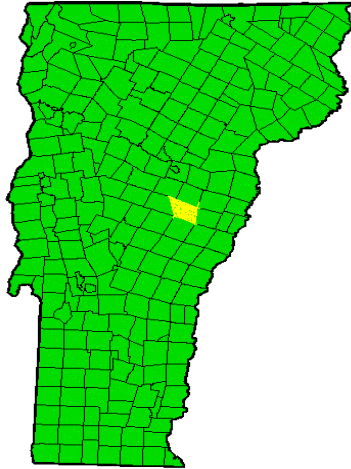


CHELSEA

**Orange County,
Vermont**



A Community Profile

**Prepared for the
Vermont Council on Rural Development
Community Visit
March, 2005**



**By
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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES**

A Note to the Reader

Just as a community is never finished modifying, adapting, and organizing its natural, political, and social environments, an attempt to profile those dynamic processes must be a work in progress. Materials below are organized to reflect community characteristics and resources. Please join us in this profiling effort and call attention to major omissions, inaccuracies, and errors of fact.

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Table of Contents

Section 1. Town Organization	1
Section 2. Human Resources	2
Section 3. Business and Infrastructure Resources	8
Section 4. Social Capital	10
Section 5. Natural Resources	11
Section 6. Sources	11

Tables

Table 1.1 – General Town Characteristics	1
Table 1.2– Chelsea General Planning Characteristics	1
Table 2.1 – Chelsea Population Characteristics	2
Table 2.2 - Ethnic Diversity	2
Table 2.3 Age and Gender	3
Table 2.4 – Chelsea Housing and Family Characteristics.....	6
Table 2.5– Town, County, and State Income & Poverty Comparisons	7
Table 3.1–Chelsea Employment Characteristics.....	8
Table 3.2–Chelsea Property Valuation & Taxation	8
Table 3.3– Chelsea Town Local Transportation Behavior	9
Table 4.1 – Chelsea Elementary School (K-6): General School Information.....	10
Table 4.2 – Chelsea and Statewide 2003 Public School Enrollment by Gender	10
Table 5.1– Chelsea Town Selected Natural and Geographical Information.....	11

Figures

Figure 2.1 Chelsea Age / Sex Pyramids, 1990 & 2000.....	4
Figure 2.2 Tunbridge Age / Sex Pyramids, 1990 & 2000.....	5
Figure 2.3 Williamstown Age / Sex Pyramids, 1990 & 2000.....	5

Community Profile – Chelsea, VT

Chelsea is a unique valley community with a time honored distribution of its population south of a river fork where White River valley broadens. This is not, nor has it been, an isolated rural community. Straight forward and well traveled roads illustrate social and commercial ties to Tunbridge to the south on Route 110 (from where the first settlers arrived), and still on Route 110, north to Washington. Similarly, Route 113 links to Vershire and Corinth to the east, and, to the north west, up over a Green Mountain ridge to the commercial center of Williamstown. There is a pairing of themes in Chelsea: an “open country rural” (with still viable, but declining timbering and farming) contrasted with light manufacturing and retail village centered activity; a dogged identity with and allegiance to the town contrasted with an increasing dependence on several neighboring towns to provide a critical mass for the center of town attention, a k to 12 school system. Similar “leakage” of local identity occurs as folks travel further to jobs in the capitol area, White River and other more urban commercial centers. The duality continues: two popular general stores in the village, paired greens, and a constructive tension between newcomer and old timer that leaves few topics of civic concern unarticulated.

Civic Structure

Table 1.1 – General Town Characteristics

Town Name	Chelsea
County	Orange
Date of Town Charter	1781
Incorporated Village(s)	None
Other Villages and Neighborhoods (past and present)	West Hill, Kennedy Corner, etc.

