

City of Barre, VT

**Regular Meeting of the
Barre City Planning Commission
Thursday, May 14, 2026 at 5:30 PM**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83132944524?pwd=OY7bpA4Xp6W6PoMaXOCjgyinPLafJx.1>

**Hybrid Participation (both in person and remote ability)
Meeting ID: 831 3294 4524
Passcode: 381609**

AGENDA

Agenda Item #	Page No.	Description
1	-	Call to Order
2	-	Adjustments to the Agenda
3	-	Public comment (for something not on the agenda)
4	2	Approval of Minutes: for the March 12, 2026 Regular Meeting
5		Old Business
	-	Commission Membership Update
	4	Municipal Ethics Training Reminder and Certifications
6		New Business
		New Commissioner Cat Allen welcome
	5	Rules of Procedure Edits Discussion
	9	Alcohol and Tobacco Retail Establishments Locations Discussion
	35	S.278 regarding Cannabis Consumption events Discussion
7		Confirmation of next meeting date of June 11, 2026
8		Executive Session – as needed
9	38	Staff updates – as needed
10		Roundtable
11		Adjourn

Barre City Planning Commission

March 12, 2026 Meeting Minutes

Present: David Sichel (Chair), Wendy Ducey (Vice Chair), Joe Reil (Secretary), Caitlin Corkins, Raylene Meunier

Absent: Rosemary Averill.

Staff: Janet Shatney (Director of Planning, Permitting & Assessing)

Visitors: None.

1. Call to Order.

5:30pm.

2. Adjustments to the Agenda.

None.

3. Public comment (for something not on the agenda).

None.

4. Approval of Minutes.

a. January 22, 2026 Special Meeting.

Corkins moved to approve, Meunier seconded, unanimous in favor.

5. Old Business.

a. Map Change Request for 4 Blackwell Street – zoning change discussion.

Shatney indicated that because the apartments already exist they will likely stand and will be considered a legal, non-conforming use of the property. Rezoning the lot to UC-3 was considered. There were also concerns expressed with changing the zoning retroactively. Consensus was to table the issue for now, as there would be no practical effect, and to consider taking it up in the future as part of a larger effort in that part of the city.

Meunier moved to table the discussion, Ducey seconded, unanimous in favor.

- b. Municipal Plan RFP draft for discussion.

Shatney presented a draft of the Municipal Plan RFP. Sichel indicated that much of the language is boilerplate and required. A few edits were suggested and consensus was for Shatney to prepare the RFP for publication.

6. New Business.

- c. Municipal Plan Review: Next Steps discussion.

Shatney and Sichel presented a chart listing priorities and goals from the previous plan. These were reviewed and discussed, regarding their current status and whether they would be appropriate for the next plan, and further discussion about surveys that might be used to solicit public opinion. Sichel suggested that members give thought to these items for future discussion.

7. Confirm Date of Next Meeting.

April 9, 2026.

8. Staff Updates.

Details are in the packet. There was some brief discussion about the buyout properties and their current status. Shatney reminded that the volunteer form was included for members who wish to renew their terms.

9. Round Table.

Ducey asked about an item in the packet regarding a meeting of Barre Town's Planning Commission, Shatney stated it was simply informational, because they will be amending their Zoning Bylaws and Ordinances and are required to notify neighboring communities.

10. Adjourn.

6:34 pm, **Ducey moved to adjourn, Corkins seconded, unanimous in favor.**

Municipal Code of Ethics Training

Who is required to complete ethics training?

Starting January 1, 2025, certain municipal officers (members of the legislative or quasi-judicial bodies, chief administrative officers, mayors, town or city managers) are required to complete training on the statewide Municipal Code of Ethics. New municipal officers must complete training within 120 days of the start of their position and every three years thereafter. Existing municipal officers have until September 30, 2025 to complete the training and every three years thereafter.

Being a member of the Planning Commission, it is strongly re, therefore, the Ethics Training must be completed.

The training, once done and a certificate issued, is valid for 3 years, very close to your term.

As of July 1, 2026, there will be 3 members of the Commission, and I have Wendy's certificate. David, if you've done yours, can you forward to me your certification.

Cat, when you get a chance, can you please complete the training and forward to me your certification once received in your email.

Thank you.

Training | Ethics Commission

Rules of Procedure
City of Barre
Planning Commission
May 16, 1997; September 26, 2019; May 2026

Article I. Establishment of Rules of Procedure

- (a) Authority. The Planning Commission of the City of Barre shall be governed by the provisions of all applicable state statutes, the City Charter, and these Rules of Procedure, as adopted by the Planning Commission.
- (b) Adoption of these Rules. The Planning Commission Rules of Procedure shall be those adopted by the Commission in accordance with 24 VSA §4462. Upon adoption of the rules, a copy of these rules and all amendments shall be filed with the City Clerk as a public record and be made available to the public upon request.
- (c) Amendments. These rules may be amended at any regular meeting by an affirmative vote of a majority of the Commission provided that such amendment has been presented in writing to each member of the Commission at least 48 hours preceding the meeting at which the vote is taken.

Article II. Officers and Duties

- (a) Members. The Planning Commission of the City of Barre shall have not less than three nor more than nine voting members appointed by the legislative body, and said legislative body may change the number of members that may be appointed to the Commission. At least a majority of the members shall be residents of the City of Barre; pursuant to Title 24 VSA §4322. The appointed Commission shall serve a three-year term. ~~consist of seven (7) members appointed by the City Council for three-year terms in accordance with Title 24 VSA §4322-4323.~~ The Planning Commission shall perform such planning functions and duties as may be required by the City Council, Charter, Ordinances, or applicable state laws.
- (b) Chairperson. The Commission shall elect a Chairperson from among its members by a majority vote annually in the month of May, or soon thereafter. The Chairperson shall perform the duties prescribed by state law, the City of Barre's Charter, and these rules.
- (c) Duties of the Chairperson. The Chairperson shall call the meeting together, preside over all meetings of the Commission, put all questions, maintain order, decide all questions of order and procedure, subject to these rules, and shall appoint any committees found necessary to carry out the business of the Commission, subject to the order of a majority of the members of the Commission.
- (d) Vice Chairperson. The Commission shall elect a Vice Chairperson from among its members by a majority vote annually in the month of May, or soon thereafter. The Vice

Chairperson shall perform all of the duties of the Chairperson in the Chairperson's absence, or when the Chair is not presiding.

- (e) Signature. The Chairperson's signature shall be the official signature of the Commission and shall appear on all applicable documents pertaining to actions of the Commission which were made at meetings of the Commission when the Chairperson was present and presiding. The Vice Chairperson's signature shall appear on all documents pertaining to actions of the Commission which were made with the Chairperson was not present or not presiding.
- (f) Secretary. A Secretary, who may or may not be a member of the Commission, or the Department of Planning, Permitting & Assessing staff, shall be appointed by a majority of the Commission. The Secretary shall perform the following duties:
 - 1. Keep the minutes of all Commission actions and proceedings, showing the vote of each member upon every question, or if absent, disqualified, or failing to vote, shall so indicate; and shall include in the minutes the names and addresses of all witnesses, and a summary of the facts on which the decision is based and the decision rendered.
 - 2. Preserve and keep the records of the Commission's examinations and other official actions.
 - 3. Cause to be filed all minutes and records of examination and other official actions with the City Clerk & Treasurer as a public record.
- (g) Vacancies. The Secretary shall give immediate notice of any vacancy of the Commission to the municipal legislative body. Any vacancy among the officers of the Commission shall be filled by election, for the unexpired term, at the regular meeting of the Commission. If the office of Chairperson becomes vacant, the Commission shall fill that office by election for the unexpired term at the next regular meeting of the Commission.
- (h) Attendance. Less than 75% attendance in any fiscal year or two unexplained absences by a Commissioner in a row is grounds for recommendation of dismissal to the City Council.
- (i) Vacancies. Vacancies shall be filled by the City Council upon the expiration of such term or an unexpired portion of any term.
- (j) Removal. Upon majority vote, the Commission may request that the City Council remove a Commissioner from the Planning Commission. Planning Commissioners may be removed at any time by unanimous vote of the legislative body per 24 VSA §4323(h).

Article III. Meetings and Hearings

- (a) Regular Meetings. Regular meetings of the Planning Commission shall be held on the second ~~and fourth~~ Thursday in each calendar month, unless there is no business to transact, in which case the meeting may be canceled. A backup meeting date is set for the fourth Thursday in a calendar month should the Commission require one.

