

HINESBURG
Chittenden County
Vermont

A Community Profile

**Prepared for the Vermont
Council on Rural Development**

HINESBURG

**-Chittenden County-
Vermont**

A Community Profile

**Prepared for the
Vermont Council on Rural Development
Community Visit
October 2006**

**By
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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

A Note to the Reader

Just as a community never finishes adapting to and organizing its natural, political and social environments, an attempt to profile these dynamic processes must be considered a work in progress. Materials below are organized to reflect community characteristics and resources and draw heavily upon easily accessible information at the CRS web site. Please join us in this profiling effort by calling our attention to major omissions, inaccuracies and errors of fact.

Thank you,

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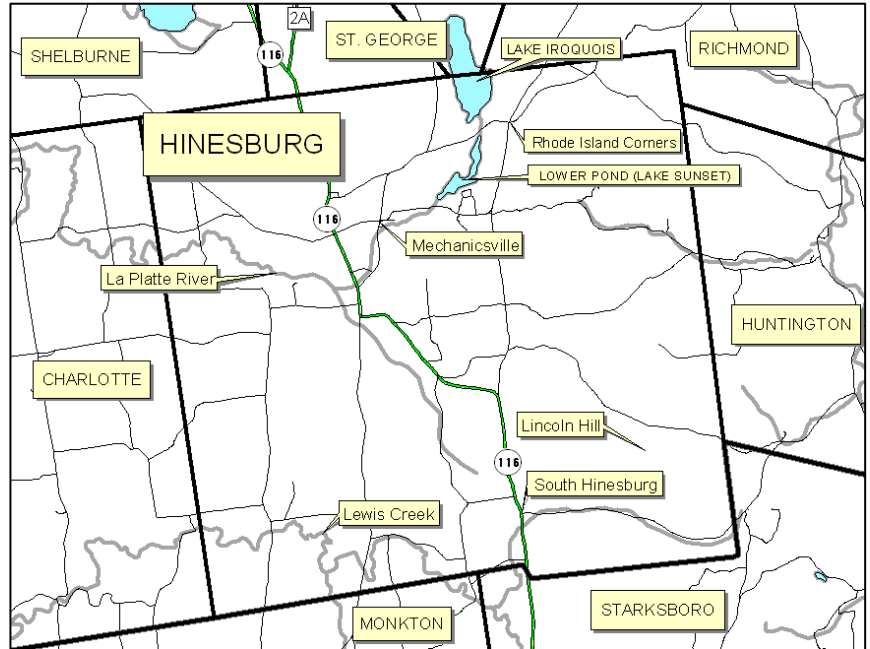
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Section 1.

Town Organization

Where is Hinesburg?

The town of Hinesburg is located in Chittenden County just to the southeast of the Burlington commercial area. Vermont towns of St. George and Williston lie to the north while Shelburne and Richmond lie to the northwest and northeast respectively. Hinesburg also shares a border with Charlotte to the west, Monkton and Starksboro to the south, and Huntington to the east.



What's in a Name?

New Hampshire Governor Benning Wentworth chartered Hinesburg in 1762. The town was one of the first Wentworth created in this area. The Hinesburg name derived from the name of the first town clerk, Abel Hine. Although chartered in 1762, it took almost twenty years for a permanent settlement to evolve, and when finally the first child was born in 1785, it was named Hine Meacham (Swift, 1977).

Brief Chronology

- 1762 – New Hampshire Governor Benning Wentworth chartered the town.
- 1785 – The first child was born Hinesburg.
- 1789 – Congregational Church was organized.
- 1803 – First post office opens.
- 1824 – Hinesburg Community School was built.
- 1866 – Valley Cheese Factory was established.
- 1901 – The present Town Hall was raised.
- 1947 – The Sarah Carpenter Memorial Library was erected.
- 1989 – NRG Systems moves to Hinesburg manufacturing facility.

