



Town of Cheshire

Economic Development – Phase 1

2023



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Executive Summary

The primary objective of this report is to provide a body of information that can be used as a foundation for future economic development planning in Cheshire. This is combined with a long-term vision of maintaining the town's rural character and quality of life. The document incorporates current demographic and economic data, along with municipal budget information and an inventory of key economic assets and drivers. This model is unique in that it draws inspiration from several economic development planning approaches, one of them being the Local Rapid Recovery Planning which was conducted by some neighboring communities in 2021. The content updates and builds upon the economic development chapter of town's Master Plan. Funding for this project was provided by the Cheshire Community Association, through an earmark secured by State Representative John Barrett, III.

Aside from the sections highlighting Cheshire's unique financial and business landscapes, which were assembled through a combination of field work, proprietary sources, and town information, much of the data in this report is publicly available. The effort to compile a broad array of information, with insights, into a single document presents a valuable resource for a future Economic Development Task Force, which is a top recommendation within Cheshire's recent Financial Management Review. Establishing such a group will help to address revenue constraints by exploring opportunities to expand the tax base and cultivate new revenue sources.

This report, considered to be an initial phase with more in-depth planning efforts to follow, documents existing conditions in categories such as zoning, transportation, utilities, and the general business environment. Several high-potential locations for revitalization or redevelopment are identified, including both public and private realm assets. Given Cheshire's recent success obtaining funding through the Commonwealth's Community One Stop for Growth and Community Compact Best Practices programs, it is the intention of this and future economic development planning to set the stage for additional and increased state investment in Cheshire.

A Strong Foundation

As detailed in the Community Profile below, Cheshire benefits from unique history and a strong sense of community, with much to support its reputation as a desirable place to live. Effective re-use of the former elementary school, now the Cheshire Community House, to host town offices, the youth center, convening spaces for meetings and events, as well as outlets for social services, demonstrates the resourcefulness of town leadership and its resilience in the face of changes brought on by regional and national trends.

In 2019, town government was expanded to a five-member Select Board, considered best practice in medium-sized rural communities. Cheshire has also invested in a full-time administrator position, allowing more aggressive pursuit of state grants and technical assistance, resulting in a town Financial Management Review, creation of a financial policies manual, and currently in-process capital investment planning.

Building on Success

Cheshire is also poised to benefit from a growing interest in the region as an outdoor recreation destination. The town was recently awarded a Community Compact Best Practices grant to develop an Open Space and

Recreation Plan. In addition, through the extensive efforts of many enthusiastic volunteers, Cheshire has secured official designation as an Appalachian Trail Community, established the highly regarded Father Tom Campsite, begun offering a broad range of community events organized annually, and with the recent clean-up of invasive growth at the Hoosac Lake shoreline scenic vista, revealed majestic views that have not been accessible for many years and are again attracting locals and visitors alike. These significant accomplishments clearly demonstrate that “Cheshire Proud” is much more than just a catchphrase.



Photo credit: BRPC

Amenities offered to AT hikers at the Father Tom campsite have brought it recognition as one of the best on the 2,200-mile trail.

Areas of Opportunity

Cheshire also boasts a charming, walkable, and historically vibrant Village Center. Recent efforts to revitalize Leland Park, home of the Cheese Press monument, along with the installation of the Mammoth Cheese replica, proudly draw attention to Cheshire’s unique past inviting all visitors, and in particular potential residents, to embrace the quality of life the town can provide. Coupled with the current economic investment happening at the Route 8 intersection with the Ashuwillticook Trail, momentum is already building.



Photo credit: BRPC

Cheshire’s unique history on display: The “Mammoth Cheese” (replica) located on Church Street at the intersection of the A.T. and Rail Trail, was sent as a gift in honor of Thomas Jefferson after his election to the U.S. presidency in 1800. Cheshire was the only town in Berkshire County where Jefferson won the popular vote.

With these dynamics in mind, this report is comprised of several sections intended to summarize existing conditions and provide an inventory of key assets. A list of high-visibility properties that are currently underutilized but hold the potential for substantial impact has also been identified. Finally, a menu of Potential Actions and Project Opportunities – selected in part because they are relatively low-cost and would require modest effort – provides a range of possibilities to explore further.

Phase 1 Report Overview

In many cases, the data provided is expanded upon within the Appendices. For the reader's convenience, snapshot summaries of each report section are provided here:

Demographics

Cheshire has experienced a slow population decline in the last decade. As with the surrounding region, Cheshire has become more diverse over the past decade. Household and family sizes have decreased in the last 10-15 years, trends which are in line with regional and national patterns.

Municipal Budget and Tax Rates

Cheshire's operating budget totals around \$7.3 million. Most of the town's taxable property values are residential. Cheshire relies on local tax bills to fund its budget at a lower percentage compared to similar towns and has comparatively low property tax rates and single-family tax bills.

Economics

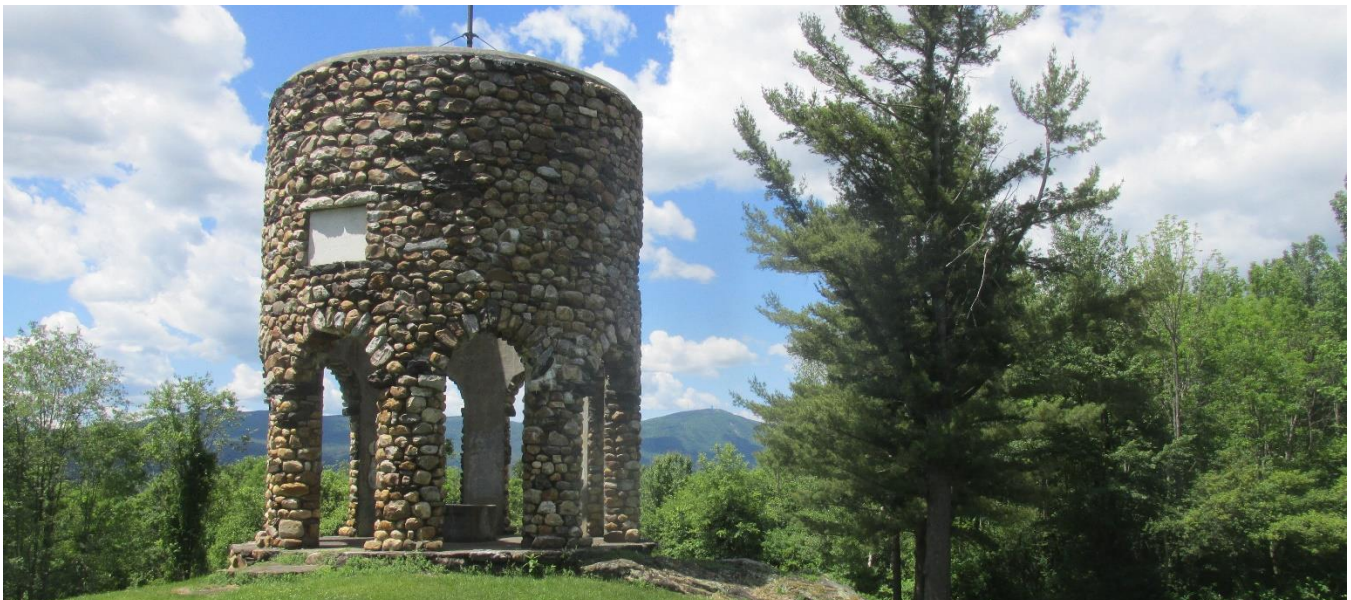
Over the past decade, Cheshire's incomes have increased and remained higher than the national average. Cheshire, and Berkshire County overall, continues to fall behind the state in terms of income levels. Cheshire often has higher unemployment than the county or state, but during the pandemic fared better than both.

Asset Inventory

Four geographic subsections of Cheshire's commercial corridors were evaluated for conditions within both the public and private realms. Eleven underutilized properties, selected for their high visibility and high potential for positive impact if revitalized, are also briefly discussed in this section.

Potential Actions and Project Opportunities

This section suggests several possible actions that, should residents or local government decide to pursue them, could have a positive effect on the business community and economic conditions of the community.



Stafford Hill Memorial, Cheshire MA. Photo source: www.findagrave.com; credit: RBass

Community Profile

A Brief Background and History



The town's seal honors the town hall and library built in 1898.

Cheshire, situated in north-central Berkshire County, is the 10th largest community in Massachusetts' westernmost county. It is located north of Pittsfield, the county's most populous municipality, and south of North Adams and Adams, the next largest municipalities, respectively. The smaller towns of Lanesborough, Savoy, and Windsor also border the town. The Appalachian Trail traverses downtown, crossing from North Mountain to Mount Greylock to the west. The town also features Cheshire Lake and Hoosic River.

Early farmers found success in the mountainside and pastures, and by 1800, the population grew to 1,537. Dairy farming remained a stronghold of Cheshire's economy while sawmills, tanneries, and the Cheshire Crown Glass Company expanded economic opportunity into the 1900s. Cheshire's population expanded alongside the growth of Berkshire County, nearly tripling from 1,221 people in 1900 to 3,479 in 1990. The current population is 3,243.

Cheshire was incorporated on March 14, 1793, and the new town was made up of parts of Adams, New Ashford, Windsor, and Lanesboro. The Adams portion was the land originally settled in 1766 by Rhode Islanders, who named the area New Providence. The early settlers were Baptists, as were most subsequent families moving to the area.

An early episode in the town's history involved the men of New Providence, known as the Silver Greys and under the leadership of Col. Joab Stafford, traveling to Vermont and helping to defeat the British at the Battle of Bennington during the American Revolution.