- (b) Special Meetings. Special meetings of the Commission may be called by the Chairperson or by a majority of the members of the Commission, provided that at least 24 hours written notice of the time, place, and business of such meeting shall be given to each member of the Commission. Action items requiring public hearing notice shall conform to the notice requirements in 24 VSA §4447 and will not be scheduled for a special meeting.
- (c) Site Visits. The Commission may convene at a site if the Commission feels a site visit will aid in their understanding of a proposed project, activity, or study. Members may visit a site individually or as a Commission. If a quorum of the Commission is present, it is an open meeting and its date and time must be announced and/or posted in accordance with state law.
- (d) Recess of Meeting or Hearing. The Commission may recess a meeting or hearing if all business cannot be disposed of on the day set. No further public notice shall be necessary provided that the date, time and place of the recessed meeting or hearing shall be announced prior to the adjournment.
- (e) Open Meetings. All meetings of the Commission and any subcommittees shall be open to the public, and held in a location that is handicapped accessible. No longer a quasi-judicial body, the Commission cannot enter into deliberative sessions which are not open to the public to discuss the issues. The Commission and any subcommittees can enter into executive sessions only in accordance with the Open Meeting Law.

Article IV. Conflict of Interest

All members of the Planning Commission shall abide by the City of Barre's Conflict of Interest Policy as most recently adopted by the Barre City Council ~~on October 13, 2009, together with any subsequent amendments~~. No disqualified member shall preside at a hearing or be counted by the Commission in establishing the required quorum. The applicant or any interested party may petition the Commission to disqualify any member because of a conflict of interest. If the Chairperson is disqualified, the Vice Chairperson shall preside. In the event the Vice Chairperson is unable to preside, a majority of the remaining Commission shall appoint an Acting Vice Chairperson for the proceeding.

Article V. Conduct of Public Hearings

- (a) Public hearings shall be conducted in accordance with the applicable rules as set forth in 24 VSA §4384, 24 VSA §4403, and other rules as are applicable.
- (b) Record of Proceedings. Proceedings at public hearings shall be recorded either electronically or by the Secretary.
- (c) Recess of public hearing. The Commission may recess a public hearing if all the matters pertaining to it cannot be disposed of on the day set. No further public notice shall be necessary provide that the date, time, and place of the recessed hearing shall be announced before adjournment.

Article VI. Voting

- (a) Quorum. For the conduct of a meeting or hearing, and the taking of any action, a quorum of the Commission must be present, consisting of a majority of the Planning Commission.
- (b) Majority Vote Required. Decisions on any matter before the Commission, except the amendment or adoption of procedural rules, shall require the concurrence of a majority of the members of the entire Commission, regardless of vacancies or disqualifications.
- (c) Motions in the affirmative. All motions made for any decision shall be made in the affirmative. This does not imply that the person making or seconding the motion support that motion. A failure to obtain four (4) affirmative votes shall be considered a denial. An abstention equals a negative vote.
- (d) Tie Vote. A tie vote shall constitute no action of the Planning Commission.
- (e) Conflict of Interest. No Commission member shall participate in any hearing or vote on any matter in which he or she has a personal or direct or indirect financial interest in the matter under consideration.

These rules of procedure were adopted by the Planning Commission:

Chairperson David Sichel~~Michael Hellein~~

Date

ANALYSIS OF TOBACCO AND ALCOHOL RETAIL ESTABLISHMENTS AND PROPOSAL FOR FUTURE REGULATION IN BARRE CITY

Objective

This document summarizes current tobacco and alcohol retail saturation and impact in Barre City, reviews relevant governance and zoning context, and outlines recommended ordinance and Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) amendments to reduce clustering, protect Sensitive Use areas, support downtown revitalization, and strengthen enforcement and transparency in licensing decisions.

Current State

Tobacco and Alcohol Retail Saturation

As of March 23, 2026, according to the Department of Liquor and Lottery, there were currently 20 permitted Tobacco Retail or Second Class (non-liquor) businesses in Barre City. 14 of the 20 businesses are permitted for both types of retail.

On March 24, 2026, a new Tobacco, Tobacco Substitute Endorsement, Second-Class Alcohol, and Lottery applicant located at 200 N Main St was approved. All existing businesses with similar licenses are within .9 miles of this new location.

The table below shows all existing locations with permits and their distance per Google Maps from 200 N Main St. Per Google, most of these businesses are no more than a 3-minute car ride from the central point of 200 N. Main St.

Name	Address	Second Class	Tobacco	Distance
Beverage Baron	411 N. Main St	Yes	Yes	.4 Miles
Cumberland Farms 8025	524 N. Main St	Yes	Yes	.8 Miles
Cumberland Farms 8027	132 S. Main St	Yes	Yes	.7 Miles
Dente's	406 N. Main St	Yes	No	.3 Miles
Dollar General 11046	74 S. Main St	Yes	Yes	.5 Miles
Dollar General 30489	540 N. Main St	Yes	Yes	.8 Miles
Smoker's World	123 N. Main St	Yes	Yes	292 Feet
Jiffy	350 N. Main St	Yes	Yes	.4 Miles

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Quality Market	155 Washington St	Yes	Yes	.7 Miles
AR Market	159 N. Main St	Yes	No	135 Feet
Walgreens	355 N. Main St	Yes	Yes	.2 Miles
Champlain Farms	169 Washington St	Yes	Yes	.7 Miles
Champlain Farms	15 S. Main St	Yes	Yes	.3 Miles
North End Deli	475 N. Main St	Yes	Yes	.7 Miles
Elks	10 Jefferson St	No	Yes	.2 Miles
Arandas	377 N. Main St	Yes	Yes	.3 Miles
Campo di Vino	131 S. Main St	Yes	No	.9 Miles
Forget-me-not Flowers	214 N. Main St	Yes	No	171 Feet
Granite City Market	224 N. Main St	Yes	Yes	285 Feet
VT Strong	69 S. Main St	No	Yes	.4 Miles

Regulatory Governance

While Tobacco, Alcohol, and Cannabis sales are all regulated by State agencies, the final permit approvals come before the City Council. The burden of establishing licensing boundaries and regulations falls to the municipalities and can only really be controlled through establishing new land use classifications rooted in Act 250.

Per Section 105 of the City of Barre Charter, the authority of the city to create new ordinances is not implicitly bound by sections listed in the charter.

The current Ordinances Chapter 10 – Licenses includes special call-outs for the following types of permitted business or activities, but not for Tobacco, Alcohol, or Cannabis retailers:

- Billiard Rooms; Bowling Alleys
- Eating Establishments
- Roller Skating Rinks
- Itinerant Vendors, Peddlers, Showmen, etc
- Public Dances

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There do not seem to be exceptions to the types of city ordinances that can be passed by council per Sec 107 of the Charter, while the Roles and Responsibilities section (4.400) of the Barre City Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) does not grant the Planning Commission or other roles ordinance-making abilities. The Planning Commission may prepare amendments and make recommendations to the City Council. However, the Council has no limitations on drafting and approving ordinances within its own body.

Lack of Zoning Buffers for Regulatory Retailers

In many jurisdictions across the country, there are often zoning buffers provided in state statute or regulation for retailers of regulated products, mostly tobacco and cannabis, based on the proximity to schools, youth-focused areas like parks, and places of worship. In Vermont, these zoning buffers are up to the discretion of the municipalities. The sole exception for these license types is a State regulation stating retail cannabis establishments cannot be within 500 feet walking distance from a school.

The only such language included in the UDO is in Section 3003 is related to Adult Entertainment, where:

Adult entertainment uses must not be located within 600 feet of an existing grade school, library, daycare facility, religious facility or public park. This distance will be measured from the property line of the subject lot to the nearest property line of the lot housing one of the listed uses. If a grade school, library, daycare facility, religious facility, or public park subsequently locates within 600 feet of a lawfully existing adult entertainment use, this provision will not be used to eliminate or restrict that adult entertainment use.¹

Across the US, it is common for government agencies of all sizes to establish special boundary thresholds for public-use or youth-focused locations with cities. These locations are similar to those mentioned in the Adult Use excerpt above. Typical distances range from 200 – 1000 feet.

Based on some quick research, at least 31 states have a state-level location buffer for alcohol retailers near primary or secondary schools. A national evidence summary based on state law reported that 31 states restrict alcohol outlet locations near K–12 schools.

For alcohol more broadly, a 2024 50-state legal review found that 33 states plus D.C. had some kind of state-level alcohol outlet density restriction, but that category includes more than just location buffers, such as population quotas and other density controls.

¹ Note: Smoker's World at 123 N Main St sells products that would be classified as Adult Entertainment as the Section 3003 is written. The distance from their property to the Aldrich Public Library is between 334.30 – 455.71 ft which is out of compliance with this section. Not knowing which came first, their retail inventory or the ordinance, it's possible that they are grandfathered into compliance, but this can also be reviewed by Council or the Planning Commission.

