful Work

<b>5</b>		<b>By 2040, full employment of the labor force, defined as unemployment below 5%, is sustained.</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
<b>Recommended Strategies</b>	<b>5a</b>	<p><b>Develop approaches that ensure we have an adaptive workforce.</b></p> <p><b>5a.1</b> Support new initiatives and business expansions that diversify services, increase or maintain average wages, provide quality jobs and/or meet an identified community need.</p> <p><b>5a.2</b> Encourage clusters of employment to provide lateral mobility so individuals can change jobs without switching fields.</p> <p><b>5a.3</b> Develop ways that support the transfer of skills to new careers as the economy changes.</p> <p><b>5a.4</b> Develop a job readiness training center for higher skilled jobs in collaboration with local educational institutions, employers, and the Vermont Department of Employment and Training.</p>	<p><b>CVEDC, Planning Department, Private Businesses</b></p>
	<b>5b</b>	<p><b>Support and expand existing employment clusters, such as higher education, the insurance industry, and government, so that individuals can change jobs without switching fields.</b></p>	<p><b>Stakeholders, Private Businesses</b></p>

## Goal D: Entrepreneurial Opportunities

The city of Montpelier is a healthy environment for new ventures; businesses, schools, and other organizations find the support they need to initiate entrepreneurial ideas that create meaningful, creative, and livable wage jobs.

<b>1</b>		<b>By 2015, there is a clearinghouse for programs and opportunities to learn about business and entrepreneurship.</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
<i>Recommended Strategies</i>	<b>1a</b>	<p><b>Support new and existing programs which help community members and entrepreneurs to fully understand entrepreneurship.</b></p> <p><b>1a.1</b> Work with government and educational institutions to ensure training about business issues is available to local small businesses.</p> <p><b>1a.2</b> Encourage entrepreneurs to meet with community members to gather interest and establish community buy-in.</p> <p><b>1a.3</b> Develop school curriculum and community programs for entrepreneurial skill development, including business and financial management.</p>	<p><b>Public and Private Schools, SBDC, Private Businesses</b></p>

## Goal D: Entrepreneurial Opportunities

2	By 2025, entrepreneurial ventures, as measured by the number of people employed by new businesses, increases by 50 percent.	Responsible Party
Recommended Strategies	<p><b>2a Provide needed support and assistance to new ventures.</b></p> <p><b>2a.1</b> Provide links to entrepreneurial resources on the City of Montpelier website.</p> <p><b>2a. 2</b> Provide useful information to prospective businesses and developers in order to attract increased investment in the community. Develop, maintain, and market an inventory of available sites and the expansion needs of existing businesses.</p> <p><b>2a.3</b> Support organizations and programs, such as the CVCAC Micro-Business Development Program, Community Capital of Vermont, Central Vermont Economic Development Corporation, and the Vermont Small Business Association, that assist with the working capital and expansion needs of existing or new business. Consider exploring funding opportunities to support such programs.</p> <p><b>2a.4</b> Develop a non-profit/for-profit incubator space with the infrastructure and communication technology needed for new entities.</p> <p><b>2a.5</b> Lobby the state for policy change around local investment so that unaccredited investors can make low-risk investments in locally owned businesses.*</p> <p><b>2a.6</b> Support tax advantages, such as tax-increment financing (TIF), that encourage re-investment.</p> <p><b>2a.7</b> Facilitate access to venture capital by connecting new businesses with resources.</p> <p><b>2a.8</b> Support disadvantaged and women-owned businesses.†</p>	<p><b>Planning Department, Montpelier Alive!, CVEDC, Private Businesses</b></p>

\* Currently, the Securities and Exchange Commission prohibits small investors who are “unaccredited” from investing in small businesses.

† A disadvantaged business is a business that is at least 51 percent owned by one or more individuals who are both socially and economically disadvantaged or, in the case of any publicly owned business of which 51% of the stock is owned by such individuals; and whose management and daily business operations are controlled by one or more such individuals. A woman-owned business is any business which is at least 51% owned by one or more women; and management and daily business operations are controlled by one or more women who own the business.

## Goal E: Human Needs

There are adequate income and human and social services in place so that over their lifespan, residents are able to meet their needs within the community regardless of age, abilities, employment, income level, and health, and involuntary poverty is a thing of the past.