Sources: Center for Rural Studies / VCGI. 2004. *Vermont Indicators Online*.
<http://crs.uvm.edu/indicators>

Table 1.2– Chelsea General Planning Characteristics

<i>Vermont Forum on Sprawl Category</i>	3-Outlying Town
Town Plan	Dec, 1997
Zoning Ordinance	Mar, 1998
Subdivision Ordinance	No
Septic Approval Process	-

Source: Center for Rural Studies / VCGI. 2004. *Vermont Indicators Online*.
<http://crs.uvm.edu/indicators>

Section 2 Human Resources

Table 2.1 – Chelsea Population Characteristics

Total Population, 2000	1240
Total Population, 1990	1166
Absolute Population Change, 1990 – 2000	74.0
Percent Population Change, 1990 – 2000	6.35%
Persons per Square Mile, 2000	31.06
Persons per Square Mile, 1990	29.21
Area in Square Miles	39.92
Percent Dependent, 2000 (under 18 and over 65)	44.5%
Percent Rural, 2000	100%
Percent Native Born (United States), 2000	1.2%
Percent Reporting Irish Ancestry, 2000	14.9%
Percent Reporting French/French Canadian Ancestry, 2000	15.2%

Sources: Center for Rural Studies / VCGI. 2002. *Vermont Indicators Online*. <http://crs.uvm.edu/indicators>
US Census Bureau. 1990, 2000. *American FactFinder*. <http://factfinder.census.gov>

Table 2.2 - Ethnic Diversity

	Number	Percent
Total population (all races)	1240	100
White alone	1242	97.8
White in combination	1226	98.1%
Black or African American alone	2	0.2%
Black or African American in combination	2	0.2%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	9	0.7
Asian alone	1	0.1%
Asian in combination	1	0.1%
Hispanic or Latino (any type)*	5	0.4%
Some other race alone	3	0.3%
Some other race in combination	2	0.2%

* Hispanic race population percentage **significantly below** state average. (Source: <http://factfinder.census.gov>)

Community Profile – Chelsea, VT

Age and Gender of Chelsea’s Citizens

Table 2.3 shows the gender and the age break down for Chelsea population. Like most of Vermont communities the data suggest surprising declines in the youngest population cohort and an ongoing increase in the proportion of the population over 65. As the following age-sex pyramids suggest, those young and older cohorts of the population are those requiring greater human, social and medical services.

Table 2.3 Age and Gender

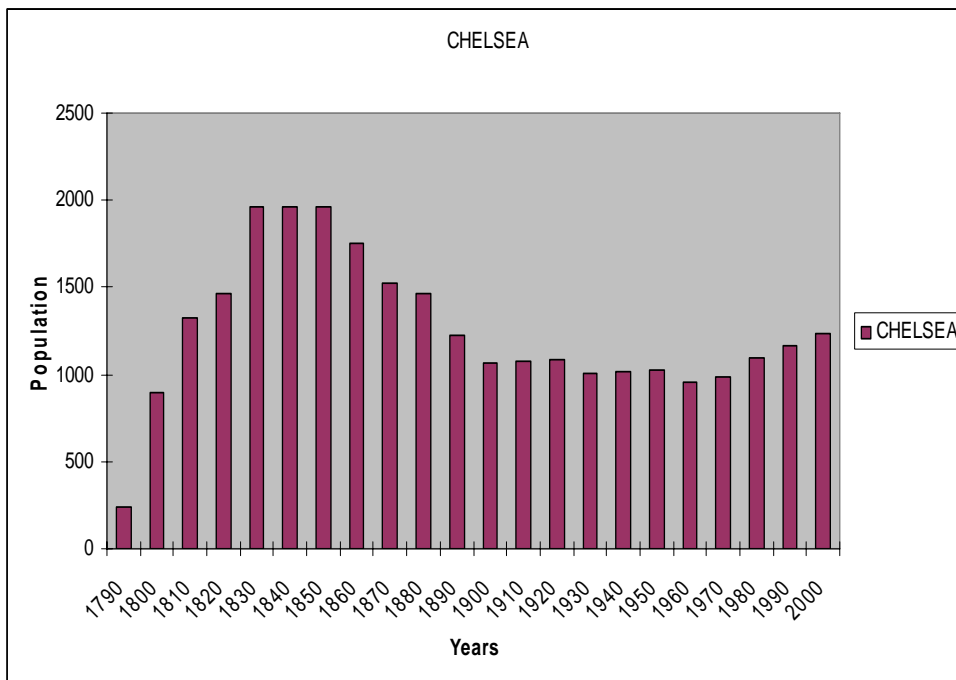
	Chelsea		Orange County	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
Total Population	1166	1240	26149	28226
Percent 0-17 Years Old	321	314	7242	7229
Percent 18-24 Years Old	81	68	2379	2206
Percent 25-44 Years Old	260	326	8635	7956
Percent 45-64 Years Old	221	299	4823	7223
Percent 65+ Years Old	183	243	3070	3612
Median Age*		41.6		38.6
Percent Male	570	628	13099	14055
Percent Female	596	622	13050	14171