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While tobacco was much harder to find, a current 2025 state-law review clearly shows them in at least 4 states that have boundary requirements:

- **Alabama:** Specialty retail license barred within **1,000 feet** of a school, child-care facility, church, public library, playground, park, or other youth-centered facility.
- **Colorado:** No new nicotine-product retailer license within **500 feet** of a school unless authorized by local license.
- **Indiana:** Specialty e-cigarette/e-liquid store cannot be within **1,000 feet** of a school.
- **New Mexico:** Licenses may not be issued to businesses within **300 feet** of a school.

Lack of Financial Incentive for Barre

There are state-imposed taxes related to the sale of tobacco, alcohol, and cannabis that have special funding streams for the State's General Fund and special education initiatives. However, the only revenue received from the sale of these products within the community is the city's opt-in 1% Local Options Tax.

Within our small community, the increase in retail locations is unlikely to increase spending on these products. More locations will not directly increase our local tax revenue nor will it keep more dollars circulating in Barre.

In fact, overall tobacco revenue in the state is on the decline while newly issued licenses are increasing.

**TABLE 1B - STATE OF VERMONT
LEGISLATIVE JOINT FISCAL OFFICE
SOURCE HEALTHCARE REVENUE FORECAST UPDATE
Consensus JFO and Administration Forecast - January 2026**

SOURCE HEALTHCARE¹
revenues are prior to all allocations and other out-transfers; used for analytic and comparative purposes only

	FY2022	%	FY2023	%	FY2024	%	FY2025	%	FY2026	%	FY2027	%	FY2028	%
	(Actual)	Change	(Actual)	Change	(Actual)	Change	(Preliminary)	Change	(Forecast)	Change	(Forecast)	Change	(Forecast)	Change
REVENUE SOURCE														
Cigarette, Tobacco, E-Cig	\$76.0	-1.9%	\$74.8	-1.5%	\$70.0	-6.5%	\$67.4	-3.6%	\$63.9	-5.3%	\$61.9	-3.1%	\$60.1	-2.9%
Claims Assessment	\$21.7	10.3%	\$23.0	5.7%	\$27.3	18.6%	\$28.8	5.5%	\$32.6	13.2%	\$34.4	5.5%	\$36.3	5.5%
Employer Assessment	\$21.9	22.2%	\$24.9	13.9%	\$26.9	7.8%	\$31.8	18.3%	\$34.3	7.8%	\$37.0	7.8%	\$39.9	7.8%
Hospital Provider Tax	\$161.5	12.4%	\$173.9	7.6%	\$192.4	10.6%	\$212.3	10.4%	\$219.8	3.5%	\$226.4	3.0%	\$218.6	-3.4%
Nursing Home Provider Tax	\$14.7	0.7%	\$14.6	-0.6%	\$14.4	-1.5%	\$14.4	0.6%	\$14.4	-0.2%	\$14.4	0.0%	\$14.4	0.0%
Home Health Provider Tax	\$5.8	-0.3%	\$6.1	5.6%	\$0.0	-100.0%	\$0.0	NM	\$0.0	NM	\$0.0	NM	\$0.0	NM
All Other HC Revenues	\$1.8	0.9%	\$2.0	6.2%	\$2.1	7.8%	\$2.3	8.6%	\$2.3	2.1%	\$2.4	1.3%	\$2.4	1.3%
TOTAL HEALTHCARE	\$303.5	8.0%	\$319.3	5.2%	\$333.0	4.3%	\$357.1	7.2%	\$367.4	2.9%	\$376.5	2.5%	\$371.7	-1.3%

Figure 1. Past and Projected Tobacco Revenue

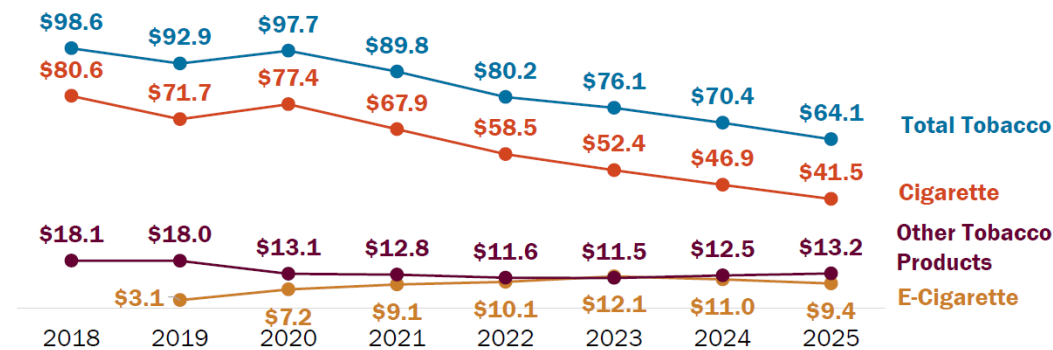
Figure 1 (Agency of Administration [consensus report](#)) shows that tobacco revenue has declined for years and is projected to keep falling over the next two fiscal years.

Another indicator of the decrease in tobacco sales and consumption can be seen in the Tobacco Wholesale revenue displayed in Figure 2.

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From 2018 to 2025, the total tobacco tax paid decrease has been driven by a decline in cigarette tax revenue.

Annual Vermont Tobacco Tax Paid (in millions of dollars) by Total and Product Type, Inflation-Adjusted



Source: Vermont Department of Taxes form CTT-646 and CTT-642, dated 2/9/26.
Data note: E-cigarette taxes started in Q3 of 2019. Other tobacco includes cigars, new smokeless tobacco (inc. nicotine pouches), snuff, chewing tobacco, roll-your-own tobacco pipe tobacco, paraphernalia. Revenue adjusted for inflation based on annual average 2025 Consumer Price Index (CPI) compared to annual average CPI of previous years and should not be used to estimate total sales or number of items sold
Vermont Department of Health

Figure 2. Decline of Tobacco Wholesaler Tax Revenue

Despite the drop in consumption, the State and municipalities continue to license new retailers. By oversaturating the market, tobacco retailers offer financial incentives to their buyers like heavy discounts or Buy One Get _____ sales. Overall, the retailer's income has decreased as the local market is too competitive. For retailers who rely on these sales versus having multiple revenue streams, it is harder to maintain profits, which could lead to pre-mature shop closures.

In relation to alcohol, the Washington County Prevention Coalition provided the following points:

Alcohol retail outlet density is a well-established environmental driver of alcohol-related harm.

- Higher outlet density is associated with:
 - Increased excessive drinking and binge drinking
 - Alcohol Use Disorder
 - Violence and injury
 - Motor vehicle crashes (including DUI)
 - Domestic violence and child maltreatment
- Community-level impacts include:
 - Disorderly conduct, noise, and public nuisance
 - Property damage and neighborhood disruption
 - Increased law enforcement and EMS utilization

The final two bullets were discussed during the [PSET presentation](#) given to City Council on April 21. Statistically, it's estimated that Vermont pays >\$2 per drink in public expenditures related to alcohol use and its consequences.

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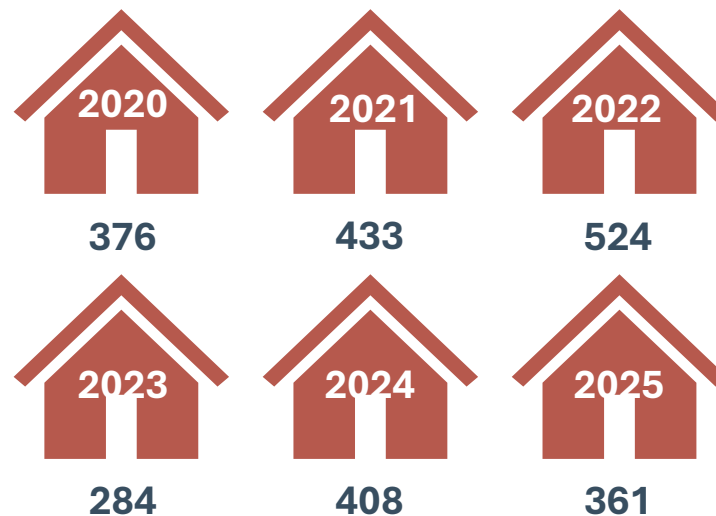
For Barre’s overall economic image, concentrations of tobacco and alcohol retailers signify a disadvantaged community. This perception is discussed in the [2022 study](#) “Associations of Alcohol and Tobacco Retail Outlet Rates with Neighborhood Disadvantage” from the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*. Disadvantaged communities are perceived as riskier investments for new businesses and less desirable by new residents. As a community working toward revitalization, this is not a perception Barre City can afford.