1	By 2020, there is an increase in the percentage of Montpelier residents that hold jobs paying a livable wage, and the number of residents living at or below 200 percent of the poverty level decreases.	Responsible Party
Recommended Strategies	<p>1a Enhance programs and supports that help unemployed and low-income people achieve economic self-sufficiency. Urge the not-for-profit sector, businesses, and government to use a collaborative and shared investment approach to develop and implement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-advocacy programs for the unemployed and low-income to address issues that perpetuate poverty;</li> <li>• Adequate training, education, life skills development, financial management, job preparation and job placement services;</li> <li>• Programs that teach cost-saving strategies relating to consumption patterns;</li> <li>• Various employment supports, including transportation subsidies, child care and eased eligibility levels for health benefits;</li> <li>• Early childhood development supports, including the integration of child care facilities in or near major centers of employment, that help parents provide children with healthy environments for full development;</li> <li>• Programs that increase access to quality food sources; and</li> <li>• Affordable housing supports, including eased eligibility levels for mortgages and subsidized interest rates.</li> </ul>	<p><b>State of Vermont, Central Vermont Community Action Council (CVAC), Private Businesses</b></p>

**Earth Charter Principle III.9:** *Eradicate poverty as an ethical, social, and environmental imperative.*

## Goal E: Human Needs

	<p><b>1b Promote a livable wage job policy.</b></p> <p><b>1b.1</b> Develop educational programs to inform businesses and consumers of the benefits of a livable wage policy.</p> <p><b>1b.2</b> Examine how a livable wage policy might increase business productivity.*</p> <p><b>1b.2</b> Explore tax incentives for businesses that adopt a livable wage policy.</p> <p><b>1b.3</b> Examine how paying a livable wage might reduce the taxes associated with income transfers that are necessary otherwise (e.g. income assistance).</p> <p><b>1b.4</b> Explore the livable wage as a corporate social responsibility, community public relations, and goodwill process.</p> <p><b>1b.5</b> Provide financial and other support to the non-profit sector to enable them to perform this advocacy role that benefits the whole community.</p>	<p><b>Stakeholders, Private Businesses</b></p>
	<p><b>1c Increase the number and variety of non-monetary exchanges taking place throughout the city.</b></p>	<p><b>Stakeholders</b></p>
	<p><b>1d Provide an economic “safety net” for those who are unable to earn enough to meet their basic needs and collaborate with state agencies to eliminate disincentives such as the loss of welfare benefits for individuals returning to the workforce.</b></p>	<p><b>State of Vermont</b></p>
	<p><b>1e Seek more local control and community input into job training and social service programs that use state and federal dollars.</b></p>	<p><b>Stakeholders</b></p>

**Earth Charter Principle III.9 (c):** *Recognize the ignored, protect the vulnerable, serve those who suffer, and enable them to develop their capacities and to pursue their aspirations.*

\* Benefits associated with livable wage policies may include a reduction in training and recruitment costs and employee theft. Livable wage policies may also increase attraction and retention, customer satisfaction, employee morale, and productivity.

## Goal E: Human Needs

<b>2</b>		<b>By 2020, total family income (adjusted for inflation) and other economic benefits increases. Costs and expenses are stable, or decrease, in relation to income and the total value of transactions.</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
<i>Recommended Strategies</i>	<b>2a</b>	<b>Connect organizations like the Vermont Employee Ownership Center with local businesses that could benefit from having employee ownership in order to increase the investment income for area employees.*</b>	<b>Stakeholders, Private Businesses</b>
	<b>2b</b>	<b>Increase value added crafts and manufacturing from local resources to strengthen the local economy.</b>	<b>Stakeholders, Private Businesses</b>

<b>3</b>		<b>All Montpelier residents have the opportunity to learn basic vocational and life skills. By 2020, the number of vocational and life skills classes offered in schools and the community has increased.</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
<i>Recommended Strategies</i>	<b>3a</b>	<b>Increase the number and variety of vocational and life skills classes in schools and the community. Offer such classes to all community members at low or no cost.</b>	<b>School Board</b>
	<b>3b</b>	<b>Identify ways to measure life skills that are required to engage in community work.</b>	<b>School Board</b>

\* Employee ownership occurs when a business is owned in whole or in part by its employees. One such model is the Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP). An ESOP is a tax-exempt employee trust. Stock is placed into a trust for distribution to employees. Employees receive the stock when they retire or when employment terminates.

**Earth Charter Principle III.9 (b):** *Empower every human being with the education and resources to secure a sustainable livelihood, and provide social security and safety nets for those who are unable to support themselves.*

## Goal F: Vibrant Downtowns

The Montpelier and Barre area has vibrant downtowns with a range of housing and activities in addition to many locally-owned businesses which offer a wide variety of affordable goods and services within an accessible distance to meet residents' needs.