Recent News

Summer 2006

- State Transportation Agency delays three road and sidewalk projects in Hinesburg, upsetting town residents ([Burlington Free Press Community Focus Article](#)).
- The Bissonette Farm looks to become part of an innovative project that will preserve farmland, provide an area for recreational use, and protect part of the LaPlatte River (Matthews, Ashley. [Land Trusts Combine to Pursue Hinesburg Farm](#)).
- Hinesburg is moving closer to expansion of their wastewater treatment facility (Matthews, Ashley. [Town Settles on Wastewater Option](#)).

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Government and Civic Structure

Table 1.1. – Hinesburg General Town Characteristics	
Town Name	Hinesburg
County	Chittenden
Year of Town Charter	1762
Incorporated Village	None
Other Villages and Neighborhoods (past and present)	South Hinesburg, Beecher Corners, Rhode Island Corners, Mechanicsville
Sources: Center for Rural Studies / VCGI. 2005. Vermont Indicators Online. http://crs.uvm.edu/indicators . The National Survey. 2000.	

Hinesburg Planning Characteristics

As shown in Table 1.2., the Vermont Forum on Sprawl has categorized Hinesburg as an “Outlying Town”. Throughout its recent development in the late 20th century, Hinesburg has followed the more suburban planning path. Development continues to be scattered widely across Town, without focusing on developing a greater concentration in the historical village area. Despite this fact, Hinesburg has continued to develop the village area through increased commercial and industrial projects.

The town’s development patterns may be attributed to many different causes. The decline in the farming industry and the proximity of the town to Burlington add development pressures. Like many other towns in rural Vermont, the town’s planning commission is looking for ways to cluster homes and preserve open lands (Hinesburg Town Plan, 2005).

Table 1.2.– Hinesburg General Planning Characteristics	
Vermont Forum on Sprawl Category	“Outlying Town” (Code 3)
Town Plan	Yes - 2005
Zoning Ordinance	Yes
Subdivision Ordinance	No
Septic Approval Process	Yes
Source: Center for Rural Studies / VCGI. 2005. Vermont Indicators Online. http://crs.uvm.edu/indicators	

Section 2.

Human Resources

Hinesburg’s population growth rate of 14.8% from 1990 to 2000 is well above the state average (8.2%). This significant difference is most likely due to Hinesburg’s close proximity to the Burlington region. With 4,340 inhabitants, it is in the top quintile of Vermont’s communities. Because Hinesburg’s population is larger than 2,500 people, the town is considered “urban” by some Vermont state definitions. However, the community’s distance from any adjacent place larger than 50,000 in population enables Hinesburg to qualify as “rural” for the U.S. Census Bureau and many other federal and state programs. Nevertheless, Hinesburg is considered by the federal government to be included within the Burlington – South Burlington Metropolitan Area, primarily due to commuting patterns.

Table 2.1 shows that Hinesburg’s population density saw a notable increase between 1990 and 2000. Nearly 35% of the town’s population may be considered “age dependent” (under age 18 and over age 65) in 2000. Among those of European ancestry, Irish and English descendants form distinctive groups.

Total Population, 2000	4,340
Total Population, 1990	3,780
Absolute Population Change, 1990 – 2000	560 inhabitants
Percent Population Change, 1990 – 2000	14.8%
Persons per Square Mile, 2000	109.0
Persons per Square Mile, 1990	94.9
Area in Square Miles	39.8
Percent Age Dependent, 2000 (Under 18 and over 65)	34.4%
Percent Rural, 2000	100%
Percent Rural Farm, 2000	2.3% (from 3.7% in 1990)
Percent Native Born (United States), 2000	97.7% (from 97.3% in 1990)
Percent Reporting Irish Ancestry, 2000	19.8% (from 14.0% in 1990)
Percent Reporting English Ancestry, 2000	17.6% (from 24.8% in 1990)
Sources: Center for Rural Studies / VCGI. 2005. Vermont Indicators Online. http://crs.uvm.edu/indicators US Census Bureau. 1990, 2000. American FactFinder. http://factfinder.census.gov	

Age and Gender of Hinesburg’s Residents

Table 2.2. shows that Hinesburg reflects state and even national trends toward a graying of the population. The effect of the baby boom age cohort is shown in the decrease in the percentages of younger and middle-aged populations and corresponding increases in the 45+ populations between 1990 and 2000. The median age in Hinesburg is older than in Chittenden County as a whole.