Barre Demographics

Barre’s demographic profile is complicated. While a substantial portion of residents are classified as vulnerable either through age, disability status, economic burdens, or rental reliance, Barre has seen some substantial changes to its residents since 2020.

Housing

Barre has attracted new residents and remote workers as one of the state’s last affordable housing markets. According to the State’s [property tax transfer](#) records, 2,386 residential properties have been sold in Barre City between 2020 and 2025. Per the US Census in 2000, there were 4,477 residential units in Barre City. Assuming these are unique addresses, 53% of Barre’s housing inventory changed ownership in recent years.



Household Income

Coinciding with the housing ownership changes, Barre City’s median household income has increased by 25-30% according to US Census data. The current estimate is between \$65,000 - \$66,000, placing Barre closer to the state-wide, non-Chittenden, average of \$77,000. While the current economy reduces the buying power of the increase, this figure demonstrates that a substantial portion of Barre City residents are earning more, and those funds could be eligible to spend within the community if opportunities existed.

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Poverty Rates

Barre's poverty level has also fluctuated over time, but recent years show the first drop in the last 30 years. While some of this drop can be attributed to the loss of livable property in the North End, it can also be attributed to the variety of new residents in Barre since the Pandemic.

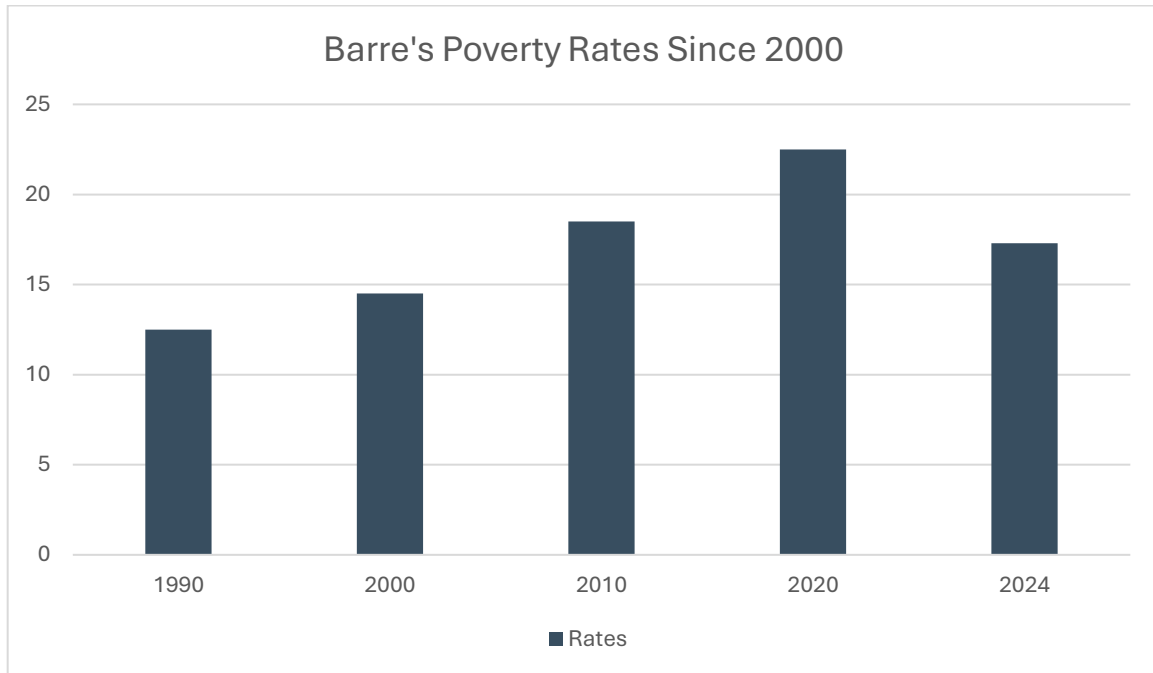


Figure 3. Barre's Changing Poverty Rates

Alcohol and Tobacco Use

Alcohol

According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), Vermont ranks as the 3rd highest in overall alcohol use (ages 12+). The Washington County Prevention Coalition provided the following statistics about Barre's Youth population, which makes up 13.5% of total residents:

- 38% of Spaulding High School students report living with a caregiver with a substance use problem (well above the state average of 27%)
- 63% of the same students report that alcohol would be easy to obtain
- Among Barre Middle School students:
 - 24% report having ridden with a driver who had been drinking
 - 20% report having ever used alcohol

The typical alcohol retail density is 1.9 to 1000 adults. Barre has 6,900 adults, which means the community should have fewer than 13 tobacco retailers. There are currently 19 permitted businesses. There is strong scientific evidence that regulating alcohol retail

ANALYSIS OF TOBACCO AND ALCOHOL RETAIL ESTABLISHMENTS AND PROPOSAL FOR FUTURE REGULATION IN BARRE CITY

density is one of the more effective strategies for reducing excessive alcohol consumption and related harms.²

Tobacco

The Barre division of the Department of Health was enthusiastic about providing data for this analysis. They provided the following statistics:

- In Vermont, adults who use one or more packs of cigarettes a day spend a minimum of \$4,555 per year.³
- 18% of deaths in Vermont among adults over 35 are attributable to cigarette smoking.⁴
- The following points were collected by the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance (YRBS) System, a division of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), when they surveyed Barre high school students in 2023:
 - 18% has tried cigarettes
 - 32% had tried a vape or e-nicotine delivery device
 - 16% consistently used a vape or e-nicotine delivery device⁵

The typical tobacco retail density is 1.4 to 1000 adults.⁶ Barre has 6,900 adults, which means the community should have fewer than 10 tobacco retailers. There are currently 17 permitted businesses.

Higher tobacco retailer density per 1,000 adults at the census tract level was significantly associated with higher levels of both overall social vulnerability and socioeconomic vulnerability, meaning that in areas with lower socioeconomic status populations, there was a higher density of tobacco retailers. It is well documented that the tobacco industry targets vulnerable populations for both new and continued use.

Current City Goals

With the current City governance and planning documents, it's clear that the community wants economic development. However, in addition to filling locations with businesses, other goals stand out:

1. Foster a greater sense of **civic pride** among Barre City residents

² "[Alcohol Excessive Consumption: Regulation of Alcohol Outlet Density.](#)" The Community Guide. Accessed 2 May 2026.

³ Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids. (2025) [State Excise and Sales Taxes per Pack of Cigarettes Total Amounts and State Ranking.](#) Accessed January 9, 2026.

⁴ **Vermont Department of Health.** [State Tobacco Control Plan 2023–2027: Vermont's Plan to Eliminate Tobacco Use and Vaping: A Framework for Action and Sustainability through 2027.](#) 12 Apr. 2023, ccessed 2 May 2026.

⁵ Note that S.198 made great headway in adding tighter restrictions around the shape of vape products being sold in the State.

⁶ **Vermont Department of Health.** [Vermont Tobacco and Alcohol Retail Audit.](#) Apr. 2025. Accessed 21 March 2026

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2. Implement the city's land use strategies as set forth in [the Municipal Plan], which identify and **establish policies for the downtown business district**, commercial zones, neighborhood commercial zones, industrial zones, and mixed-use zones.
3. Link economic development goals and strategies to building a sustainable community so that today's decisions and actions will not diminish the opportunities for **future generations to live healthy** and successful lives in the city.

Future-State Recommendations

The 2016 [document](#), *Vermont Municipal Regulation of Alcohol and Tobacco and Alcohol and Tobacco Advertising*, prepared for the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission, states,

“Although municipalities are limited because Vermont is a Dillon’s rule state, the Legislature has delegated to them authority to regulate alcohol and tobacco that is fairly expansive. Municipalities can enact local ordinances, create or amend governance charters, and utilize land use controls to regulate the sale, possession, and consumption of alcohol and tobacco... Municipalities in Vermont tend to “do what they have always done,” only looking at past successful practices.

Given the multiple options potentially available to regulate alcohol and tobacco, municipalities could be more creative and aggressive in their approach moving forward.”

Looking ahead to Barre City's future, we have an opportunity to create thoughtful mechanisms that encourage complementary businesses to grow and thrive within our community. At the same time, we can reaffirm the commitment made in our Designated Downtown application to strengthen and enhance our downtown through intentional planning, zoning, and investment. By following through on that vision, we can restore our downtown as a vibrant, welcoming heart of the community.

Regulate Tobacco, Alcohol, and Cannabis Retail Permits Through Ordinance and Zoning

We can build on existing tools within our own community framework to support a more balanced mix of businesses. The UDO's approach to Adult Entertainment provides a clear precedent for applying similar strategies to other sectors.