Signage recently installed by the town honors its historic past and provides a strong basis for additional wayfinding.

During the mid-19th century, Cheshire developed an industrial base including industries of sand processing, lime production, lumbering, iron production, and dairy products, among others. Cheshire quartz sand was considered the finest available at the time and was shipped to glass factories around the country. Though Cheshire did not make much glass, it did have one of the earliest factories in Massachusetts, and one of its factories manufactured the first plate glass in America in 1854.

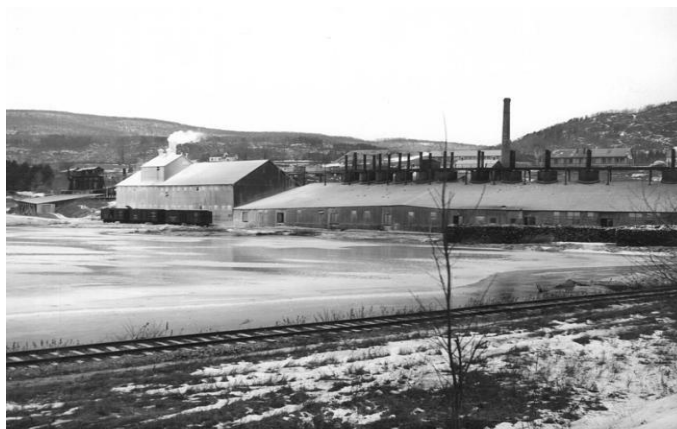


Photo credit: Berkshire Eagle archives

The Farnam Lime Plant, photographed in 1938.

After the Civil War, the Farnam brothers started a lime-producing factory that shipped large quantities of the product to New York and other rapidly expanding cities for use in plaster. Today, those industries have closed, and Cheshire is primarily a residential community.



Photo source: Wikipedia

Cheese Press monument in Leland Park.

Arguably Cheshire's most famous episode occurred in 1801 following the election of President Thomas Jefferson. The town's Baptist minister, John Leland, who had earlier preached in Virginia near Jefferson's home, was strongly supportive of him, and when he won the election over John Adams, Leland initiated a plan to commemorate the occasion. The result was a Mammoth Cheese made from a day's supply of curds weighing 1235 pounds. This mammoth cheese was transported to Washington and presented to President Jefferson at the president's house on January 1, 1802.

Appendix D contains tables of historic properties and assets within Cheshire. The above summary is provided in partnership with Barry Emery, an expert in Cheshire history. Titles by Emery can be found at <https://emery395.wixsite.com/books> and include:

History of Cheshire's Incorporation and the Shape It's In
Historical Mysteries of Cheshire
Made in Cheshire
Brooklyn Comes to Cheshire
History of Cheshire
The Mammoth Cheese Event: When America Watched Cheshire
What Is and What Was: Historic Virtual Tour of Cheshire
Who What When Why: More Cheshire Mysteries and Updates

Demographic Data

Notes about data sources: Unless otherwise noted, all data points used in this report are derived from the American Communities Survey, 5-year estimates, 2017-2021. While ACS 1-year estimates provide the most current data, they are less accurate, capturing a smaller sample size, and most appropriate when analyzing areas with populations over 65,000.¹

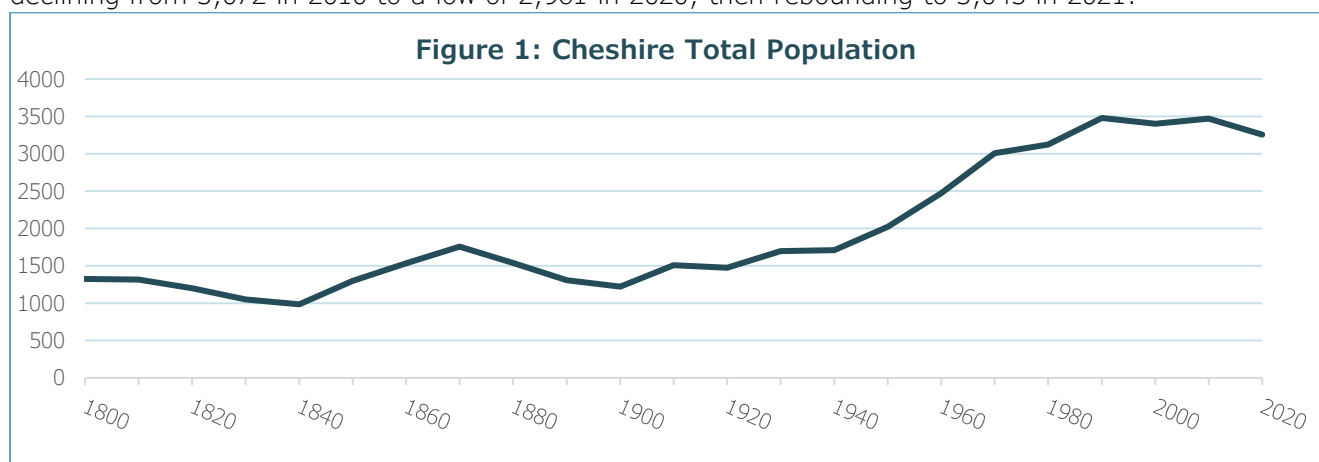
Notes about comparison communities: In several instances, Cheshire statistics are compared with communities in Berkshire County or nearby within Western Massachusetts. Specifically, the towns of Hinsdale and Lanesborough in Berkshire County, Buckland in Franklin County, and Huntington in Hampshire County. While these communities may differ from Cheshire in terms of the total population, they are considered viable comparisons due to their rural nature, industrial composition, income levels, or municipal tax revenue scenarios. An initial set of nine potential comparison communities was reduced to five after eliminating some because they were significantly larger or smaller than Cheshire or had substantially different income levels or home values. While no single data point provides a precise equivalent, considering Cheshire within the comparative set provides some valuable context. (See **Appendix A** for demographic and economic information about the comparison communities.)

Population

The current population of Cheshire is estimated at 3,243 people. This population is contained within 1,509 households, resulting in an average household size of 2.15 people.

The population of Cheshire decreased slowly between 2010 and 2020, reaching a low of 3,138. Estimates for 2021 show a rebound to near the population counts from 2010 and 2011.

Similar trends are seen in some neighboring communities, including Hinsdale, although neither rebounded to the same degree in 2021. The population trend in Lanesborough most closely mirrors that of Hinsdale, declining from 3,072 in 2010 to a low of 2,961 in 2020, then rebounding to 3,043 in 2021.

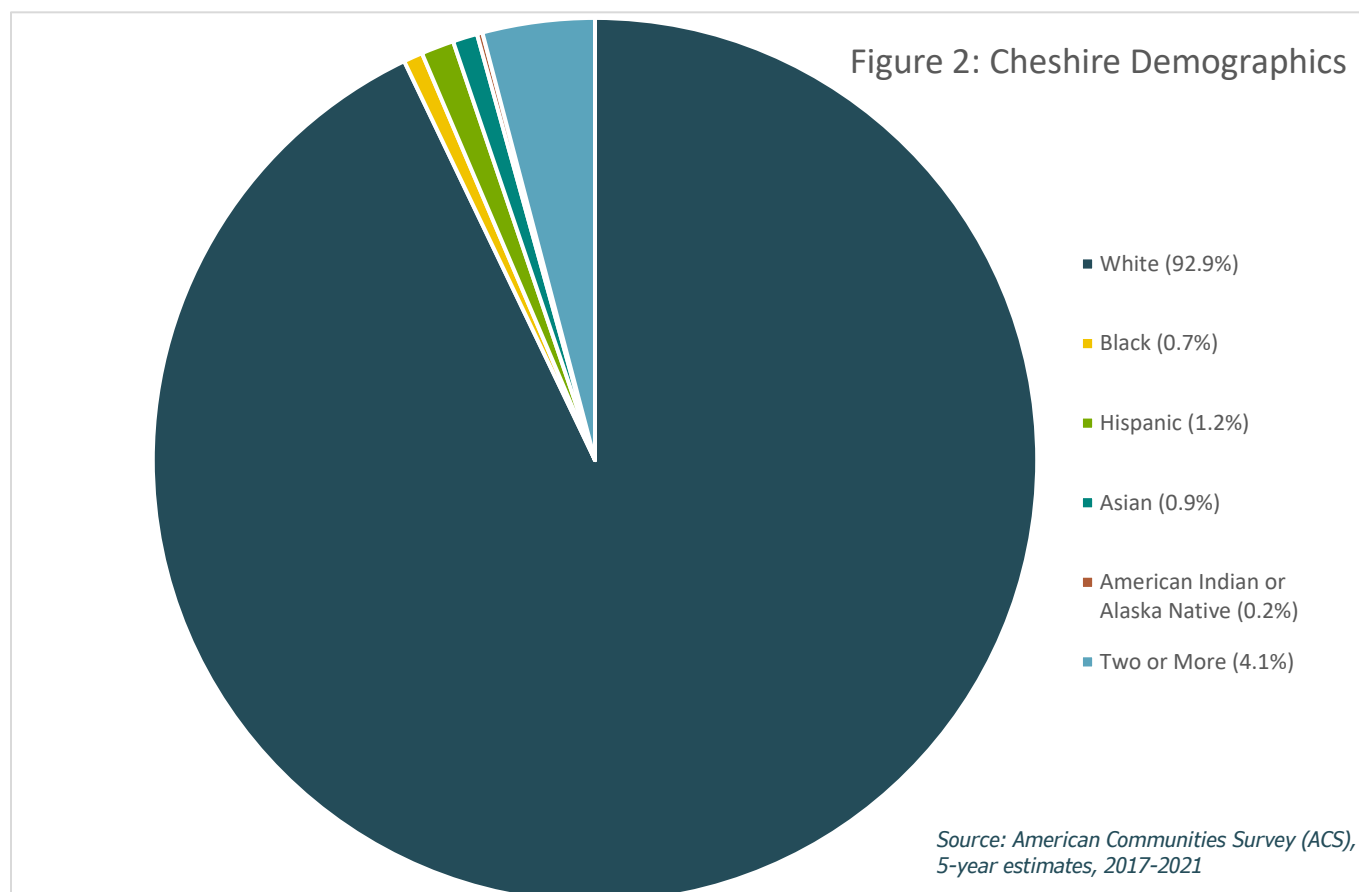


¹ <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/guidance/estimates.html>

Population by Race and Ethnicity

Cheshire's population is largely White (92.9%), with the second largest segment categorized as Two or more races (4.1%). This is followed by Hispanic or Latino (1.2%), Asian (.9%), Black or African American (.7%), and American Indian or Alaska Native (.2%)

Cheshire is more diverse than a decade ago. According to the 2011 ACS, Cheshire's population at that time was approximately 98.4% White, .9% two or more races, .4% Black, and .3% some other race.