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 1990, 2000. *American FactFinder*.

<http://factfinder.census.gov>

*Median age significantly below state average. (Source: www.city-data.com/city/Johnson-Vermont.html 2004).

Chelsea Population Trend since 1790 – Today



Community Profile – Chelsea, VT

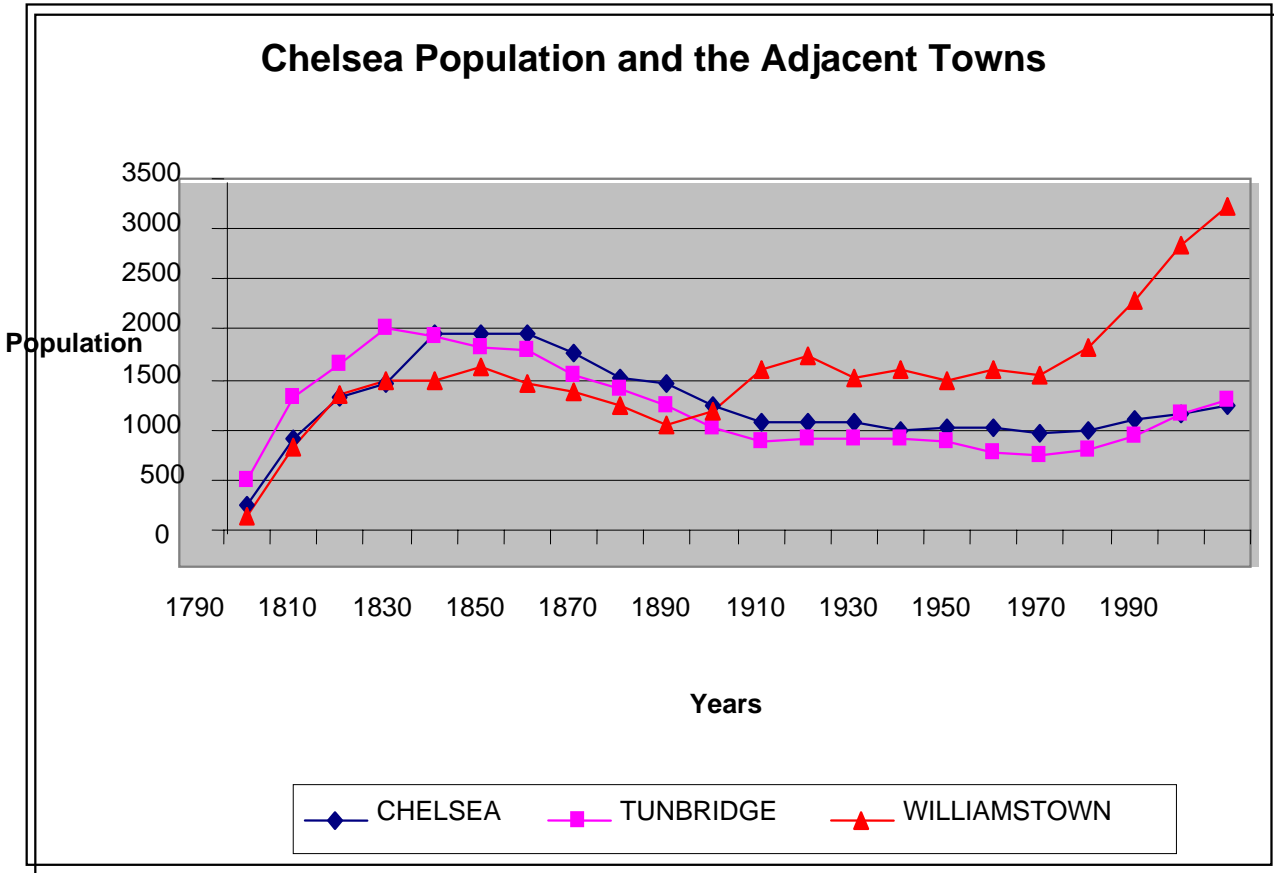
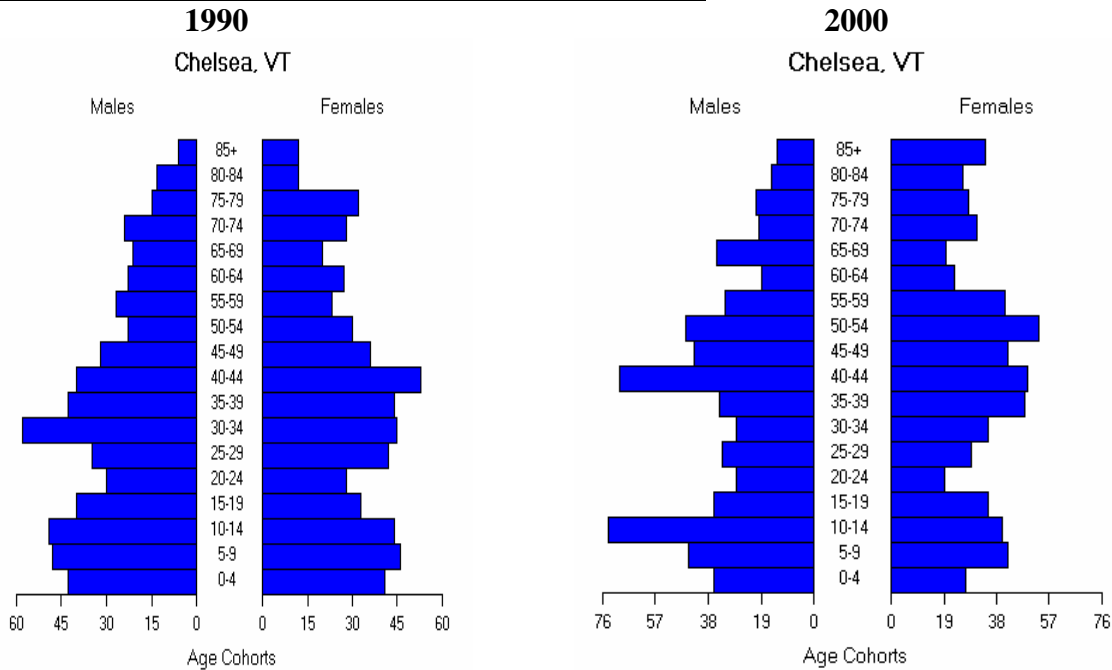