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Table 2.2. – Hinesburg Age and Gender Demographic Comparisons				
	Hinesburg		Chittenden County	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
Total Population	3780	4,340	131,761	146,571
Percent 0-17 Years Old	30.3	29.4	23.4	23.5
Percent 18-24 Years Old	7.1	5.8	16.4	13.3
Percent 25-44 Years Old	43.8	35.4	35.6	32.0
Percent 45-64 Years Old	14.0	24.2	16.5	21.8
Percent 65+ Years Old	4.8	5.2	8.1	9.4
Median Age	N.A.	35.3	N.A.	34.2
Percent Male	49.9	49.3	48.5	48.6
Percent Female	50.1	50.7	51.5	51.4
Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 1990, 2000. American FactFinder. http://factfinder.census.gov				

Hinesburg Housing and Family Characteristics

Table 2.3. depicts housing and family characteristics in Hinesburg. Although the numbers of families and households are increasing, the relative size of both families and households is decreasing, mirroring national trends. Home values and rents are increasing substantially. Community leaders concerned with the quality and affordability of the community’s housing will find more detailed information at the Vermont Housing Data website at www.housingdata.org.

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Table 2.3. – Hinesburg Housing and Family Characteristics		
	1990	2000
Number of Families	1,009	1,174
Number of Households	1,345	1,596
Average Family Size	3.21	3.09
Average Household Size	2.81	2.72
Single-Mother Households	65	82
Total Housing Units	1,487	1,693
Number of Owner-Occupied Housing Units	1,118	1,302
Number of Renter-Occupied Housing Units	227	294
Median Housing Unit Value	\$107,500	\$132,000
Median Gross Rent	\$566	\$658
Median Gross Rent as Percent of Income	20.7%	21.6%
Percent Increase in Households (1990-2000)		18.7%
Percent Increase in Housing Units (1990-2000)		13.9%
Sources: Center for Rural Studies / VCGI. 2005. Vermont Indicators Online. http://crs.uvm.edu/indicators U.S. Census Bureau. 1990, 2000. American FactFinder. http://factfinder.census.gov		

Table 2.4. compares income and poverty data for Hinesburg, Chittenden County, and the state. Hinesburg lags behind the county and state in 2004 annual average wage, but is about average when compared to the county and state figures for all other income measures. Hinesburg’s poverty indicators are consistently below the county and state levels with respect to the general poverty rate, child poverty rate, elderly poverty rate, and are about average for percentage of households with public assistance when compared to Chittenden County.

Table 2.5. shows that the proportion of Hinesburg residents who have received associate or bachelor’s degrees is slightly below the county level. The level of graduate, professional, or PhD degrees, however, is above the county’s rates. The percentage of Hinesburg residents who have attained some college or less is similar to that of the county.

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Table 2.4.– Hinesburg Town, County, and State Income & Poverty Comparisons			
	Hinesburg	Chittenden County	Vermont
Annual Average Wage, 2004	\$31,830	\$38,433	\$33,276
Per Capita Income, 1999	\$22,230	\$23,501	\$20,625
Median Family Income, 1999	\$54,836	\$59,460	\$48,625
Median Household Income, 1999	\$49,788	\$47,673	\$40,856
Persons for whom Poverty Status was determined	152	12,267	55,506
Poverty Rate, 1999	3.5%	8.8%	9.4%
Child Poverty Rate (persons under 18 years), 1999	5.1%	8.4%	11.4%
Elderly Poverty Rate (persons 65 years or over), 1999	3.5%	8.2%	8.4%
Percentage of Households with Public Assistance Income, 1999	3.9%	3.8%	4.8%
Sources: Center for Rural Studies / VCGI. 2002. Vermont Indicators Online. http://crs.uvm.edu/indicators U.S. Census Bureau. 1990, 2000. American FactFinder. http://factfinder.census.gov			

Table 2.5. – Hinesburg Town Educational Attainment, 2000 (percent persons 25 years and older)		
	Hinesburg	Chittenden County
Less than High School/No Diploma	8.6%	9.4%
High School Diploma	25.6%	23.5%
Some College	17.9%	16.7%
Bachelor's / Associate's Degree	28.9%	34.5%
Graduate / Professional / PhD Degree	19.0%	15.9%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 1990. American FactFinder. http://factfinder.census.gov		

Section 3.