The racial demographics are in line with comparison communities:

Buckland (Franklin County) is 88.4% White, 4.7% two or more races, 4.7% Hispanic, and 2.2% Asian.

Hinsdale is 94.7% White, 1.9% two or more races, 2.9% Hispanic, .3% Black, and 0.1% Pacific Islander.

Huntington (Hampshire County) is 93.8% White, 2.6% two or more races, 2.1% Hispanic, 1.3% Black, .2% American Indian, and .1% some other race.

Lanesborough is 98.8% White, 0.3% Black, 0.5% some other race, and .4% two or more races.

By comparison, Berkshire County's population is approximately 86.9% White; 5.2% Hispanic; 3.3% two or more races; 2.5% Black; 1.7% Asian; 0.3% some other race; and 0.1% American Indian.

Average Family and Household Size

There are approximately 1,509 households in the town of Cheshire and 919 families. The average household size is 2.15 members, and the average family size is 2.76 members. Approximately 275 families have children under the age of 18.

Household demographics remained consistent in the last decade. The overall number of households increased by about one hundred, but household sizes shrunk. According to the 2011 American Community Survey five-year estimates, there were 1,408 households in Cheshire in 2011 with an average size of 2.3 members. Cheshire shows a similar trend with families. According to the 2011 American

Community Survey, five-year estimates, there were 835 families living in Cheshire in 2011 with families averaging the size of 3.03. The number of families grew in the last decade, but the average size shrunk.

The household and family size trends align with regional and national trends. The average household size in Berkshire County is 2.2, only .05% larger than Cheshire. In the communities compared in this analysis, Cheshire most closely resembles Lanesborough's average household size of 2.22 and is slightly larger than Lanesborough's average family size.

Notes about Family vs. Household Size definitions: according to the U.S. Census Bureau, the "size of household" includes all the people occupying a housing unit. "Size of family" includes the family householder and all other people in the living quarters who are related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption.

**TABLE 1: Community Comparisons:
Average Family and Household Sizes**

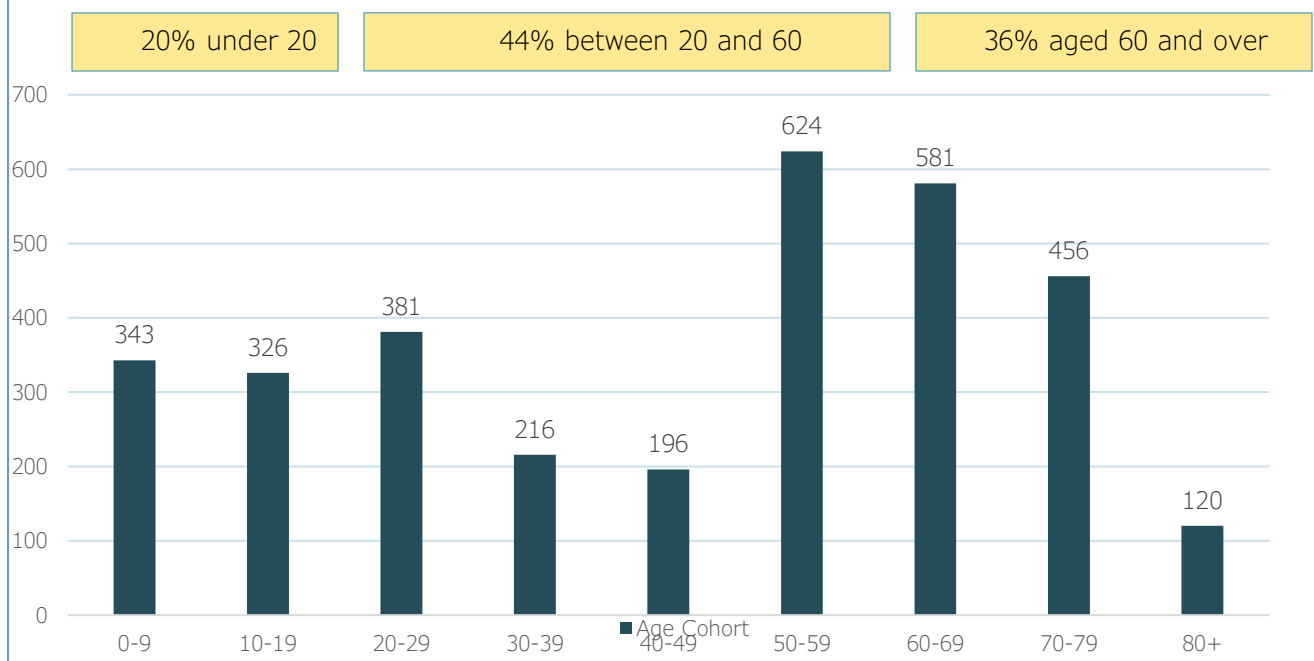
Municipality	Average Family Size	Average Household Size
Huntington (Hampshire)	2.93	2.42
Hinsdale	2.92	2.40
Buckland (Franklin)	2.80	2.35
Lanesborough	2.72	2.22
Cheshire	2.76	2.15

Source: American Communities Survey (ACS), 5-year estimates, 2017-2021

Age Distribution and Median Age

Approximately one in five Cheshire residents are under the age of 20. Another one in five is between the ages of 50 and 59. The 60 to 69 age bracket is the next most populous, accounting for approximately 18% of the population, and the 70 to 79 age bracket accounts for approximately 14%.

Cheshire's population notably lacks residents between the ages of 30 and 39 and 40 and 49, which combined account for just 13% of the population. Those over 60 account for 36% of Cheshire's overall population.

Figure 3: Age Distribution

Source: American Communities Survey (ACS), 5-year estimates, 2017-2021

Cheshire's residents are older than the county's median age. Cheshire's residents have a median age of 52 compared to the countywide median age of 47.1. Among comparison communities, the town of Lanesborough is most similar to Cheshire with a median age of 52.4.

The populations in Hinsdale, Buckland, and Huntington are all slightly younger, with median ages of 49.1, 45.8, and 43.4, respectively.

TABLE 2: Community Comparison: Median Age

Municipality	Median Age
Lanesborough	52.4
Cheshire	52.0
Hinsdale	49.1
Buckland (Franklin)	45.8
Huntington (Hampshire)	43.4

Source: American Communities Survey (ACS), 5-year estimates, 2017-2021

Economic Data

Municipal Budget

Cheshire's operating budget is approximately \$7.3 million, including Enterprise and CPA funds. Two-thirds (\$4,728,651) are derived from local taxes. The next highest contributing revenue source is local receipts. About 13% of Cheshire's municipal budget is funded by state aid.

The town of Cheshire has approximately \$395,041,816 worth of taxable property values. 90.2% of the taxable value is residential properties, 5.7% is commercial, 3.6% is personal property, and less than 1% is industrial.

So

**FIGURE 4:
REVENUE BY SOURCE, FY23**

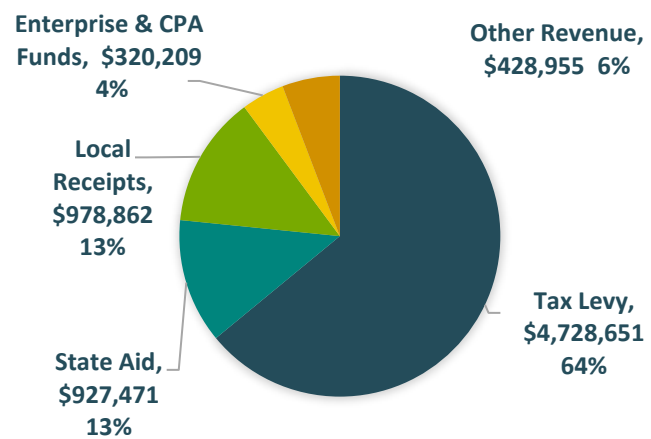


Figure 5: Tax Levy by Class - Cheshire Fiscal Years 2019-2023



Source: Division of Local Services (DLS), Community Comparison Report

Budgets, Revenue, and Tax Rates

Cheshire funds 64% of its budget from local tax bills, i.e., the Tax Levy, which is the lowest percentage among the peers selected. This results in more significant reliance on State Aid and Local Receipts, which are variable from year to year.