Figure 2.1 Chelsea Age / Sex Pyramids, 1990 & 2000



Community Profile – Chelsea, VT

Figure 2.2 Tunbridge Age / Sex Pyramids, 1990 & 2000

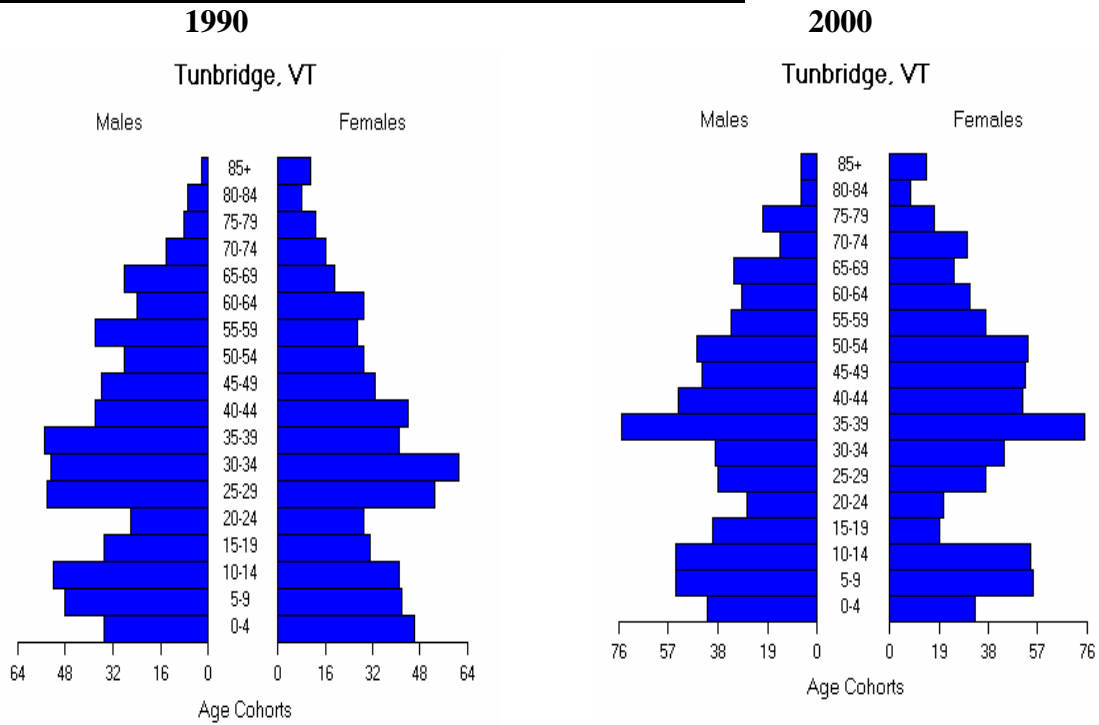
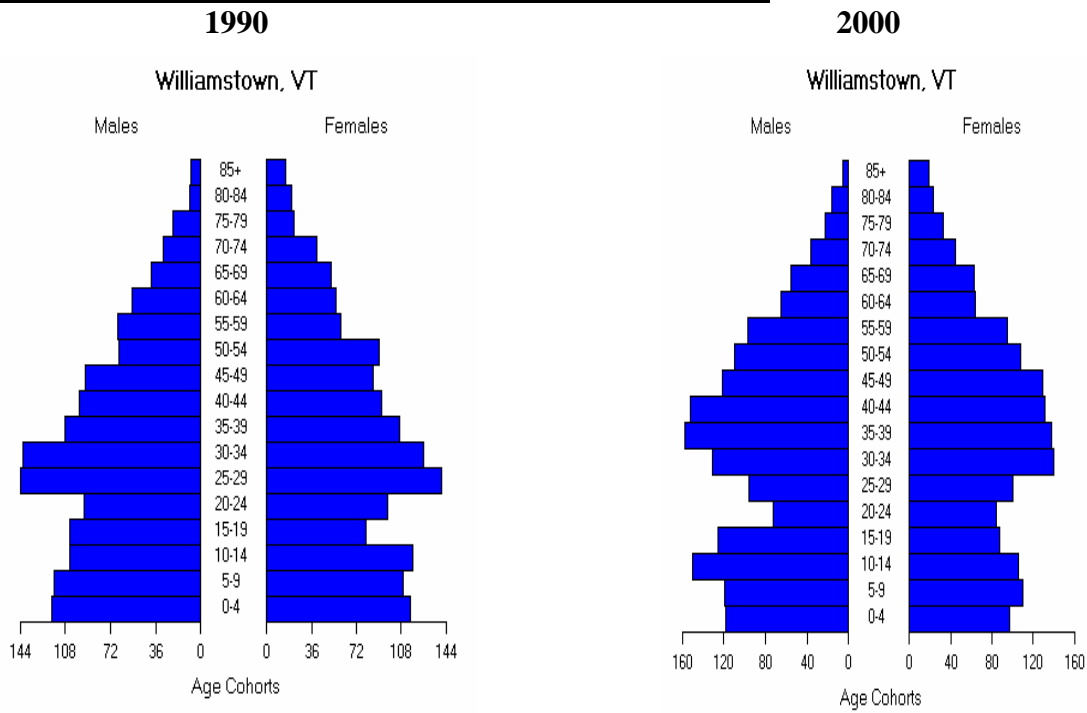