Add Additional Municipal Classifications to Support Economic Diversity

Consider creating municipal classifications for tobacco- and alcohol-focused retailers versus those that have a wider variety of products. These classifications should be permissible because they regulate land use characteristics and business types. An example of classifications could include:

“Tobacco Specialty Retailer”

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A retail establishment authorized to sell tobacco products through a State-issued Tobacco license, with a focus on small-scale or specialty production.

- No more than 30% of the floor area or display shall be devoted to the sale of tobacco products, and such establishments are characterized by the sale of cigars, pipe tobacco, and roll-your-own products.
- Cigarettes, vapes, and e-nicotine delivery devices shall be allocated no more than 10% of the floor area or display.
- No drive-through sales
- No self-service displays are accessible to customers
- An establishment shall not qualify as a Tobacco Specialty Retailer if it also meets the definition of a General Alcohol Retailer.

“General Tobacco Retailer”

Any establishment licensed to sell tobacco products through a State-issued Tobacco license offering tobacco or nicotine products and does not meet the definition of a Tobacco Specialty Retailer, Convenience, or Grocer.

Includes, but is not limited to:

- Convenience stores
- Vape shops
- Business with more than 10% of floor area or display dedicated to the sale of tobacco products

“Limited Alcohol Retailer (Beer and Wine – Specialty)”

A retail establishment authorized to sell beer and wine only through a State-issued Second-Class license, with a focus on small-scale or specialty production.

- No more than 30% of the floor area or display shall be devoted to the sale of alcoholic beverages, and such establishments are characterized by the sale of wine, cider, and specialty or craft beer products.
- Malt beverages shall be allocated no more than 10% of the floor area or display.
- Mass-market (macro) beer brands shall be allocated no more than 10% of the floor area or display.
- No sale of distilled spirits.
- An establishment shall not qualify as a Limited Alcohol Retailer if it also meets the definition of a General Tobacco Retailer.

“General Alcohol Retailer”

Any establishment licensed to sell alcoholic beverages through a State-issued Second-Class license not meeting the definition of a Limited Alcohol Retailer, Convenience, or Grocer.

Includes, but is not limited to:

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- Package/liquor stores
- High-volume alcohol outlets
- Business with more than 25% of floor area or display dedicated to the sale of alcohol

“Cannabis Retailer”

Any establishment licensed to sell recreational use cannabis products.

“High-Impact Use Retailer”

Any establishment that

- Meets the definitions of both a General Alcohol Retailer and a General Tobacco Retailer
- Does not meet the definition of a Convenience Store or Grocer

“Grocer”

- Any establishment with the primary purpose of selling fresh, prepared, and packaged food for off-site consumption and household goods. It may offer retail sales of tobacco or alcoholic products for off-site consumption, if licensed by the State of Vermont, as an accessory use.

To meet this classification, no less than 70% of the floor area or display shall be devoted to the sale of alcoholic beverages, and such establishments are characterized by the sale of wine, cider, and specialty or craft beer products.

- Fresh produce
- Dairy, including milk and cheese
- Raw Meat
- Household goods

Includes, but is not limited to:

- Grocery stores
- Markets
- Bodegas
- Business with a minimum of 70% of floor area dedicated to the sale of food products, as defined above.

“Food or Beverage Store”

- **Update:** *An establishment that sells food or **non-alcoholic beverage** items primarily not for immediate consumption to the general public. It may offer prepared foods or drinks for immediate consumption either on-site or for take-out as an accessory use.*

“Convenience Store”

- **Update:** *An establishment that sells a limited line of staple food, packaged food, and convenience items primarily for off-site consumption. It may offer*

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*prepared foods or drinks for immediate consumption either on-site or for take-out as an accessory use. **It may offer retail sales of tobacco or alcoholic products for off-site consumption, if licensed by the State of Vermont, as an accessory use.***

To meet this classification, no more than 40% of the floor area or display shall be devoted to the sale of alcoholic beverages and/or tobacco products.

“Brewery”

- A facility where beer is brewed on-site for distribution and/or on-site consumption, and which may include an accessory tasting room, taproom, or retail sales area.

Discourage General Retailers Clustering through Zoning

The goal is not to eliminate these regulated products from the community or Downtown District, but to reduce clustering and allow the area to function more closely to the goals identified in our Municipal Plan. This can be achieved by applying targeted restrictions, such as enforcing Conditional Use Permits (CUPs), which are already required for Retail Sales in the UC-1 district under the UDO.

Cities in Vermont currently using CUPs include:

- Killington
- Westfield
- Waitsfield

New guidelines for CUPs may include:

- General Tobacco Retailers shall not be located within 750 feet of another business with an active Tobacco Retailer license. Distance shall be measured in a straight line from the nearest point of the structure containing the proposed use to the nearest point of the structure of any existing such use.
- General Alcohol Retailers shall not be located within 750 feet of another business with an active Second-Class Alcohol license. Distance shall be measured in a straight line from the nearest point of the structure containing the proposed use to the nearest point of the structure of any existing such use.
- High-Impact Use Retailers shall not be located within 1,000 feet of another business with a Tobacco Retail or Second-Class Alcohol license. Distance shall be measured in a straight line from the nearest point of the structure containing the proposed use to the nearest point of the structure of any existing such use.
- Cannabis Retailers shall not be located within 1,500 feet of another such use. Distance shall be measured in a straight line from the nearest point of the structure containing the proposed use to the nearest point of the structure of any existing such use.

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- Cannabis Retailers shall not be located within 750 feet of a General Tobacco Retailer or High-Impact Use Retailer. Distance shall be measured in a straight line from the nearest point of the structure containing the proposed use to the nearest point of the structure of any existing such use.
- Tobacco Specialty Retailers and Limited Alcohol Retailers shall be exempt from minimum separation requirements, provided they do not meet the definition of a General Tobacco Retailer or a General Alcohol Retailer.
- Properties with combined Convenience Store and Fueling Station uses, Grocers, and Breweries shall be exempt from minimum separation requirements.

These standards shall be applied as part of the Conditional Use Permit review for any business in the Design Review Overlay District (DROD), and applications that do not meet these requirements shall not be approved, except where specifically authorized under the provisions for nonconforming uses. This ensures that products are readily available to consumers and helps prevent clustering.

Tobacco Specialty Retailers and Limited Alcohol Retailers are intended to function as lower-impact and accessory uses. Therefore, they are subject to fewer locational restrictions than General and High-Impact Retailers.

Create Location Buffers for Sensitive Use Spaces

Also, in our Zoning or Charter, we should define “Sensitive Use” spaces that are within the Downtown Review Overlay District or classified as a Civic location, which include any public or quasi-public facility or facility supporting a vulnerable population, including, but not limited to:

- Community Facilities, as defined in 1104, except municipal parks with an area less than 10,000 square feet
- Public libraries as recognized by the State’s Department of Libraries
- Rehabilitation services or residential treatment facilities, as defined in 3228
- Senior Housing
- Assisted Living
- Group Home

Once defined, consider establishing a buffer around Sensitive Use spaces.

- Tobacco Specialty Retailers, Limited Alcohol Retailers, and Breweries shall not be located within 500 feet of designated Sensitive Use spaces. Distance shall be measured in a straight line from the nearest point of the structure containing the proposed use to the nearest point of the property boundary of the Sensitive Use.
- General Alcohol Retailers, General Tobacco Retailers, and Cannabis Retailers, not also identified as a High-Impact Use Retailer, shall not be located within 750 feet of designated Sensitive Use spaces. Distance shall be measured in a straight line from the nearest point of the structure containing the proposed use to the nearest point of the property boundary of the Sensitive Use.

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- High-Impact Use Retailers shall not be located within 1,000 feet of designated Sensitive Use spaces. Distance shall be measured in a straight line from the nearest point of the structure containing the proposed use to the nearest point of the property boundary of the Sensitive Use.
- Convenience Stores and Grocers with regulatory substance licenses, including tobacco, tobacco enhancement, and second-class licenses, shall not be located within 500 feet of designated Sensitive Use spaces. Distance shall be measured in a straight line from the nearest point of the structure containing the proposed use to the nearest point of the property boundary of the Sensitive Use.