TABLE 3: Comparison of Municipal Budgets, Arranged by Total Budget Size (FY23)

Municipality	Total Budget	Tax Levy as % of Budget	State Aid as % of Budget	Local Receipts as % of Budget	Other + CPA + Ent as % of Total
Lanesborough	\$12,116,895	75.34	4.95	10.97	8.74
Cheshire	\$7,384,148	64.04	12.56	13.26	10.15
Hinsdale	\$6,838,498	71.35	6.31	15.25	7.08
Buckland	\$6,665,662	69.41	6.23	3.11	21.25
Huntington	\$6,183,852	71.50	11.86	12.66	3.98

Source: Division of Local Services (DLS), Community Comparison Report

Cheshire's total Tax Levy is more than 90% Residential Real Estate Tax, which is second only to Huntington among its peers. While the Tax Levy's portion of the total Operating Budget is low by comparison, the high percentage collected via residential real estate tax places a more significant burden on the residents' finances.

TABLE 4: Tax Levy Amounts by Class (FY23)

Municipality	Residential	Commercial	Industrial	Personal	Total	RO Levy as % of Total	CIP Levy as % of Total
Huntington	\$4,165,931	\$97,528	\$23,456	\$134,501	\$4,421,416	94.22	5.78
Cheshire	\$4,269,360	\$267,312	\$21,218	\$170,760	\$4,728,651	90.29	9.71
Buckland	\$3,878,092	\$180,288	\$442,347	\$125,976	\$4,626,704	83.82	16.18
Lanesborough	\$7,620,200	\$824,398	\$140,650	\$543,344	\$9,128,591	83.48	16.52
Hinsdale	\$3,782,706	\$327,100	\$103,998	\$665,736	\$4,879,541	77.52	22.48

Source: Division of Local Service (DLS), Community Comparison Report

Single-Family Tax Bills

Cheshire's FY23 average single-family tax bill is \$3,258, which equates to 10.54% of the average per capita income, up from 9.53% in fiscal year 2022.

This average tax bill ranks lowest among the comparison towns. The town of Cheshire's average single-family tax bill is 26th out of 32 municipalities in Berkshire County, and the 13th lowest in the Commonwealth.

Among comparable towns, Cheshire's has the second highest total assessed property values. Cheshire's commercial base most closely resembles Hinsdale, and its industrial base most closely resembles Huntington.

TABLE 5: Comparison of Single-Family Tax Bills (FY23)

Municipality	Single-Family Tax Bill
Lanesborough	\$5,313
Huntington	\$4,500
Buckland	\$4,922
Hinsdale	\$3,713
Cheshire	\$3,258

Source: Division of Local Services (DLS), Community Comparison Report

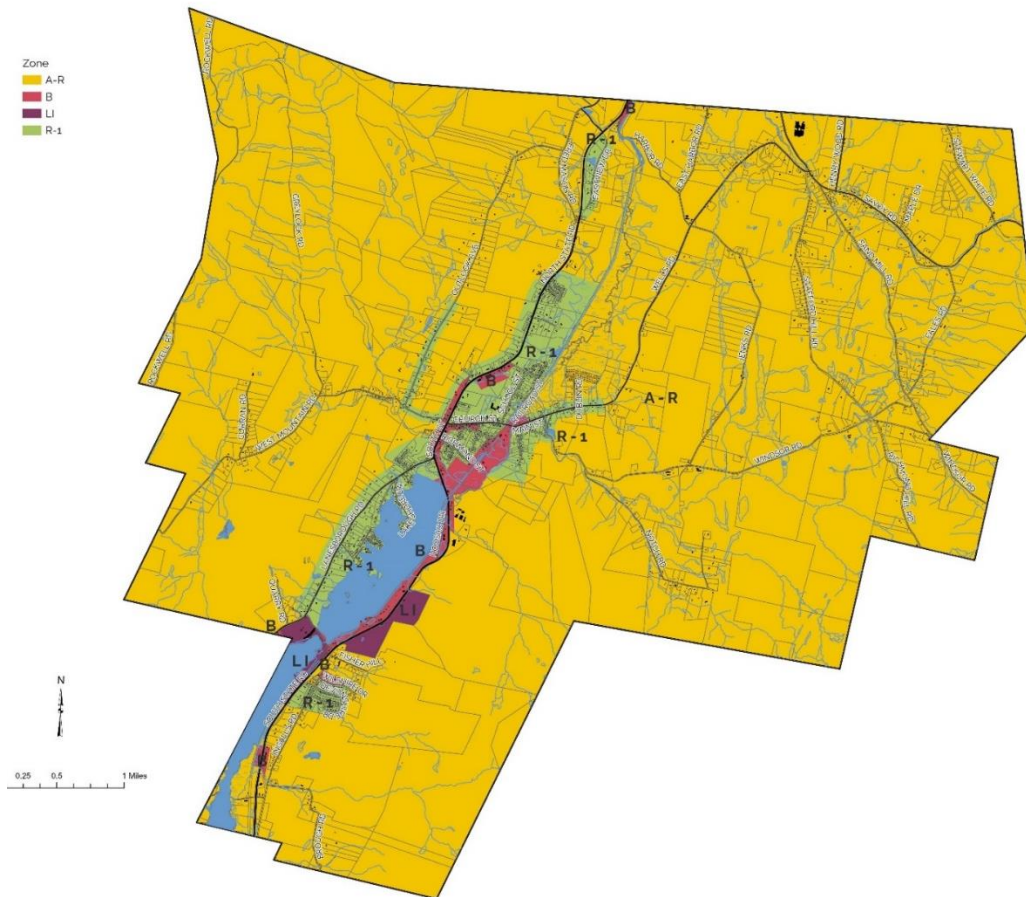
TABLE 6: Assessed Property Values, Arranged by Assessed Value – Residential (FY23)

Municipality	Assessed Value – Residential	Assessed Value – Commercial	Assessed Value – Industrial	Assessed Value – Personal Property	Total Assessed Value	R/O % of Total Value
Lanesborough	\$431,250,687	\$46,655,214	\$7,959,800	30,749,515	\$516,615,216	83.48
Cheshire	\$356,671,659	\$22,331,867	\$1,772,615	14,265,675	\$395,041,816	90.29
Hinsdale	\$280,408,184	\$24,247,593	\$7,709,300	49,350,321	\$361,715,398	77.52
Buckland	\$228,931,070	\$10,642,767	\$26,112,600	7,436,609	\$273,123,046	83.82
Huntington	\$244,336,128	\$5,720,114	\$1,375,700	7,888,623	\$259,320,565	94.22

Source: Division of Local Services (DLS), Community Comparison Report

Zoning

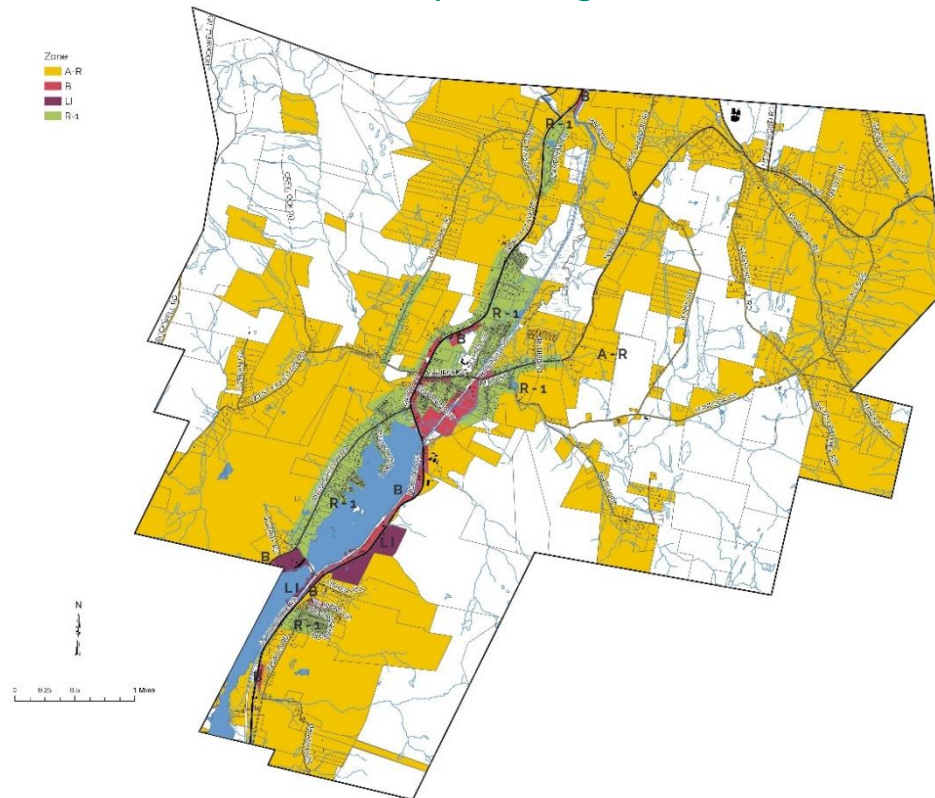
The simplified map below shows the current Zoning in Cheshire. Categories include Agricultural Resident (A-R), Light Industrial (L-I), Residential (R-1), and Business (B). Not shown are overlay districts for Flood Plain and Marijuana, and two Water Supply Zones.