Figure 2.3 Williamstown Age / Sex Pyramids, 1990 & 2000



Community Profile – Chelsea, VT

Chelsea Housing and Family Information

Table 2.4 – Chelsea Housing and Family Characteristics

	1990	2000
Number of Families		317 324
Number of Households	429	495
Average Family Size	3.15	2.95
Average Household Size	2.67	2.41
Single-Mother Households	28	44
Total Children in Single-Parent Families	66	91
Total Housing Units	610	657
Number of Owner-Occupied Housing Units	329	372
Number of Renter-Occupied Housing Units	100	123
Median Housing Unit Value	\$81900	\$98600
Median Gross Rent	\$303	\$435
Median Gross Rent as Percent of Income	24%	29.2%
Percent Increase in Households (1990-2000)	N/A	15.4%
Percent Increase in Housing Units (1990-2000)	N/A	7.7%

Sources: Center for Rural Studies / VCGI. 2004. *Vermont Indicators Online*.

<http://crs.uvm.edu/indicators>

U.S. Census Bureau. 1990, 2000. Summary File 3. *American FactFinder*.

<http://factfinder.census.gov>

Community Profile – Chelsea, VT

Table 2.5– Town, County, and State Income & Poverty Comparisons

	Chelsea	Orange County	Vermont
Annual Average Wage, 2003	\$23627	\$26479	\$32090
Annual Average Wage, 2001	<u>\$22829</u>	\$24626	N/A
Per Capita Income, 1999	\$16164	\$18784	\$20625
Median Family Income, 1999	\$40625	\$45771	\$48625
Median Household Income, 1999	\$32024	\$39855	\$40856
Persons for whom Poverty Status was determined			
Poverty Rate, 1999	15.3%	9.1%	9.4%
Child Poverty Rate (persons under 18 years), 1999	21.43%	11.4%	10.7%
Elderly Poverty Rate (persons 65 years or over), 1999	18.5%	8.8%	8.5%
Percentage of Households with Public Assistance Income, 1999	5.3%	4.4%	4.8%

Sources: Center for Rural Studies / VCGI. 2004. *Vermont Indicators Online*. <http://crs.uvm.edu/indicators>
 U.S. Census Bureau. 1990, 2000. Summary File 3. *American FactFinder*. <http://factfinder.census.gov>

Table 2.5 that the median family income in Chelsea in the year 1999 is below the state median and the household median income is similarly lower than that of the State. These are typical patterns in rural communities.

Section 3. Business and Infrastructure Resources

Table 3.1–Chelsea Employment Characteristics

Top Five Industries, 2000 (employed persons 16 years and over)		
Educational, Health, and Social Services	22.6%	
Manufacturing	17%	
Construction	11.4%	
Retail Trade	9.9%	
Public Administration	6.9%	
	Chelsea Town	Orange County
Unemployment Rate, 2001 (Not Season Adj.)	1.9%	2.7%
Annual Average Employment, 2001	330	7963

Sources: Center for Rural Studies / VCGI. 2002. *Vermont Indicators Online*.

<http://crs.uvm.edu/indicators>

U.S. Census Bureau. 1990, 2000. *American FactFinder*.