Business and Infrastructure Resources

History of Business and Employment in Hinesburg

Due to its location in relation to the Burlington area, more and more residents in recent years have begun commuting out of town for work. However, Hinesburg has sustained more local jobs than many Vermont towns due to their ability to maintain a few, small high – tech firms, such as NRG Systems, as well as the Saputo Cheese U.S.A. Factory. Hinesburg also offers many of the small businesses typical to Vermont towns, such as bed & breakfasts, banks, construction and manufacturing firms, and a town newspaper, the Hinesburg Record.

Many of Hinesburg’s first industries were developed around the water power provided by the drastic change in elevation from one side of town to the other. Historically, Hinesburg was home to one of the largest woolen mills in northwestern Vermont, owned by Isaiah Dow. In the later 19th century, his mill provided the surrounding area with cashmeres, flannel, and stocking yarn. During the same time period, two Irish families used the water energy provided from Patrick Brook to start a multitude of sawmills, gristmills, carding and weaving mills, a foundry for making plows, and a woodworking company. This area of town was called Patrick and Murray Corners, after the Irish family names, and is now known as Mechanicsville (Swift, 1977). In addition to the early economy’s industrial sector, Hinesburg also had a flourishing agricultural sector. When Hinesburg was first settled, the western part of town near the LaPlatte River and Lewis Creek became home to many farms.

Hinesburg Employment Characteristics

Table 3.1. shows the various employment characteristics of the town.

Table 3.1. – Hinesburg Employment Characteristics		
Top Five Industries, 2000 (employed persons 16 years and over)		
Educational, health, and social services	25.6%	
Manufacturing	14.4%	
Retail Trade	12.3%	
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	10.4%	
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services	7.9%	
	Hinesburg	Chittenden County
Unemployment Rate, 2005	3.10%	3.10%
Civilian Labor Force, 2005	2,710	88,750
Sources: Center for Rural Studies / VCGI. 2002. Vermont Indicators Online. http://crs.uvm.edu/indicators U.S. Census Bureau. 1990, 2000. American FactFinder. http://factfinder.census.gov		

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Property Values

Table 3.2. shows the municipal tax rate, educational tax rate for homesteads, educational tax rate for non-residential properties, and the common level of appraisal ratio.

Table 3.2.– Hinesburg Property Valuation & Taxation	
Municipal Tax Rate (plus LAR & Highway) (per \$100), 2004	0.5904
Educational Tax Rate for Homesteads (per \$100), 2004	2.2755
Educational Tax Rate for Non – Residential (per \$100), 2004	2.1128
Common Level of Appraisal Ratio, 2004	0.6650
Source: Center for Rural Studies / VCGI. 2005. Vermont Indicators Online. http://crs.uvm.edu/indicators	

Transportation

Hinesburg lies along Route 116, and the town is less than 10 miles southwest of the Interstate 89 entrance in Richmond. Hinesburg is also less than 15 miles from Burlington. Hinesburg’s proximity to this major transportation corridor and the population base of the Burlington region has undoubtedly contributed to its development over the years.

Table 3.3. depicts several indicators reflecting transportation in Hinesburg. Based on the 2000 Census, about 20% of the working population both live and work in town. Residents rely on automobiles to get to work and they typically drive alone.

Table 3.3.– Hinesburg Town Local Transportation Behavior	
Total Number of Accidents, 2001	51
Number of Accidents Involving Fatalities, 2001	1
Percent Population who Work in Town of Residence, 2000	20.3%
Total Number of Workers 16 Years of Age and Older, 2000	2,433
...who Drove to Work Alone	1,959
...who Carpooled to Work	318
...who used Public Transportation	0
...who Commuted via other Means	44
...who Worked at Home	112
Source: Center for Rural Studies / VCGI. 2005. Vermont Indicators Online. http://crs.uvm.edu/indicators	

Section 4.