Signage

To support and ***promote the long-term economic and social vitality of Barre City's central business district,⁷ encourage investment that increases the value of downtown buildings and property⁸, and promote a quality, urban streetscape and pedestrian-friendly environment⁹***, consider the following revisions to the UDO:

3107 Signs section:

- Update 3107.D:
 - **Remove** 3107.D(9) for the restriction of Neon signs. All neon signs should go through the Development Review Board (DRB) to ensure they conform to the purposes stated in 3107.A.
 - **Add** (16) *Signs mounted on rigid foam board, including but not limited to:*
 - Gatorboard
 - Foam board
 - Rigid foam board
 - High-density foam board
 - Rigid display board
 - **Add** (17) *Handwritten signs advertising products*
- Update 3107.I:
 - **Add** (5) *Temporary signs cannot promote tobacco or cannabis use. Only locations with an on-premises consumption tobacco license may display event signs promoting alcohol.*
- Update 3107.L(2):

*Applicants may seek conditional use approval for distinctive, building-mounted signs that do not conform to the standards of this section within the **Design Review Overlay District**, Urban Center 1 and 2, and Mixed Use 1 districts.*
- Update Figure 3-11 Window Sign Miscellaneous language:
 - **Remove:** Applied plastic or vinyl cut letters are strongly discouraged and are prohibited in the DRO district.

⁷ Section 2101.A(1) of the UDO

⁸ Section 2101.A(5) of the UDO

⁹ Section 2101.A(7) of the UDO

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- **Update:** Each window sign consisting of applied plastic or vinyl cut letters is limited to one graphic per window and must be approved by the Design Review Board.
- **Add:** Window signs in the DRO district may not include references to regulated substances such as tobacco, alcohol, or cannabis, including but not limited to terms such as “Smoke Shop” or “Vape Shop”.
- **Add:** Window signs may not be constructed of paper products.
- Update Figure 3-15 Projecting Sign language:
 - **Add Location:** *An establishment with multiple ground-floor accessible businesses with distinct entrances may have 1 projecting sign per business.*
 - **Add Miscellaneous:** *Projecting signs imagery is limited to the name of the business and, if desired, its logo. Logos may not use imagery of tobacco, alcohol, or cannabis products or use.*
- Update Figure 3-20 Sandwich Board Sign
 - **Add Location:** *An establishment with multiple ground-floor accessible businesses with distinct entrances may have 1 sandwich board sign per 100 ft of building frontage, with no more than 1 sandwich board per business.*
 - **Add Miscellaneous:** Sandwich board signs in the DRO district may not include references to regulated substances such as tobacco, alcohol, or cannabis, including but not limited to terms such as “Smoke Shop” or “Vape Shop”.

Enforcement

Enforcement is the strongest mechanism for enforcement, especially outside of a licenses renewal period.

“Coverage Statements”

Any use lawfully existing prior to the adoption of these changes shall be considered a nonconforming use and may continue, but shall not be expanded, enlarged, or intensified.

Any signage approved prior to the adoption of these changes shall be considered grandfathered and may continue, but shall not be changed, expanded, enlarged, or intensified.

No tobacco retail, tobacco enhancement, or second-class license shall be approved or renewed unless the establishment complies with all applicable zoning, land use, and permitting requirements.

Continuous zoning violations may result in the suspension or recommendation for revocation of the permit for ongoing zoning violations.

Violations and Penalties

The current language in this section applies to building owners versus business owners. Consider the following edits:

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*Imposing fines and penalties to the maximum extent allowed under state law until the property owner **and/or business owner** remedies the violation.*

*Upon failure of the property owner or other responsible party to cure a violation of this ordinance, **Barre City may suspend or recommend revocation of city-approved licenses or institute appropriate court action.***

Summary

These standards are intended to:

- Prevent the new high-impact retailers in the DROD based on the current market saturation
- Support the character and economic vitality of the Downtown District by encouraging businesses where the Tobacco and Alcohol offerings are either specialized or incidental and subordinate to their primary retail offerings.
- Promote public health and safety by establishing Sensitive Use areas, and
- Maintain a balanced mix of commercial activity to promote Vermonters and tourists to spend time in our Designated Downtown.

Under the proposed spacing requirements, some existing general tobacco and alcohol retailers in Barre, Vermont's Design Review Overlay district would become nonconforming but may continue operating. Others would become non-conforming due to the relative distance to a Sensitive Use space.

Name	Address	In DROD?	Location Buffer Compliant?	Sensitive Use Buffer Compliant?
Beverage Baron (HI)	411 N. Main St	No	Yes	No – Brook St School
Cumberland Farms 8025 (CN)	524 N. Main St	No	Yes	Yes
Cumberland Farms 8027 (CN)	132 S. Main St	No	Yes	No – Spaulding Civic Boundary
Dente's (GR)	406 N. Main St	No	Yes	No – Brooks St School
Dollar General 11046 (HI)	74 S. Main St	Yes	No – VT Strong	No – Post Office

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Dollar General 30489 (HI)	540 N. Main St	No	Yes	No – Wobby Park, Public Safety Building
Smoker's World (HI)	123 N. Main St	Yes	No	No – Library, City Hall, City Hall Park, Mathewson Playground, Church Cluster
Jiffy (CN)	350 N. Main St	Yes	Yes	Yes
Quality Market (G)	155 Washington St	No	Yes	Yes
AR Market (G)	159 N. Main St	Yes	Yes	Yes
Walgreens (HI)	355 N. Main St	Yes	No – Jiffy Mart	No – Auditorium
Champlain Farms (CN)	169 Washington St	No	Yes	Yes
Champlain Farms (CN)	15 S. Main St	Yes	Yes	No – City Hall Park, City Hall, Post Office, Church Cluster
North End Deli (GR)	475 N. Main St	No	Yes	Yes
Elks (GR)	10 Jefferson St	Yes	No – 445 ft to Smoker's World	Library, City Hall Park, Church Cluster, City Hall
Arandas (FS)	377 N. Main St	Yes	Yes	Yes
Campo di Vino (SR)	131 S. Main St	No	Yes	Yes
Forget-me-not Flowers (SR)	214 N. Main St	Yes	Yes	Yes
Granite City Market (G)	224 N. Main St	Yes	Yes	Yes
VT Strong (GR, C)	69 S. Main St	Yes	No – 270 ft to Dollar General	Yes
Barre Beer and Tobacco Shop (HI)	200 N. Main St.	Yes	No – 235 ft to Granite City Market	No – Library, City Hall Park, Mathewson Park, City Hall

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Abbreviations include:

- GR – General Tobacco or Alcohol Retailer
- SR – Specialty Retailer
- HI – High Impact
- G – Grocer
- CN – Convenience Store
- C – Cannabis Retailer

No current conforming permit holders would be affected beyond the nonconformity provisions outlined in the Enforcement section. Others who may be out of compliance may need to become compliant. Over time, these standards will guide new businesses toward specialty classifications, allowing the corridor to gradually diversify over a 5–10 year period.

DRAFT AMENDMENTS TO THE BARRE CITY UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE

ARTICLE 1 — GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 101. Purpose and Intent

These regulations are adopted to:

1. Support a balanced, diverse, and resilient mix of commercial activity within the City and Downtown District;
2. Foster a greater sense of civic pride among Barre City residents by encouraging compatible, pedestrian-oriented, and community-supportive development patterns;
3. Implement the City's land use strategies as established in the Municipal Plan, including policies governing downtown business districts, commercial districts, neighborhood commercial districts, industrial districts, mixed-use districts, and overlay districts;
4. Promote economic development strategies that contribute to a sustainable community and support opportunities for current and future generations to live healthy and successful lives within the City;
5. Prevent the overconcentration and clustering of certain regulated retail uses where such concentration may undermine neighborhood character, pedestrian activity, economic diversity, or long-term revitalization objectives;
6. Encourage land use patterns that support a broad range of retail, service, civic, residential, cultural, and employment opportunities within the Downtown District and surrounding neighborhoods;
7. Reinforce compatible development patterns and minimize cumulative land use impacts associated with concentrated regulated retail uses, including impacts related to traffic, signage intensity, late-night activity, and commercial compatibility; and
8. Advance the goals of the City's Downtown Designation Program and related revitalization initiatives.

These regulations are intended to regulate land use characteristics, locational impacts, and compatibility between uses. Nothing herein shall be construed to prohibit the lawful sale of products otherwise authorized by the State of Vermont.

ARTICLE 11 — DEFINITIONS

Section 1104. Definitions

Alcohol Retailer, General

A retail establishment licensed by the State of Vermont to sell alcoholic beverages for off-site consumption through a Second-Class license and which does not qualify as a Limited Alcohol Retailer, Convenience Store, or Grocer.

Characteristics may include:

- Package or liquor stores;
- High-volume alcohol sales; or
- More than twenty-five percent (25%) of the floor area or display area is devoted to alcoholic beverages.

Alcohol Retailer, Limited

A retail establishment licensed by the State of Vermont to sell beer and wine for off-site consumption through a Second-Class license and characterized by specialty, small-scale, or craft beverage offerings.

To qualify as a Limited Alcohol Retailer:

1. No more than thirty percent (30%) of floor area or display area shall be devoted to alcoholic beverages;
2. Malt beverages shall occupy no more than ten percent (10%) of floor area or display area;
3. Mass-market beer brands shall occupy no more than ten percent (10%) of floor area or display area;
4. Distilled spirits shall not be sold; and
5. The establishment shall not meet the definition of a General Tobacco Retailer.