<b>1</b>		<b>By 2015, the occupancy of buildings in, and adjacent to, the designated downtown has increased due to the renovation and improvements of existing vacant and underutilized space and attraction and retention of core businesses.</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
<i>Recommended Strategies</i>	<b>1a</b>	<p><b>Explore and find means to improve accessibility and affordability of space for small businesses and/or residential space in downtown buildings, particularly on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors.</b></p> <p><b>1a.1</b> Offer incentives or tax credits to landlords who are able to maintain high standards of energy efficiency, access, and safety.</p> <p><b>1a.2</b> Redevelop empty or underutilized properties in the downtown.</p> <p><b>1a.3</b> Encourage the use of upper floor units for internet businesses, studios, and for-profit and non-profit incubator spaces. Provide an incentive, such as a property tax credit, to encourage use.</p> <p><b>1a.4</b> Provide information to local building and business owners on programs and funding available for energy efficiency and other improvements.</p>	<b>Property Owners, City Council, Private Businesses</b>
	<b>1b</b>	<p><b>Revise and streamline the review required for minor changes of commercial uses in the downtown – for example, retail to restaurants, or office space to retail – to make reuse of space less cumbersome for building owners.</b></p>	<b>Planning Commission, City Council</b>

<b>2</b>		<b>By 2015, the level of municipal investment in the downtown and the Growth Center has increased to support redevelopment and new facilities that enhance the resilience and adaptability of the downtown.</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
<i>Recommended Strategies</i>	<b>2a</b>	<p><b>Implement a Tax Increment Financing District that encompasses the downtown and as much of the Growth Center as practical to provide additional financing tools to support continued improvement and growth in these areas.</b></p>	<b>City Council, CM</b>

## Goal F: Vibrant Downtowns

<b>3</b>		<b>By 2015, the total number of people, including local residents and tourists, shopping and visiting downtown increases.</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
<b>Recommended Strategies</b>	<b>3a Support a dynamic business mix that provides both fun and functional goods and services.</b>  <b>3a.1</b> Maintain the number and diversity of food stores and restaurants in town.  <b>3a.2</b> Determine what “everyday” goods and services, currently unavailable in Montpelier, could be provided by local businesses. Encourage entrepreneurs and businesses to try to provide such goods and services.	<b>Montpelier Alive!, Planning Department, Private Businesses</b>	
	<b>3b Explore creative ways to draw more people downtown.</b>  <b>3b.1</b> Create a mechanism, such as a local options tax, to pay for the requirements to support cultural activities which attract people to downtown.  <b>3b.2</b> Increase the number of pocket parks and playgrounds within walking distance of downtown.	<b>City Council, Parks Commission</b>	
	<b>3c Promote Montpelier as a tourist destination.</b>  <b>3c.1</b> Coordinate tourism related development with other economic development efforts (such as downtown revitalization, agricultural products, commercial, retail, and industrial development) in order to maximize the City’s return on investment by exposure of all facets of products and opportunities to both visitors and residents.  <b>3c.2</b> Identify existing and potential facilities, such as a Montpelier Welcome Center, which attract identified tourist target groups. Support the development of identified necessary facilities and activities.  <b>3c.3</b> Utilize a variety of methods to promote community-wide festivals, celebrations, and activities, to tourists.  <b>3c.4</b> Jointly promote all of the accommodations and conference facilities available in Montpelier.  <b>3c.5</b> Promote state government as a tourist attraction.	<b>State of Vermont, Chamber of Commerce, Montpelier Alive!, Planning Department, Private Businesses</b>	

## Goal F: Vibrant Downtowns

### 2009 Montpelier Citizens' Survey

- ✓ 45 percent of residents report that **shopping opportunities** in Montpelier are “good” or “excellent.”
- ✓ 67 percent of residents report that the **overall quality of business and service establishments** in Montpelier are “good” or “excellent.”
- ✓ 68 percent of residents report that **opportunities to attend cultural events** are “good” or “excellent.”
- ✓ 73 percent of residents report that **opportunities to participate in social events and activities** are “good” or “excellent.”



"2009 All Species Day Parade," Jim Sheridan, *Montpelier resident*

## Goal G: Food

Food sources derive from local, sustainable practices that provide us with a high quality, healthy, affordable, and secure supply of food. Neighborhood gardens and farms grow local, seasonal, and fresh food for all our residents, and neighborhood food storage facilities ensure local food in all seasons.

<b>1</b>		<b>By 2020, 75 percent of Montpelier’s growers practice sustainable food production.</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
<b>Recommended Strategies</b>	<b>1a</b>	<b>Review soil maps and encourage the use of best soils for farming.</b>	<b>Planning Department</b>
	<b>1b</b>	<b>Encourage local farmers to utilize conservation tillage* practices.</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>
	<b>1c</b>	<p><b>Promote sustainable food production.</b></p> <p><b>1c.1</b> Expand and promote educational programs about sustainable food production.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community classes about food production and preservation are well-advertised and attended by community members.</li> <li>• The Central Vermont Food Systems Council increases public outreach about local food issues through radio spots and public television programming.</li> <li>• Encourage and support such programs as farm-to-school and farm-to-hospital.</li> </ul> <p><b>1c.2</b> Expand and promote awareness programs about where our food comes from and how far it has traveled.</p> <p><b>1c.3</b> Support organizations that promote sustainable agriculture and discourage the use of chemicals in local food production.</p>	<b>Central Vermont Food Systems Council</b>

\* Conservation tillage practices leave a small amount of crop residue on the surface of the soil in order to slow water movement and thereby reduce the amount of soil erosion.