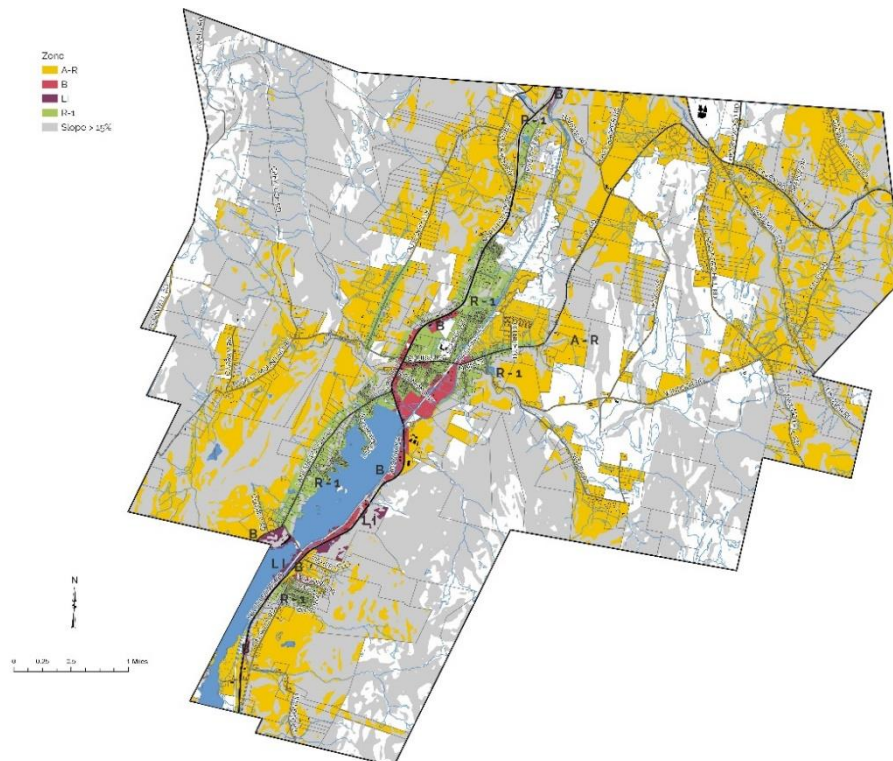
The following page displays these same zoning categories, first with Conserved Land indicated in white, then with both Conserved Land and areas with a slope greater than 15 percent (grey).

These maps demonstrate the relatively small amount of remaining developable land in Cheshire. Areas shaded in yellow are currently zoned A-R and are distinct and in most cases physically removed from the condensed Business and Light Industrial zones. Redevelopment, revitalization, and limited in-fill within existing L-I and B zones have the most potential to positively impact the vibrancy of the business community.

Non-Conserved or Protected Land by Zoning District



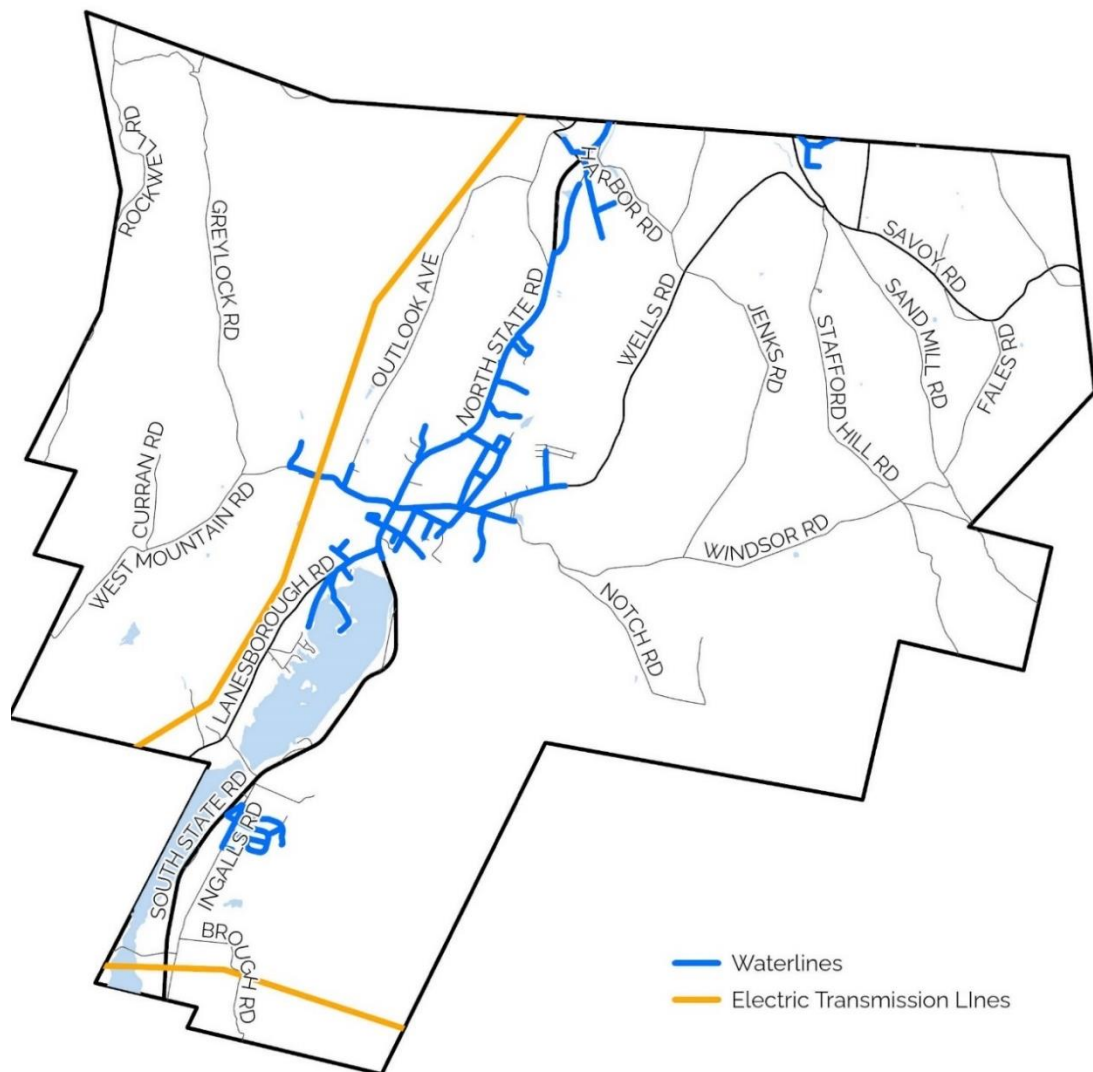
Non-Conserved or Protected Land with Slopes < 15%



Utilities

The town offers water service for the more densely developed corridors, including downtown and extending north on Route 8. A secondary water company serves a small densely populated area on South State Road. All commercial and residential facilities rely on septic. The proximity of Electric Transmission Lines is well situated for future energy development including solar.

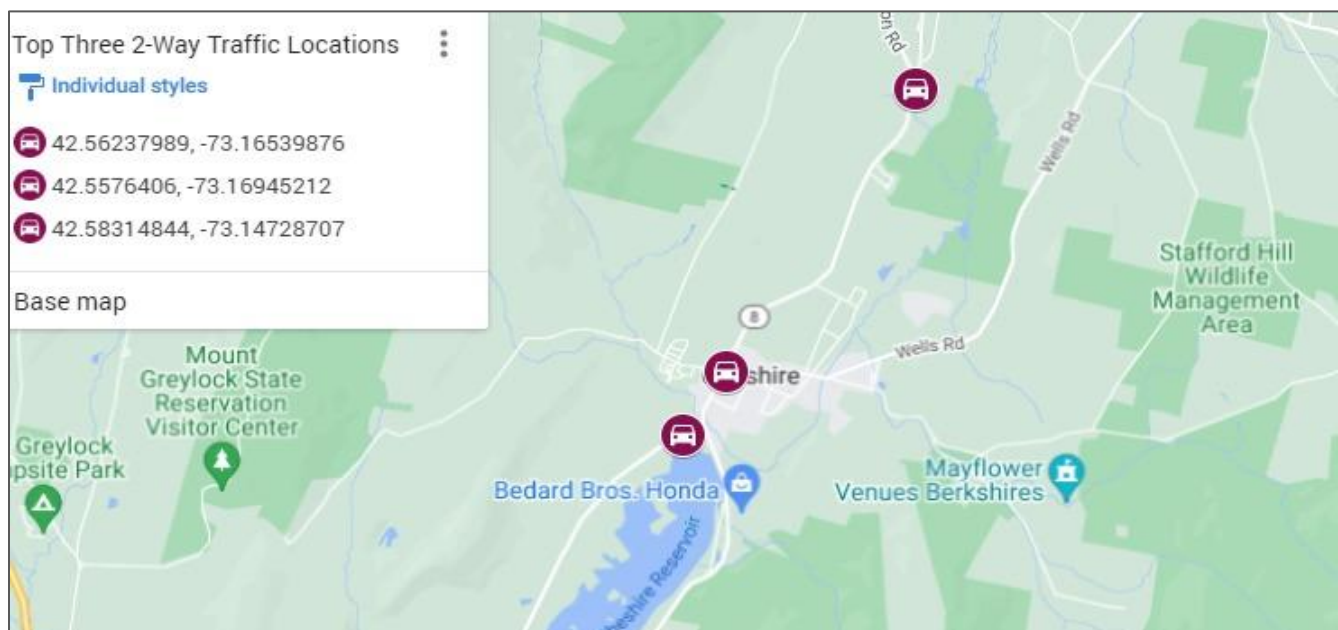
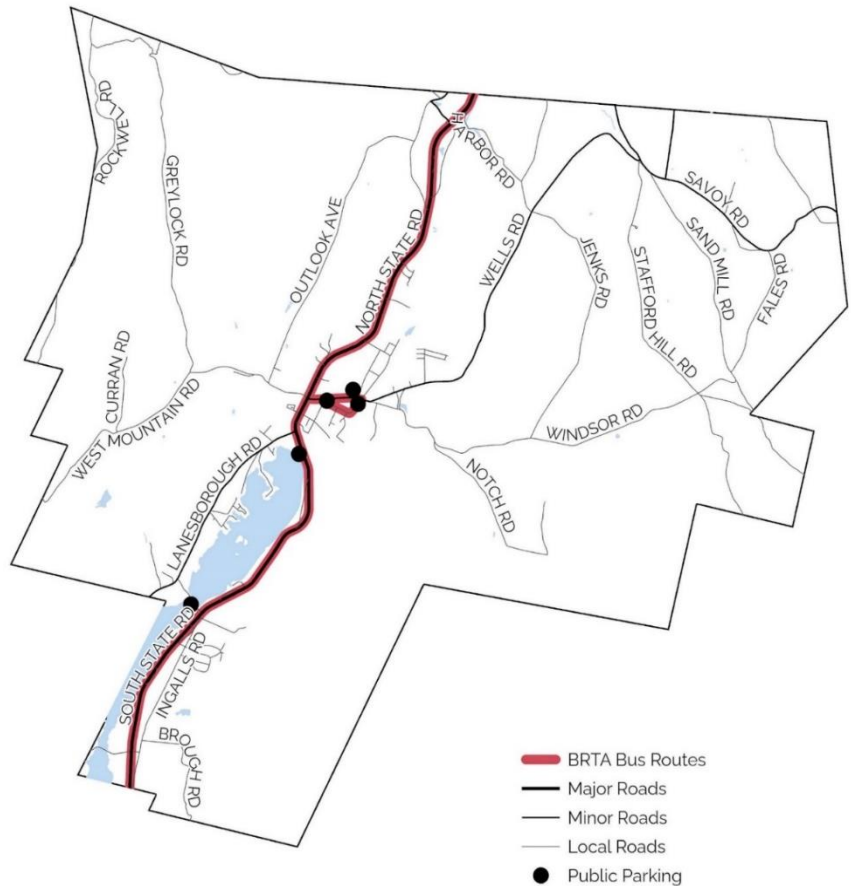
Utilities