Brewery

A facility where beer is brewed on-site for distribution and/or on-site consumption, and which may include accessory tasting rooms, taprooms, or retail sales areas.

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Cannabis Retailer

An establishment licensed by the State of Vermont to sell recreational cannabis products.

Convenience Store

An establishment engaged in the retail sale of a limited line of staple foods, packaged foods, and convenience items primarily for off-site consumption. Prepared foods or beverages may be offered as an accessory use.

Alcoholic beverage or tobacco sales may be permitted as accessory uses when licensed by the State of Vermont.

To qualify as a Convenience Store:

- No more than forty percent (40%) of floor area or display area shall be devoted to alcoholic beverages and/or tobacco products.
-

Food or Beverage Store

An establishment engaged primarily in the retail sale of food and/or non-alcoholic beverage items not intended for immediate consumption.

Prepared food or beverage service for on-site or take-out consumption may be permitted as an accessory use.

Grocer

An establishment engaged primarily in the retail sale of fresh, prepared, and packaged foods and household goods for off-site consumption.

Alcoholic beverage or tobacco sales may be permitted as accessory uses when licensed by the State of Vermont.

To qualify as a Grocer:

1. At least seventy percent (70%) of floor area or display area shall be devoted to food products and household goods; and

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2. Food products shall include fresh produce, dairy products, raw meat products, and packaged food products.

Grocers may include:

- Grocery stores;
- Markets;
- Bodegas; or
- Similar food-oriented establishments.

High-Impact Retail Use

A retail establishment that:

1. Meets the definitions of both a General Alcohol Retailer and a General Tobacco Retailer; and
2. Does not qualify as a Convenience Store or Grocer.

High-Impact Retail Uses are characterized by intensified retail concentration, increased signage and advertising intensity, greater compatibility concerns within pedestrian-oriented districts, and cumulative land use impacts associated with clustering.

Sensitive Use

A public, quasi-public, civic, institutional, residential care, or vulnerable-population-serving use located within the Design Review Overlay District (DROD) or Civic District.

Sensitive Uses include:

- Community Facilities, except municipal parks less than ten thousand (10,000) square feet;
- Public libraries recognized by the Vermont Department of Libraries;
- Rehabilitation or residential treatment facilities;
- Senior housing facilities;
- Assisted living facilities; and
- Group homes.

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Tobacco Retailer, General

An establishment licensed by the State of Vermont to sell tobacco or nicotine products and which does not qualify as a Tobacco Specialty Retailer, Convenience Store, or Grocer.

Characteristics may include:

- Vape shops;
- Tobacco-focused retail establishments; or
- More than ten percent (10%) of the floor area or display area is devoted to tobacco or nicotine products and accessories.

Tobacco Retailer, Specialty

A retail establishment licensed by the State of Vermont to sell tobacco products and characterized primarily by specialty or small-scale tobacco offerings.

To qualify as a Tobacco Specialty Retailer:

1. No more than thirty percent (30%) of floor area or display area shall be devoted to tobacco products and accessories;
2. Cigarettes, vape products, and electronic nicotine delivery systems shall occupy no more than ten percent (10%) of the floor area or display area;
3. Drive-through sales shall be prohibited.
4. Customer-accessible self-service tobacco displays shall be prohibited; and
5. The establishment shall not meet the definition of a General Alcohol Retailer.

ARTICLE 3 — USE REGULATIONS

Section 310. Regulated Retail Uses

A. Applicability

The standards of this Section shall apply to regulated retail uses located within:

1. The Design Review Overlay District (DROD); and
2. Any zoning district where Retail Sales require Conditional Use approval.

Regulated retail uses shall comply with the separation, buffering, and Conditional Use Permit requirements established in Table 310-1 in addition to all other applicable provisions of this Ordinance.

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B. Interpretation

Where multiple standards apply, the more restrictive standard shall govern.

No regulated retail use shall be approved that fails to satisfy the requirements of Table 310-1 unless expressly authorized under Article 8 governing lawful nonconforming uses.

C. Table 310-1. Regulated Retail Use Standards

Use Classification	Minimum Separation Between Like Regulatory License Types	Sensitive Use Buffer	Conditional Use Permit Required in DROD
General Tobacco Retailer	750 ft from: • General Tobacco Retailers; or • Convenience Store with a Tobacco Retailer License; or • Grocer with a Tobacco Retailer License	750 ft	Yes
General Alcohol Retailer	750 ft from: • General Alcohol Retailers; or • Convenience Store with a Second-Class License; or • Grocer with a Second-Class License	750 ft	Yes
High-Impact Retail Use	1,000 ft from: • General Alcohol Retailers; or • General Tobacco Retailer; or • Convenience Store with a Tobacco	1,000 ft	Yes

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	Retailer or Second-Class License; or Grocer with a Tobacco Retailer or Second-Class License		
Cannabis Retailer	1,500 ft from Cannabis Retailers; 750 ft from High-Impact Retail Uses or General Tobacco Retailers	750 ft	Yes
Tobacco Specialty Retailer	Exempt	500 ft	Yes
Limited Alcohol Retailer	Exempt	500 ft	Yes
Brewery	Exempt	500 ft	Yes
Convenience Store with Tobacco Retail or Second-Class Licenses	Exempt	500 ft	Yes
Grocer with Tobacco Retail or Second-Class Licenses	Exempt	500 ft	Yes

Section 312. Conditional Use Approval Standards

In addition to the standards of Article 5, the Development Review Board shall evaluate:

1. Whether the proposed use would contribute to excessive concentration of regulated retail uses;
2. Compatibility with surrounding land uses and pedestrian-oriented development patterns;
3. Consistency with the Barre City Municipal Plan;
4. Potential cumulative impacts associated with clustering of regulated retail uses;
5. Effects on neighborhood character, economic diversity, and downtown revitalization objectives.

Applications failing to meet the standards of Section 310 shall not be approved except as otherwise authorized for lawful nonconforming uses under Article 8.

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Section 313. Exemptions

The following uses shall be exempt from minimum separation requirements between regulated retail uses:

1. Tobacco Specialty Retailers;
2. Limited Alcohol Retailers;
3. Breweries;
4. Grocers; and
5. Combined Convenience Store and Fueling Station uses;

provided such uses do not otherwise qualify as High-Impact Retail Uses.

Section 314. Measurement Standards

Distances required under Sections 310 through 313 shall be measured in a straight line:

1. From the nearest point of the structure containing the proposed use;
2. To the nearest point of the structure containing the existing regulated use; or
3. To the nearest property boundary of a Sensitive Use, where applicable.

ARTICLE 8 — NONCONFORMITIES

Section 8105. Existing Regulated Retail Uses

Any regulated retail use lawfully existing prior to the effective date of this Ordinance and rendered nonconforming by these amendments may continue subject to the requirements of Article 8.

Expansion, relocation, intensification, or change in use classification of a nonconforming regulated retail use shall require compliance with Article 3 unless otherwise approved by the Development Review Board consistent with the standards for nonconforming uses.



VERMONT LEGISLATIVE Joint Fiscal Office

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Fiscal Note

April 14, 2026

Ted Barnett, Senior Fiscal Analyst

S.278 – An act relating to cannabis

As passed by the Senate^{1,i}

Bill Summary

This bill would make various changes to the adult-use cannabis market in Vermont:

- *Section 1:* Increase the single package THC limit from 100mg to 200mg.
- *Section 2:* Increase transaction limits from one ounce to two ounces.
- *Section 3:* Increase the cannabis possession limits of cannabis and hashish to two ounces and ten grams, respectively.
- *Section 5:* Create a pilot program for event permits that would allow for ten public events and ten private events each year for two years
- *Section 6:* Create a pilot program for delivery permits that would be available to 15 retailers each year for two years.
- *Section 10a:* Decrease fees for all tiers of outdoor cultivators.
- *Section 11:* Allow a proposal to hold a vote on whether to permit a cannabis retailer to operate within a municipality to be made by the legislative body of the municipality or a petition of 5% of the voters of the municipality.
- *Section 12:* Distribute local cannabis fees to municipalities annually rather than quarterly.
- *Section 13:* Change employee fees from annual to biennial renewal.
- *Section 14-22:* Repeal the integrated license type, which has not been in use since the last licensee converted to a conventional license.
- *Section 23:* Allow tier 1 cultivators, tier 1 manufacturers, and businesses granted economic empowerment status by the Cannabis Control Board (CCB) to receive low-interest rate loans and grants from the Cannabis Business Development Fund.
- *Section 24:* Amend the definition of household income for the calculation of education property tax credits to include business deductions or credits for cultivation, testing, processing, or sale of cannabis or cannabis products.

