



Brownfields Area Wide Planning

*For a portion of Johnson Village encompassing
Railroad Street from Main Street to the former talc mill,
including the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail and River Road East*

FAQs

What is the purpose of this project and the Brownfields Area Wide Planning Grant?

Johnson has brownfields sites in several prime Village locations. To learn about their redevelopment potential and the benefits that could accrue from their re-use, Village officials worked with the Lamoille County Planning Commission (LCPC), to secure a grant from the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The area the grant is focusing on is Railroad Street from Main Street to the former Talc Mill, including part of River Road.

The Area Wide Planning Project for Johnson Village will develop a revitalization and remediation plan for the targeted area and develop a vision for the re-use of selected “catalyst sites” to improve Johnson’s vibrancy. The targeted area includes the following sites: the former talc mill plant, Railroad Street, intersection of Railroad Street and River Road East, and the intersection of Railroad and Main Street.

What is a “brownfield”?

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) defines a brownfield as "real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant".

Revitalization of unproductive brownfields is an important concern for towns and cities. Contaminated brownfield sites often sit idle and unused because the cost of cleaning these sites is high and uncertain.

Why is this project important for Johnson?

Re-use of brownfields sites in prime Village locations would bring many potential benefits. Redeveloping these lots could greatly enhance the appeal of Johnson as a place to live and work for existing residents, as well as attract new residents to live and start businesses in Johnson.

Outcomes include enhanced real estate values, improved quality of life for all residents, and more incentives for local economic growth.

Project so far:

A Steering Committee of several community leaders has been formed to guide the planning process and provide feedback to the planning consultant, who together make up the Project Team. Weston & Sampson Engineers, Inc. from Waterbury Vermont were selected to perform the tasks necessary to produce an implementable plan for the catalyst sites. The Project Team has inventoried existing site conditions within the target area, and met with multiple property owners. There is initial understanding of the types of remediation needed to rehabilitate specific properties and which property owners are interested in exploring redevelopment scenarios on their properties.

Based on these findings, the Steering Committee selected 3 “catalyst” sites to evaluate further to determine the best redevelopment scenarios. **The 3 sites are:**

- **The former Manchester Mill property**
- **The corner of Railroad and Main Streets, and**
- **The former Talc Mill property**

Project Next Step: Obtain Public Input:

On August 29th, at Tuesday Night Live, the Project Team will have a space set up to present our ideas and to gather valuable input from the public. We want to know what you think would be best for improving Johnson’s vibrancy. We also want to get your reactions, comments and suggestions for redeveloping the 3 catalyst sites. We want to hear your thoughts on:

- Redevelopment scenarios at the 3 catalyst sites;
- Improving connections between the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT) and Village Main Street for residents and visitors;
- What you think would best serve the community

Questions?

For more information about the project, please contact Meredith Birkett, Village Manager (vojmanager@townofjohnson.com; 635-2611) or Lea Kilvdyov, LCPC Regional Planner (lea@lpcvt.org; 851-6348)