Transportation

Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA) serves the community of Cheshire with a small spur from Route 8 into downtown Cheshire. This route connects Pittsfield and North Adams, connecting the residents of Cheshire with major employment centers of the region through the Intermodal Center. Buses are scheduled on an hourly basis throughout the day Monday through Saturday, going both north and south.

The most recent vehicular traffic counts were conducted in 2022. The map below indicates the top three locations in terms of Average Daily Traffic. The north- and south-bound location on Route 8 just north of Church Street sees the most traffic, with a count of 11,358 vehicles per day. North State Road south of Fred Mason Road saw 11,268 vehicles per day, and the major collector of Lanesboro Road saw 2,242 vehicles per day.



Outdoor Recreation

Development of its outdoor recreation potential is likely the most significant near-term economic opportunity for Cheshire. With many thousands of Ashuwillticook Rail Trail users annually, along with a few thousand additional Appalachian Trail (A.T.) through, section, and day hikers to the majestic Cheshire Cobble overlook, these two attractions which intersect on Church St. in the Village Center are popular destinations for residents across Berkshire County and distance travelers alike.

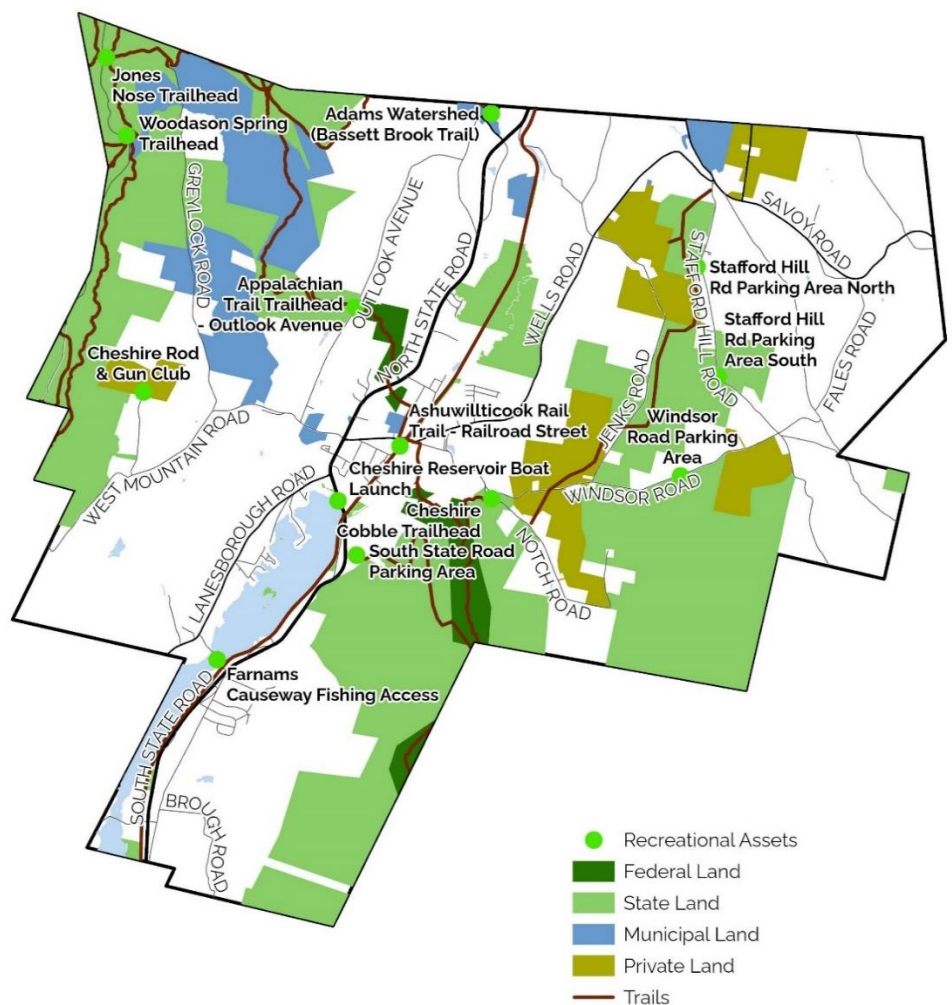
The intersection of these trails has become a hub of recreational activity with the 2019 launch of the Father Tom A.T. Campsite, the seasonal installation of artwork including a full-size replica of Cheshire's Mammoth Cheese and expanded service from an ice cream and sandwich shop located there.

Hoosac Lake is another popular playground for fishermen, kayakers, canoeists, paddle boarders, and countless photographers. With eagles nesting on the lake islands and sharing the skies with their Osprey counterparts, out-of-state license plates are a frequent occurrence in the Farnams Causeway and Route 8 Boat Ramp parking lots.

Along with fishing, hunting is another sport pursuit taking advantage of the extensive open space, and the Cheshire Rod and Gun Club is among the most active of its type in the county.

Although there are a modest number of separate outdoor recreation assets located within Cheshire (see **Appendix D** for full list), the community has a significant impact on the outdoor recreation realm within our region.

Coordination with 1Berkshire, the Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) designated by the state, and with Berkshire Regional Planning Commission's new outdoor recreation website (launching early 2024) can help to ensure reciprocal benefits for the town.



Cheshire Business Environment

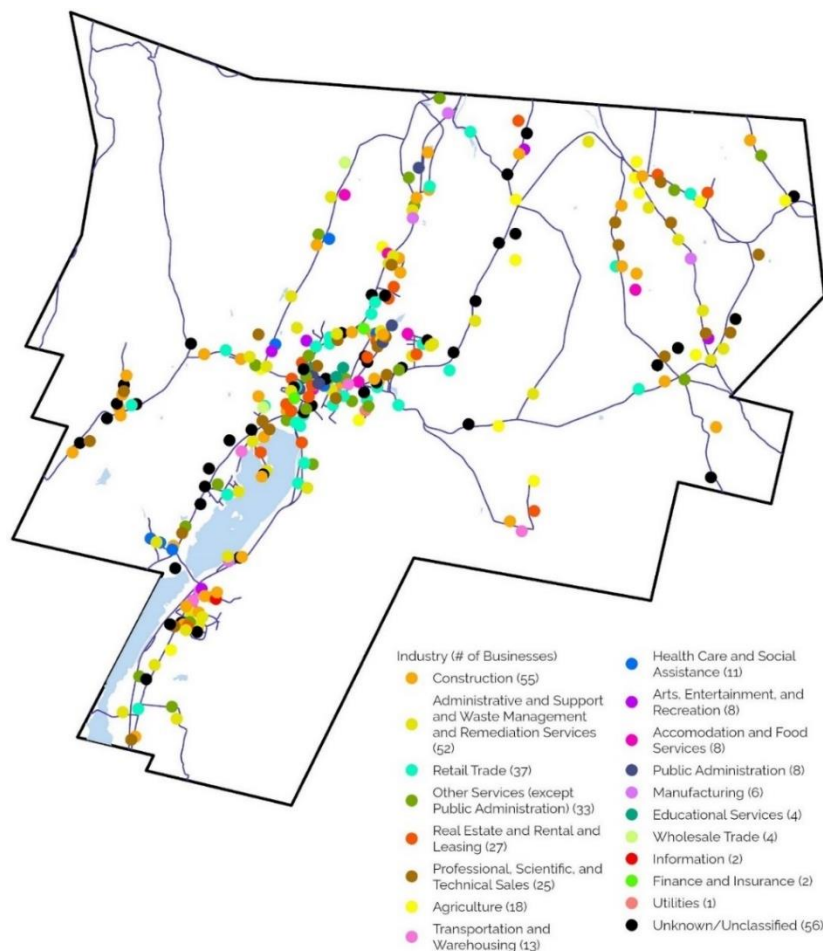
The map below demonstrates the distribution of businesses within Cheshire, many of which are operating as Sole Proprietorships in home-based situations. An inventory of businesses operating within Cheshire over the past 5-10 years (some of which may be dormant or permanently closed) is contained within the Appendix, along with regional business conditions and contextual information for Berkshire County.