## Goal G: Food

<b>2</b>		<b>By 2020, 75 percent of Montpelier residents report that the availability of affordable quality food is “good” or “excellent.”</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
<b>Recommended Strategies</b>	<b>2a</b>	<b>Support the development of informal systems that allow residents to learn about, create, and utilize infrastructure (gardens, root cellars, freezers, tool sheds, etc) to grow, preserve, and/or share food.</b>	<b>Central Vermont Food Systems Council</b>
	<b>2b</b>	<b>Ensure food sources are affordable and derived from secure and reliable suppliers.</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>
	<b>2c</b>	<b>Maintain programs that subsidize the institutional purchasing of local food.</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>
	<b>2d</b>	<b>Support and maintain programs that provide nutritious foods to people in need.</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>
	<b>2e</b>	<b>Expand and promote educational programs about making healthy food choices.</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>
	<b>2f</b>	<b>Maintain local non-profits and churches’ community lunch programs.</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>
	<b>2g</b>	<b>Support and expand efforts to provide children with low cost, high nutrition school meals.</b>	<b>School District, Stakeholders</b>
<b>2009 Montpelier Citizens’ Survey</b>	✓ 63 percent of residents report that the <b>availability of affordable quality food</b> is “good” or “excellent.”		

## Goal G: Food

3		By 2025, 50 percent of the Montpelier food supply is grown and processed within a 100-mile radius of Montpelier, in order to reduce dependence on food imports. By 2025, direct purchasing from local farmers increases.	Responsible Party
Recommended Strategies	3a	<p><b>Montpelier increases direct purchasing of local produce by:</b></p> <p><b>3a.1</b> Establishing a year-round farmers’ market in a permanent location.</p> <p><b>3a.2</b> Support and promote the local farmers’ market.</p> <p><b>3a.3</b> Increasing direct purchasing between growers within a 100-mile radius and Montpelier restaurants; groceries; and municipal, medical, and educational institutions.</p> <p><b>3a.4</b> Supporting and enhancing processing and distribution facilities to increase the amount of value-added products bought and sold locally.</p>	<p><b>City Council, Montpelier Alive!, Stakeholders, Private Businesses</b></p>
	3b	<p><b>Provide opportunities for local food producers to easily access the Montpelier food marketplace.</b></p> <p><b>3b.1</b> Support and promote neighborhood-based gardens and the farmers’ market.</p> <p><b>3b.2</b> Dedicate city-owned land to food production by small, local producers.</p> <p><b>3b.3</b> Encourage mainstream food stores to carry a certain percentage of locally produced food.</p>	<p><b>City Council, Stakeholders, Montpelier CAN!</b></p>
	3c	<p><b>Promote local food educational programs.</b></p> <p><b>3c.1</b> Promote community classes about food production and preservation.</p> <p><b>3c.2</b> The Central Vermont Food Systems Council increases awareness of local food education opportunities and increases public education of local food issues through radio spots and public television programming.</p> <p><b>3c.3</b> Develop a “garden mentor” program to support new household gardeners.</p> <p><b>3c.4</b> Develop a lawn conversion program to help residents convert lawns to gardens.</p>	<p><b>Central Vermont Food Systems Council</b></p>

## Goal G: Food

	<p><b>3d</b> <b>Modify municipal ordinances to support agriculture within the city.</b></p> <p><b>3d.1</b> Encourage community gardens through local land-share programs.</p> <p><b>3d.2</b> Examine and amend processing regulations so that they support local agriculture.</p> <p><b>3d.3</b> Obtain grants to develop community garden sites.</p> <p><b>3d.4</b> Consider providing a tax incentive to land-owners who share land for agricultural purposes.</p> <p><b>3d.5</b> The City provides support by offering assistance to develop “Garden Parks” in areas of high need. These parks would meet food, open space, and recreational needs.</p>	<p><b>Planning Commission, City Council</b></p>
	<p><b>3e</b> <b>Build regional food networks that balance population density and acreage needed for food production.</b></p>	<p><b>Stakeholders</b></p>
	<p><b>3f</b> <b>Prepare a food security plan that identifies sources of locally grown food, storage facilities, and the opportunities for local production for food that is currently imported.</b></p>	<p><b>Central Vermont Food Systems Council</b></p>