S.278 would make various changes related to the adult use cannabis market, including creating a pilot program for cannabis event and delivery permits

¹ The Joint Fiscal Office (JFO) is a nonpartisan legislative office dedicated to producing unbiased fiscal analysis – this fiscal note is meant to provide information for legislative consideration, not to provide policy recommendations.

Fiscal Impact

Event permits would generate a maximum of \$10,000 annually, of which \$5,000 would be allocated to municipalities and \$5,000 would be allocated to the Cannabis Regulation Fund. Delivery permits would add an additional \$1,500, for a total of \$6,500 of potential additional annual fee revenue for the Cannabis Regulation Fund in fiscal years 2027 and 2028. Both pilots would sunset July 1, 2028.

The bill would reduce fees for outdoor cultivators. This change would reduce revenue to the Cannabis Regulation Fund by approximately \$105,000 annually. However, the provision would not go into effect unless the General Assembly has transferred at least \$105,000 to the Cannabis Regulation Fund by July 1, 2026.

Changing the definition of household income for the purposes of calculating the property tax credit to include cannabis deductions would, all else equal, increase property tax credits paid to Vermont homeowners, which would reduce net homestead property tax revenues to the Education Fund starting in fiscal year 2027. These changes would have a minimal impact on the Education and General funds.

Section 27 would allow licensed cannabis cultivators to form a cannabis cultivator cooperative corporation pursuant to 11 V.S.A. chapter 7. Those cooperatives pay fees at incorporation or merger (\$20), and for amendment to those filings (\$10) and would result in minimal revenue for the Secretary of State Corporations Special Fund.

Provisions of the bill that would increase package and transaction limits are designed in part to make Vermont's regulated market more attractive to those who are currently purchasing from the illicit market. The fiscal impact of these changes is challenging to quantify, especially together as a policy package. However, any change in the size of the adult-use market would impact both cannabis excise and sales tax revenues.

Background and Details

The following sections contain a fiscal impact:

Sections 5 and 6: Permit Pilot Programs

These sections would create two two-year pilot programs (ending July 1, 2028) for two permit types: an event permit and a delivery permit. The event permit would be for licensed cannabis establishments, which could include cultivators, retailers, and other licensees. The permit would need local approval and to meet various other logistical requirements. Each year, ten permits would be available for private events and ten permits would be available for public events. In both cases, a permit would be valid for a single event that does not last longer than 24 hours. Sales of cannabis products would not be allowed during the event, and the event could not be held at a location where alcohol is sold. Fees would be \$500 and would be directed 50% to the host municipality and 50% to the Cannabis Regulation Fund. Assuming 20 events, the fees would generate \$10,000 each year of the pilot.

Delivery permits would be available to tier 1 and tier 2 cultivators and manufacturers licensed by the CCB. Deliveries would be limited to between 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM, physical addresses in Vermont, and products for personal use. Fees would be \$100 for 15 permits annually (\$1,500 each year assuming 15 permits).

Sections 10a: Outdoor Cultivator License Fees

Outdoor cultivators are grouped into five different tiers for licensing fees based on the size of plant canopy. For example, under current law fees range from \$750 annually for tier 1 cultivators with less than 1,000 square feet of canopy space or fewer than 125 plants to \$18,000 annually for tier 5 cultivators with up to 20,000 square feet of canopy space. This section would reduce fees approximately in half for all tiers of outdoor cultivators. Table 1 highlights these fee changes.

Table 1: Proposed Changes to Outdoor Cultivation Licenses in S.278

Fee Name	Current Licenses	Current Fee	FY 2027 Projected Revenue (Current Law)	Proposed Fee	FY27 Projected Revenue (with fee changes)	Difference
Cultivator - Outdoor Tier 1	74	\$750	\$55,500	\$375	\$27,750	(\$27,750)
Cultivator - Outdoor Tier 2	24	\$1,875	\$45,000	\$925	\$22,200	(\$22,800)
Cultivator - Outdoor Tier 3	9	\$4,000	\$36,000	\$2,000	\$18,000	(\$18,000)
Cultivator - Outdoor Tier 4	2	\$8,000	\$16,000	\$4,000	\$8,000	(\$8,000)
Cultivator - Outdoor Tier 5	3	\$18,000	\$54,000	\$9,000	\$27,000	(\$27,000)
Total			\$206,500		\$102,950	(\$103,550)

Section 13: Employee Licenses

Section 13 would convert annual employee licenses of \$50 to a two-year license of \$100. Although the overall amount paid for licenses over the two years would not change, it would change the timing of revenues received by Cannabis Regulation Fund. Approximately 1,700 employees were licensed by the CCB in fiscal year 2025, which generated \$83,700 for the Cannabis Regulation Fund.²

Section 23: Property Tax Credit Calculation

The Cannabis Business Development Fund was established by Act 62 (2021) to provide low-interest loans and grants through the Agency of Commerce and Development (ACCD) to social equity applicants to cover the expenses associated with starting and operating a licensed cannabis establishment. The Fund has received a total of \$1.5 million in transfers from the General Fund and Cannabis Regulation Fund and a \$50,000 one-time payment from an integrated licensee as required by statute. ACCD expects that this funding will be fully spent by the end of fiscal year 2026.³ This section would expand the number of cannabis establishments eligible to receive support from the Fund, but it does not change how much money would be allocated to those recipients.

Section 24: Property Tax Credit Calculation

Section 24 would impact the calculation of household income which is used to calculate property tax credits. Increases in property tax credits, starting with claims filed in 2026, would reduce net homestead education property taxes by an unknown amount annually starting in fiscal year 2027. These changes are estimated to have a minimal impact on the Education and General funds. While this change is estimated to have a de minimis impact on the Education Fund, absent other changes in policy, the yields and property tax rates may need to be adjusted to account for the forgone revenue from this provision.

ⁱ The full fiscal note history is available on the fiscal tab of the bill page on the General Assembly website and can be pulled up through a bill number search on the JFO page.

² <https://legislature.vermont.gov/assets/Legislative-Reports/Act-56-2025-Fees-and-Appropriations-Report.pdf>

³ https://ccb.vermont.gov/sites/ccb/files/2026-01/CBDF_CCB.Data_Report_1.29.2025.pdf

Staff Updates for May 14, 2026 Packet

- To note, the DRB had appointed a new member, Philip Back on March 17, and Sarah Helman was reappointed on May 5, 2026. The DRB has one current at-large vacancy.
- As most of you know now, 4 Commissioners have decided to not redo their term of office and have resigned from the Commission after our June meeting. And on May 5, we welcomed Cat Allen, a new Commissioner appointed by the City Council. We also asked the Council to reduce the number of members from 7 to 5, so that we can continue meeting if we have 3 members after July 1. A revised Rules of Procedure addresses the change in membership so that we do not need to change our Rules of Procedure when the Commission grows or shrinks.
- The DRB will have a hearing in June to hear an application from Good Samaritan Haven, who is purchasing 24 Jefferson Street and moving their shelter from 105 Seminary Street to the new location. A shelter in this particular zoning district is Conditional, hence requiring DRB approval.
- Our Assessing staff continues to work with the Appraisal company; the last visual checks of the commercial properties occurred last week, and now they are working on final assessments. Informational meetings will occur the week of June 9 through Saturday, June 13. They are hosting these so that property owners can come and ask questions about the process and what it all means. Change of appraisal notices will be going out soon.
- FEMA buyout status: 15 Scampini Square and 12 Harrington Avenue were purchased on April 27, 2026, bringing our total buyout purchases to 16. 9 of those have been demolished to date, and we are waiting for the asbestos company to finish review of the recently purchased and then the demolition contractor will mobilize to Barre City to take down more structures. No additional closings are scheduled at this time, but I continue to work with those remaining property owners as to their status.
- Turning Point Center at 18 S. Main Street continues to move along nicely; their consultant and I continue to move to grant agreement from grant award, getting final pieces of documentation in the grants management system. I am working now with the City attorney to get required legal documentation done and recorded so that the grant can be issued and I can complete a reimbursement.
- As you know the City was awarded 3 CDBG-DR grants, and we continue to complete the next step of special conditions necessary to get us having a grant agreement offered for each; Prospect Heights Development for \$5,434,242; the Harrington Avenue Debris Rack redevelopment for \$856,428; and the Stormwater upgrades for study and design for \$250,000.
- If you recall, I informed the Commission in tandem with the City Manager informing the Council that we had applied for Round 2 CDBG-DR funding for elevation and city buyouts to further our mission in the North End, but we are not awarded any of this funding.