Entities within in the community employ more than 25 include:

1. Adams Cheshire Regional School District – municipal
2. Town of Cheshire (including Administration, Highway, Police and Fire) - municipal
3. Bedard Brothers Auto Sales (including Chevrolet, Volvo, Chrysler/Jeep/Dodge/RAM) – private, for profit
4. Casella Waste Systems / Cheshire Hauling – private, for profit
5. Whitney's Farm Market – private, for profit

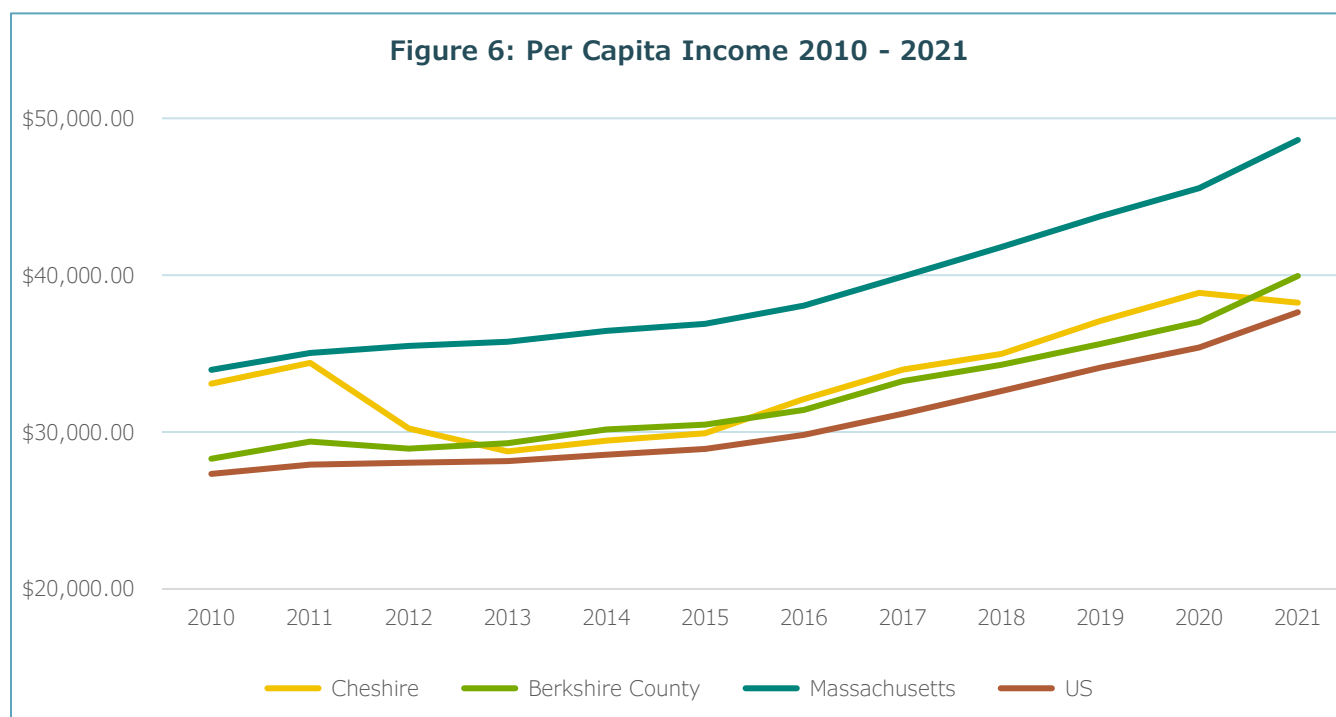
Smaller businesses also have significant potential to impact the economic vitality of Cheshire, particularly those within the restaurant, retail, and recreation realms. Attracting visitors and providing positive, memorable experiences is a catalyst for growth and can encourage people to relocate to the community.

Appendix D contains a full inventory of businesses. Future economic development should include refinement of the inventory, which includes potential duplications and businesses that have closed permanently.



Per Capita Income (PCI)

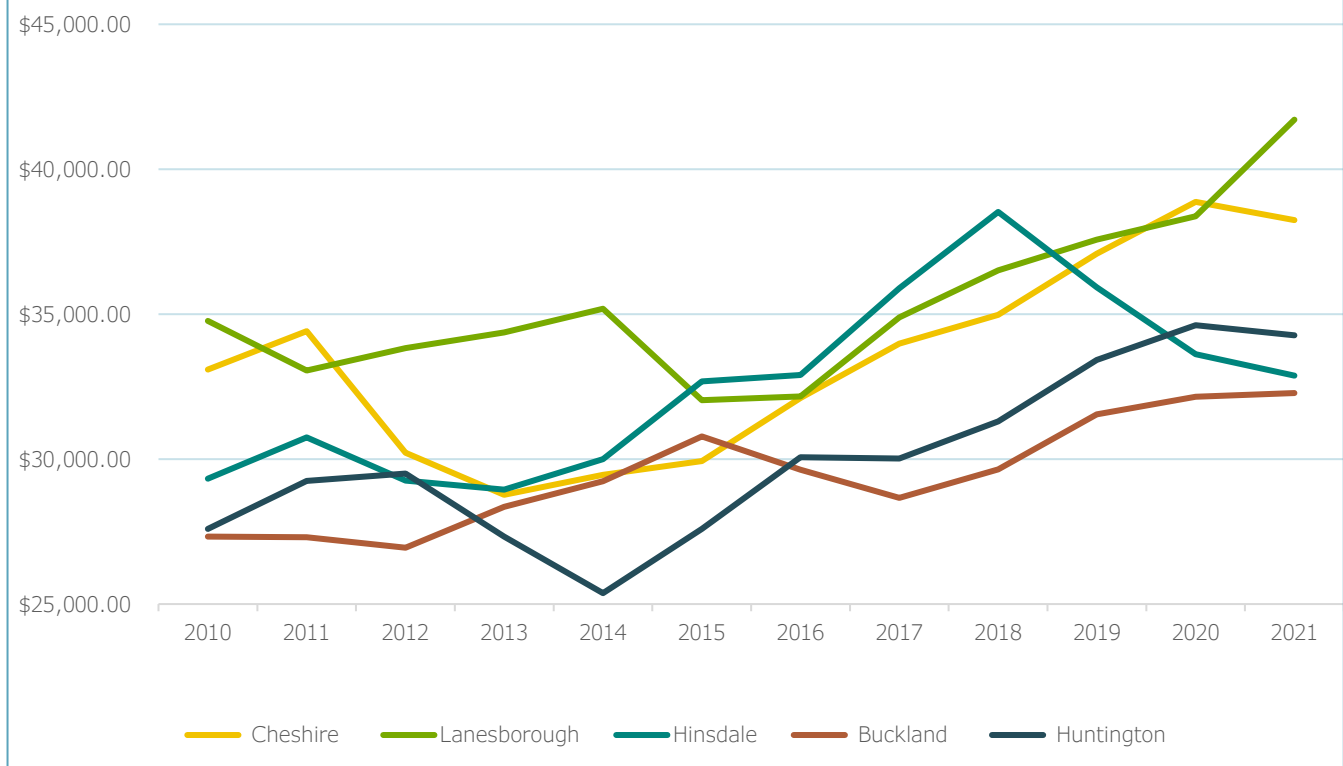
Per Capita Income in Cheshire has increased overall in the past decade, starting at \$33,085 in 2010 and reaching a peak of \$38,874 in 2020 before decreasing slightly to \$38,249 in 2021. Per Capita Income in Cheshire was higher than Berkshire County overall in 2010, and by 2021 was lower than the countywide average of \$39,952. Cheshire and Berkshire County lag behind the Commonwealth, which reached a Per Capita Income of \$48,617 in 2021 (up from \$33,966 in 2010), but both are higher than the US, which had a Per Capita Income of \$27,334 in 2010 and by 2021 was at \$37,638.



Source: American Communities Survey (ACS), 5-year estimates, DP03. www.berkshirebenchmarks.org.

Cheshire's PCI has remained above US levels consistently for at least the past decade, although trends as of 2021 suggest that it may fall below national levels in the near future. The downward trend since 2020 may be tied to the relatively high levels of unemployment in Cheshire since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. As shown on the following page, similar trends occurred after 2020 in communities where unemployment rates pushed the municipality into a category of "Economic Distress", such as Hinsdale.

