

- Use sight-distance standards based on the actual travel speeds and not the posted speed limits. If no such data exists or is not current, then the Town will work with the Regional Planning Commission to obtain the appropriate data.

## **F. Other Modes of Travel**

### **Non-Motorized Use**

Many residents bike or walk on town roads in Tunbridge. The rural nature of most of Tunbridge's roads makes bike and pedestrian travel reasonably safe. However, bike and pedestrian travel along the Route 110 is less safe due to higher traffic volume and speed and a lack of available shoulders.

Tunbridge has 2.45 miles of legal trails, all of which can be used by the public for hiking, horseback trail riding, road bike riding, mountain bike trail riding, backcountry skiing, and snowshoeing. Additional recreational opportunities can be found using trails maintained by VAST.

### **Rail and Air**

Tunbridge does not have any rail lines or airports. The closest rail line is just south of town in Royalton that serves both freight rail and AMTRAK. AMTRAK stops in both Randolph and White River Junction. The closest regional airport is in Lebanon, New Hampshire and major airport in Burlington, Vermont.

### **ATVs/Snowmobiles**

ATVs and snowmobiles are popular forms of recreation in the Town, however, misuse can lead to long-term road or trail damage. Some ATV use is allowed on town roads, but it is limited to Class 4 roads as long as damage does not incur. Snowmobiles may cross town roads, and utilize Class 4 roads and Legal Trails with Selectboard permission, but most of the VAST snowmobile trail network is on private lands.

### **Public Transportation**

Tunbridge, like most Vermont Towns, lacks public transportation. Stagecoach, Inc. offers limited public transportation in the form of special requests for individuals who need transportation for medical reasons, etc. Although there is no Stagecoach bus route in Tunbridge, there are a number of routes that depart from nearby Randolph where Stagecoach is located. Tunbridge residents can take advantage of Stagecoach's "Ticket to Ride" Program helps pay a substantial percentage of the cost of rides for senior citizens (60+) and persons with disabilities when there is not available transportation in the household or the person requesting the trips is unable to drive on the day of the trip. Ticket to Ride is available for a broad array of destinations, such as medical services, shopping, errands, and social purposes.

Other major forms of transportation, including air and rail services, are not available in Tunbridge, but can be accessed in neighboring communities in the Upper Connecticut River Valley. The closest rail facility is located in Royalton, Vermont. The closest airport is located in Lebanon, New Hampshire.

Given that Tunbridge's elderly population is growing, the need for an affordable source of public transportation that can bring the elderly to major medical facilities like Dartmouth Hitchcock and

larger commercial centers for day-to-day shopping needs is important. See Appendix B for additional transportation information.

## **G. Goals, Policies, and Recommendations**

### **Goals**

1. To maintain a transportation system that is safe, efficient, meets the needs of residents, and complements the other goals and policies of this Plan.
2. To ensure that future development does not unnecessarily or unreasonably impact the public investment in Town and regional transportation systems or facilities, including highways, bikeways, and trails.
3. To support local, regional and statewide efforts to provide public and private transportation systems that meet the needs of all population segments and not just those who use automobiles.
4. To minimize transportation energy consumption and use of fossil fuels by encouraging carpooling, transit, electric vehicle usage, and creative alternatives for sharing transportation resources.
5. To provide pedestrians with safe areas to travel within the Villages of Tunbridge and North Tunbridge, such as sidewalks, crosswalks, and bike paths.
6. To provide regular maintenance and upgrades to road equipment and facilities, provided that the costs do not put an undue burden on the people of Tunbridge.
7. To recognize the importance of balancing the need to have safe roadways with the desire to maintain appropriate widths and the health of existing vegetation in its role as a structural component of the roads.

### **Policies**

1. Prior to a final decision to proceed with a major capital transportation project, policy makers should first analyze the project against reasonable alternatives and include public input. In examining the alternatives, investigation should focus on the environmental, energy, social and investment costs and the extent to which such costs meet the goals and policies of this Plan.
2. Development and the associated costs that create impacts on Tunbridge's road system or that require improvements to Town highways shall be borne by the developer, in consultation with the Selectboard. The Selectboard shall have sole power to change the classification of the road.
3. It is the policy of the town to minimize curb cuts to ensure the proper function and performance of a town highway.
4. It is the policy of the town that the design of access roads and related facilities provide for proper alignment of new or relocated driveways along a roadway.
5. The Town shall seek public input in any decision to substantially change the maintenance level or surface treatment of any town road.
6. The Town, as written in V.S.A. Title 19 Section 310, does not maintain Class 4 Highways, excepting bridges and culverts. The policy of the Selectboard is that before the town would consider adopting a new road or upgrading an existing highway, the abutting property owners shall be responsible for the cost of improving and/or building the road to Town specifications. Final decision regarding the nature of the improvement rests with the Selectboard.
7. Private landowners shall not improve or update town-maintained roads without previously getting approval for the Selectboard.
8. The Town supports increased facilities for park and ride, transit services, and the installation of charging stations.
9. ATV usage shall not lead to the damage of roads.

## Recommendations

1. In reviewing requests to improve or update town-maintained roads, the Selectboard shall consider all of the following criteria:
  - a. Volume of traffic,
  - b. Noise of vehicles,
  - c. Impact to neighbors, and
  - d. Weight of vehicles.
2. The Town shall continue to update its Road and Bridge standards.
3. In the event that any of Tunbridge’s five covered bridges were to collapse, break, or fall into disrepair, the Town should improve it for emergency access.
4. Given the interest in the benefits from biking, hiking, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, and similar outdoor recreational activities, the Town should, as an alternative to complete discontinuance of a highway, give full consideration to preserving Class 4 roads for recreational use by downgrading their status to a legal trail and thus retaining the public’s interest in them.
5. The Town should investigate the right-of-way and width of its roads in terms of feet and rods.
6. Tunbridge should work with the Vermont Agency of Transportation to analyze speed limits on town-maintained roads to ensure the safety of drivers and residents.
7. The Town should consider lowering the speed-limit from 35 to 30 mph in its Village Areas.
8. The Town should promote a dialogue to improve the safety of multiple use on Recreation Road.
9. The Town should look into placing an EV charging station at the town office or library.
10. The Selectboard should establish a policy for permitted uses on Legal Trails.

*“In the end, our society will be defined not only by what we create, but by what we refuse to destroy.” ~ John Sawhill,  
Nature Conservancy*