Social Capital

Some Famous Citizens

Lisa Alther, Novelist

Lisa Alther is the author of five novels – *Kinflicks*, *Original Sins*, *Other Women*, *Bedrock* and *Five Minutes in Heaven*. Although she is originally from Kingsport, Tennessee, Alther has lived in Hinesburg for the past 30 years. Besides writing, Alther currently works for Athenaeum Publishers in New York and she has taught a literature class at St. Michael's College (Lisa Alther Official Home Page).

William Alanson Howard, U.S. Representative from Michigan and Governor of the Dakota Territories

William A. Howard was born in Hinesburg in 1813 and graduated from Middlebury College in 1839. After graduating, Howard moved to Michigan and taught mathematics at the University of Michigan. In 1854, he successfully campaigned for a Representative of Congress position as a member of the Whig party. After staying in Congress for three terms, Howard served in various governmental positions until eventually being appointed as Governor of the Dakota Territories in 1878. He spent the last years of his life living and working in Yankton, Dakota Territory (Biographical Directory of the United States Congress).

William Lamb Picknell, Painter

William Lamb Picknell was born in Hinesburg in 1853. He is best known for his landscapes, coastal views, figure genres and his rapid painting style. His most notable works include: *The Road to Concarneau*, 1880; *Lobster Fisherman*, 1882; *Lande de Kerran, Finistere*, 1877; *Morning on the Loing at Moret*, 1895; and *Banks of the Loing*, 1895 (Famous Americans).

Schools

A school is not just an educational resource, but serves also as a networking hub for the community. Hinesburg's school system, which includes the Hinesburg Community School and Champlain Valley Union High School, rank well on many indicators for Vermont schools (see *Vermont School Report* at <http://crs.uvm.edu/schlrpt/>). Fluctuations in school enrollments challenge many community school boards in Vermont and Hinesburg's leaders struggle with these changes as well.

Hinesburg Community School's total school enrollment for the 2004-2005 school year was 546, having fluctuated from a peak of 604 in the 2001-2002 school year to a low of 543 in 2003-2004 (see Table 4.1.). The student/teacher ratio in 2004-2005 shows that Hinesburg Community School has slightly smaller classes than in 2001-2002, however class size has been increasing during recent years. Note that the student/teacher ratio is above the Vermont State level.

Champlain Valley Union's total school enrollment has increased in recent years. In 2004-2005, Champlain Valley Union saw its highest enrollment of the past four years (1,357 students). Likewise, the student/teacher ratio has been increasing and is well above the state level.

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Table 4.1. – Hinesburg Community School (K-8): General School Information

	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	State 2004-05*
Total School Enrollment	604	558	543	546	98,361
Attendance Rate	95.8%	95.4%	95.1%	N/A	N/A
Retention Rate	0.3%	0.2%	3.3%	N/A	N/A
Student/Teacher Ratio	13.1	12.1	12.3	12.8	11.6
Eligible Special Education	11.6%	10.6%	12.0%	13.0%	14.1%
*All Vermont students K-12. Source: Center for Rural Studies and VT Department of Education. 2004. VT School Report. http://crs.uvm.edu/schlrpt					

Table 4.2. – Champlain Valley UHSD #15: General School Information

	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	State 2004-05*
Total School Enrollment	1,210	1,251	1,313	1,357	98,361
Attendance Rate	95.4	95.6	96.1%	N/A	N/A
Retention Rate	1.4%	1.4%	0.0%	N/A	N/A
Student/Teacher Ratio	14.6	14.4	14.9	15	11.6
Eligible Special Education	14.3%	12.8	12.6%	11.9%	14.1%
*All Vermont students K-12. Source: Center for Rural Studies and VT Department of Education. 2004. VT School Report. http://crs.uvm.edu/schlrpt					

Table 4.3. shows that the Hinesburg Community School and Champlain Valley Union’s enrollment by gender data closely mirrors statewide total trends. There are slightly higher percentages of males than females in both the elementary and secondary school. In FY 2006, Hinesburg Community School’s female enrollment (49.8%) was a slightly higher percent of total enrollment than the statewide elementary percentage (48.3%) of females. Champlain Valley Union also has a higher enrollment of female students than the statewide percentage (48.8%).