<http://factfinder.census.gov>

Property Values

Table 3.2 shows average residential value, the Grand List and the Effective Property Tax Rate. These data are not strictly comparable with other census indicators because, as indicated in the footnotes, they come from different sources here and are collected by the state Tax Department.

Table 3.2–Chelsea Property Valuation & Taxation

Average Residential Value (on less than 6 acres), 1999	\$87299
	1999 \$77042
Effective Property Tax Rate (rate per \$100), 2001	2.41%

Source: Center for Rural Studies / VCGI. 2002. *Vermont Indicators Online*. <http://crs.uvm.edu/indicators>
 Vermont Department of Taxes, Division of Property Valuation and Review. 1998-2000

Transportation

Table 3.3 below shows the transportation patterns for people in Chelsea. Many people drive their own cars as little to no public transportation is available. A small number share or carpool.

Table 3.3– Chelsea Town Local Transportation Behavior

Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) for State Highways, 2000	53,168
Total Number of Accidents, 1997	2
Number of Accidents involving fatalities, 1997	0
Commuters who Drive Alone, 2000	1,088
Percent commuters who Drive Alone, 2000	74.87%
Commuters who Carpool, 1990	172
Percent Commuters who Carpool, 1990	12.56%
Commuters who use Public Transit, 1990	11
Percent Commuters who use Public Transit, 1990	1.34%

Source: Center for Rural Studies / VCGI. 2002. *Vermont Indicators Online*.
<http://crs.uvm.edu/indicators>

Section 4.Social Capital: Schools

These data suggest that Chelsea Schools have well prepared their students for higher learning. The adult population reflects high educational attainment and an abiding interest in the performance of their school. An on going concern is providing opportunities for recent graduates in the locale (retaining our youth), an issue faced by many school planners in Vermont

Table 4.1 – Chelsea Elementary/High School (K-12): General School Information

	2000-2001	01-02	02-03	03-04	State (most recent)
Total School Enrollment	266	257	236	236	99,104
Attendance Rate	95.2%	93.9%	94.3%	N/A	N/A
Retention Rate	1.8%	1.6%	.4%	N/A	N/A
Student/Teacher Ratio	10.3	10.5	10.7	8.7	11.7
Eligible Special Education	10.5%	10.1%	10.6%	10.2%	13.9%

Source: Center for Rural Studies and VT Department of Education. 2004. *VT School Report*.

<http://crs.uvm.edu/schlrpt>

Table 4.2 – Chelsea Educational Attainment, 2000 (percent persons 25 years and older)

	Chelsea	Orange County
Less than High School	7.8%	5.5%
High School Diploma	38.1%	37.4%
Some College	15.9%	15.2%
Bachelor's / Associate's Degree	22.5%	22.1%
Graduate / Professional / PhD Degree	6.1%	9.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 2000. *American FactFinder*. <http://factfinder.census.gov>

Section 5. Natural Resources

Rivers and Mountains

Table 5.1– Chelsea Town Selected Natural and Geographical Information

Land Area (square miles)	39.92
Water Area (square miles)	.02
Percent Conserved Lands, 1999	2.3
Change in Forest Land to Developed Land, 1970-90 (acres)	25.6
Change in Forest Land to Non-Forested Land, 1970-90 (acres)	91.4
Change in Non-Forested Land to Developed Land, 1970-90 (acres)	2.7

Sources: Center for Rural Studies / VCGI. 2002. *Vermont Indicators Online*. <http://crs.uvm.edu/indicators>

Section 6. Sources

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

The internet resources used include:

For data:

The Center for Rural Studies. 2005. *Vermont Indicators Online*. <http://crs.uvm.edu/indicators/>

The U.S. Census Bureau. 2005. *American FactFinder*. <http://factfinder.census.gov>

Vermont Dept. of Education. 2005. *Vermont School Report*. <http://maps.vcgi.org/schlrpt/>

For text:

Chelsea town website. 2004. <http://www.chelseavt.org>

Environmental Protection Agency. 2004. <http://www.epa.gov/region1/pr/2003/sep/030915.html>

For maps:

<http://www.mapquest.com>