



**SBURG**

Chittenden County  
Vermont

**A Community Profile**

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

# **HINESBURG**

**-Chittenden County-  
Vermont**

## **A Community Profile**

**Prepared for the**



## **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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# Section 1.

## Town Organization

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### 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.

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**Government and Civic Structure**

<b>Table 1.1. – Hinesburg General Town Characteristics</b>	
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. <a href="http://crs.uvm.edu/indicators">http://crs.uvm.edu/indicators</a> . 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 20<sup>th</sup> 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).

<b>Table 1.2.– Hinesburg General Planning Characteristics</b>	
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. <a href="http://crs.uvm.edu/indicators">http://crs.uvm.edu/indicators</a>	

## Section 2.

# Human Resources

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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)

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<b>Table 2.2. – Hinesburg Age and Gender Demographic Comparisons</b>				
	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. <a href="http://factfinder.census.gov">http://factfinder.census.gov</a>				

**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](http://www.housingdata.org).



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Table 2.4. compares income and poverty data for Hinesburg, Chittenden County, and the state. Hinesburg lags

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<b>Table 2.4.– Hinesburg Town, County, and State Income &amp; Poverty Comparisons</b>			
	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. <a href="http://crs.uvm.edu/indicators">http://crs.uvm.edu/indicators</a> U.S. Census Bureau. 1990, 2000. American FactFinder. <a href="http://factfinder.census.gov">http://factfinder.census.gov</a>			

<b>Table 2.5. – Hinesburg Town Educational Attainment, 2000 (percent persons 25 years and older)</b>		
	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. <a href="http://factfinder.census.gov">http://factfinder.census.gov</a>		



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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.

<b>Table 3.2.– Hinesburg Property Valuation &amp; Taxation</b>	
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. <a href="http://crs.uvm.edu/indicators">http://crs.uvm.edu/indicators</a>	

### 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.

<b>Table 3.3.– Hinesburg Town Local Transportation Behavior</b>	
Total Number of Accidents, 2001	51
Number of Accidents Involving Fatalities, 2001	1

## Section 4.

# Social Capital

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### 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/>).  
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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. <a href="http://crs.uvm.edu/schlrpt">http://crs.uvm.edu/schlrpt</a>					

**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. <a href="http://crs.uvm.edu/schlrpt">http://crs.uvm.edu/schlrpt</a>					

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

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### 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. <a href="http://crs.uvm.edu/indicators">http://crs.uvm.edu/indicators</a>		

## **Section 6.**

# **Sources**

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

**The Internet resources used include:**

**For data:**