Table 4.3 – Hinesburg and Statewide 2004 Elementary and Secondary Public School Enrollment by Gender

	Female	Male	Total Enrollments
Hinesburg Community School	49.8%	50.2%	516
Statewide Elementary Total	48.3%	51.7%	49,979
Champlain Valley Union	48.8%	51.2%	1,362
Statewide Secondary Total	47.6%	52.4%	46,657
Source: VT Department of Education. 2006. Public School Enrollment Report FY06.			

Town Activities

Recreation

A multitude of recreation facilities are available in the town of Hinesburg. Natural areas and parks of interest include the Lyman Meadows Park, Wainer Park, Geprag Park, the Hinesburg Town Forest, and the Lake Iroquois beach area. An ice rink, tennis courts, snowmobile trails, golf course and driving range add to the available recreational opportunities in town. Year round recreation events are planned by the town and include the annual Fourth of July celebration, summer music concerts, a town – wide garage sale day, an annual Halloween party and a Winter Carnival (Town of Hinesburg).

Websites and Communication

Hinesburg has a town website at <http://www.hinesburg.org>, which is an easy – to – navigate site with a lot of useful town information posted. Links to the Hinesburg Annual Report, various town departments, community links, and other general information are all available on the main page (Town of Hinesburg).

Section 5. Natural Resources

Lakes and Rivers

Originally known as Hinesburg Pond, Lake Iroquois is the most prominent body of water in town. It is believed that the name came from the Algonquian tribe, who were enemies of the Iroquois. Other notable bodies of water include Texas Brook, Patrick Brook, Lewis Creek, and the LaPlatte River (Swift, 1977).

Mountains and Hills

Although there are plenty of hills in town, many of them were never given official names. A few that do appear on maps include Dow Hill, Mount Pritchard, and Lincoln Hill, all of which were named after Hinesburg residents. Other unofficially named hills include Texas Hill, Red Rock, High Rock, and Bald Hill. One thing to note is that the terms “mountain” and “hill” do not necessarily delineate the normal differences in elevation. For example, Lincoln Hill is 1,400 feet high and the elevation of Texas Hill is a similar 1,500 feet. However, Mount Pritchard is only 1,100 feet high (Swift, 1977).

Table 5.1. presents critical natural resource information for Hinesburg.

	Land Area (acres)	25,478.40
	Water Area (acres)	192
	Total Private & Public Conserved Lands, Acres, 1999	1,237.46
	Percent Private % Public Conserved Lands, 1999	4.80%
	Federal Administered Conserved Lands, Acres, 1999	0
	State Administered Conserved Lands, Acres, 1999	1,042.23
Sources: Center for Rural Studies / VCGI. 2005. Vermont Indicators Online. http://crs.uvm.edu/indicators		

Section 6.

Sources

This Community Profile is an attempt to bring together information from many different sources.

The Internet resources used include:

For data:

The Center for Rural Studies. 2005. *Vermont Indicators Online*. <http://crs.uvm.edu/indicators/>
The U.S. Census Bureau. 2005 *American FactFinder*. <http://factfinder.census.gov>
Vermont Dept. of Education. 2006. *Vermont School Report*. <http://maps.vcgi.org/schlrpt/>

For text:

Town of Hinesburg, Vermont. <http://www.hinesburg.org>
Lisa Alther: Official Home Page. <http://www.lisaalther.com>
Biographical Directory of the United States Congress. <http://bioguide.congress.gov>
Famous Americans. <http://famousamericans.net>

The written sources used were:

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1977 Vermont Place-Names: Footprints of History. Brattleboro, Vermont. The Stephen Greene Press.

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