**Figure 7: Per Capita Income 2010 - 2021,
Community Comparisons**



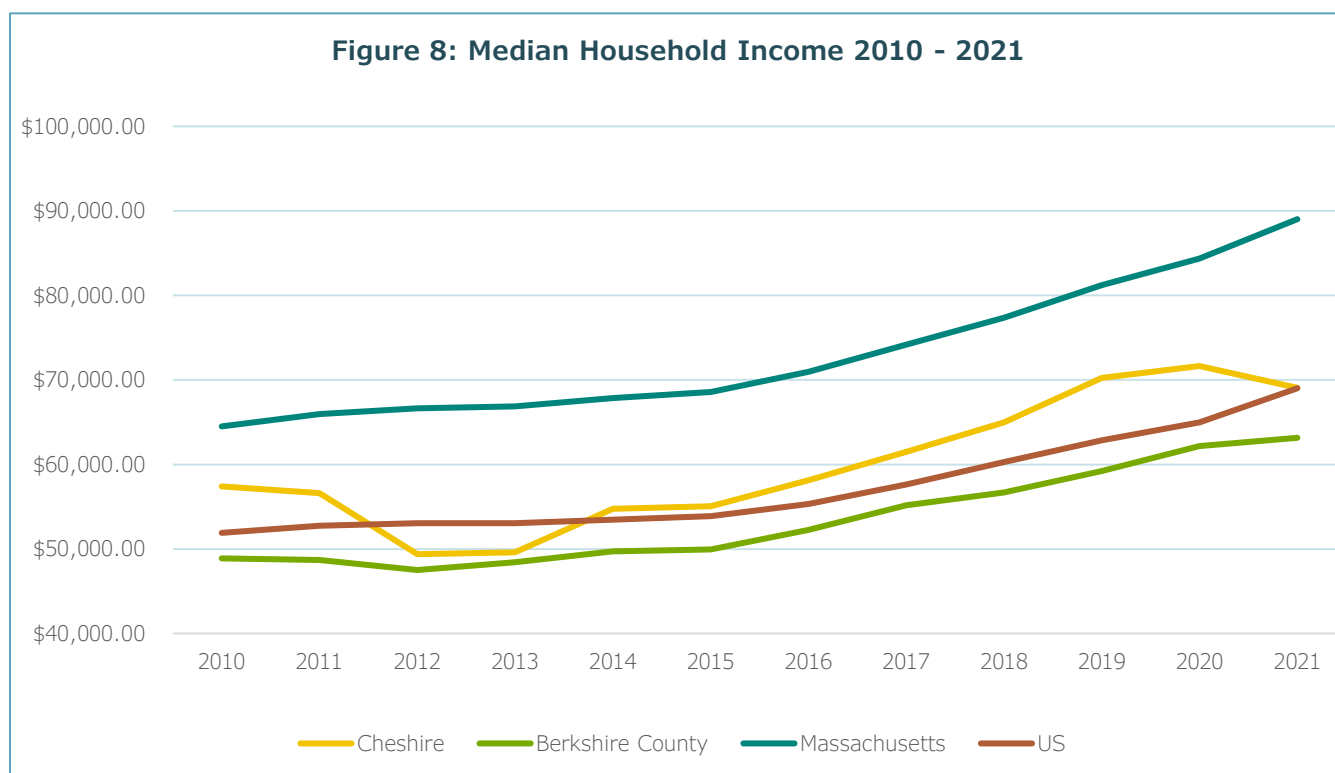
Source: American Communities Survey (ACS), 5-year estimates, DP03.

Per Capita Income levels in Cheshire rank second only to Lanesborough within the comparison group. After experiencing fluctuations prior to 2015, among the peer towns all except Hinsdale have seen per capita income growth before leveling off in 2020. Cheshire has seen an increase of more than 23% during that time.

Appendix A contains further information regarding current Per Capita Income levels of all comparison communities.

Median Household Income (MHI)

Median Household Income has seen more fluctuation in Cheshire than in Berkshire County, MA, or in the US, since 2010. In 2010, Cheshire had a higher MHI than Berkshire County as a whole, as well as when compared to the US. Cheshire's MHI subsequently dropped below the US in 2012 and 2013 before recovering in 2014 and generally following the same trendline as Berkshire County until 2020. Cheshire experienced a decline in Median Household Income in 2021 that was not reflective of the trends in Berkshire County, the Commonwealth, or the US.



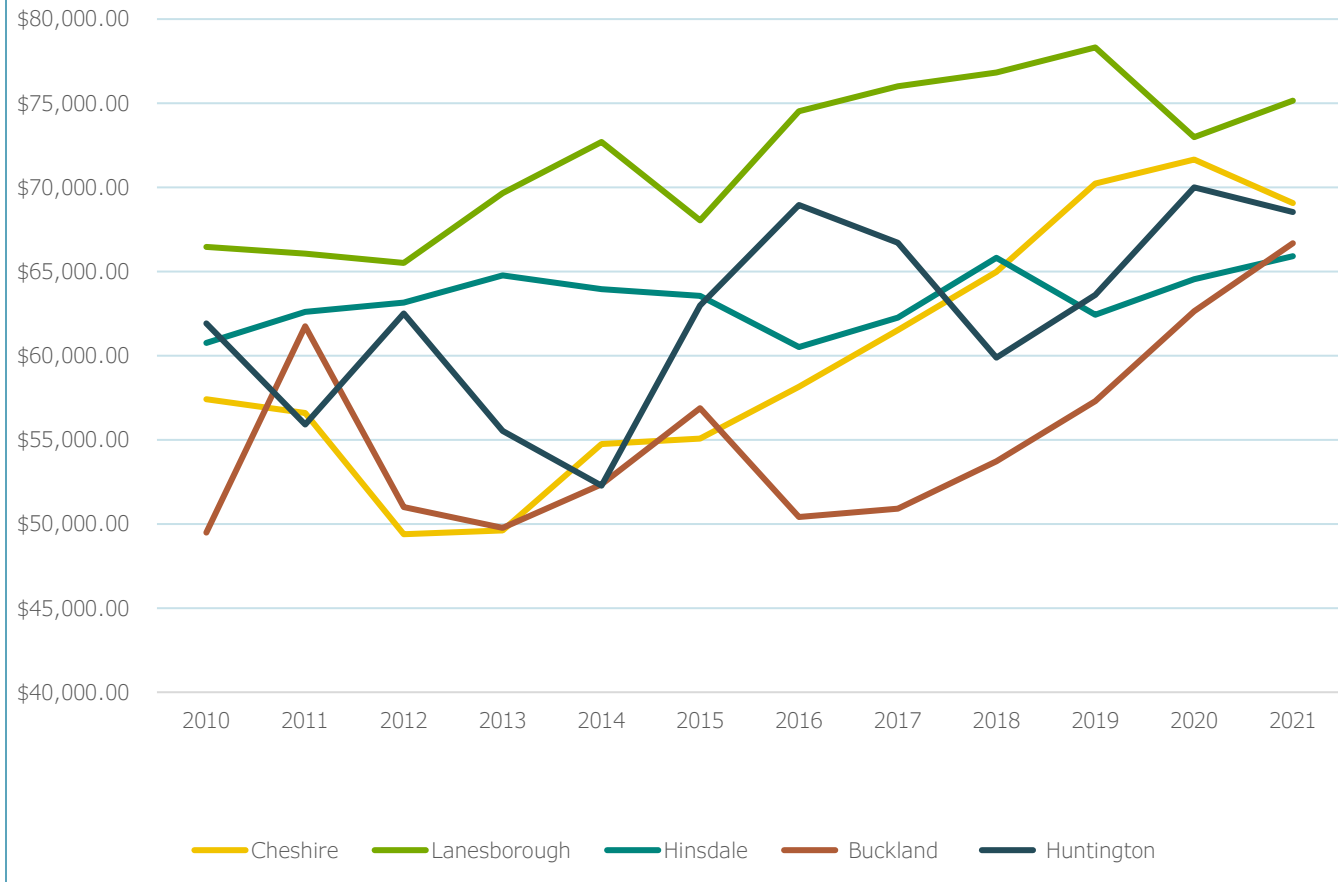
Source: American Communities Survey (ACS), 5-year estimates, S1901.

Cheshire, along with Berkshire County as a whole, continues to fall behind the state regarding income. The regional data clearinghouse and repository of information regarding key “indicators”, www.berkshirebenchmarks.org, considers the percentage of households making greater than \$75,000 per year to be a primary measurement of progress.

This threshold was set in 2017, when Massachusetts’ MHI was \$75,000 compared to only \$55,190 in Berkshire County. Since that date, the number of households making over \$75,000 per year in the county has increased each year at the same rate as the state and nation. Most municipalities with high levels of qualifying households are in the southern section of the county.

Among comparison communities, only Lanesborough currently exceeds a Median Household Income of over \$75,000 per year.

**Figure 9: Median Household Income 2010 - 2021,
Community Comparisons**



Source: American Communities Survey (ACS), 5-year estimates, S1901.

Cheshire's Median Household Income is associated with an Average Household Size of 2.2 people. The comparison community most similar in size (Lanesborough) shares the same Average Household Size, while several others have an average of 2.4 people per household (Buckland, Hinsdale, and Huntington).

Cheshire has a Median Rent of \$1,250, lower than Lanesborough, which is similarly sized. However, the closest community among the comparative set, in terms of Median Household Income, is Huntington.

Appendix A contains further information regarding current Median Household Income levels and Median Rents of all comparison communities.

Unemployment Rates

Unemployment rates in Cheshire have typically followed the same pattern as those of Berkshire County and the Commonwealth since 2000. Frequently, unemployment rates in Cheshire have been higher than Berkshire County or the Commonwealth, although during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, Cheshire fared better than either the county or state.

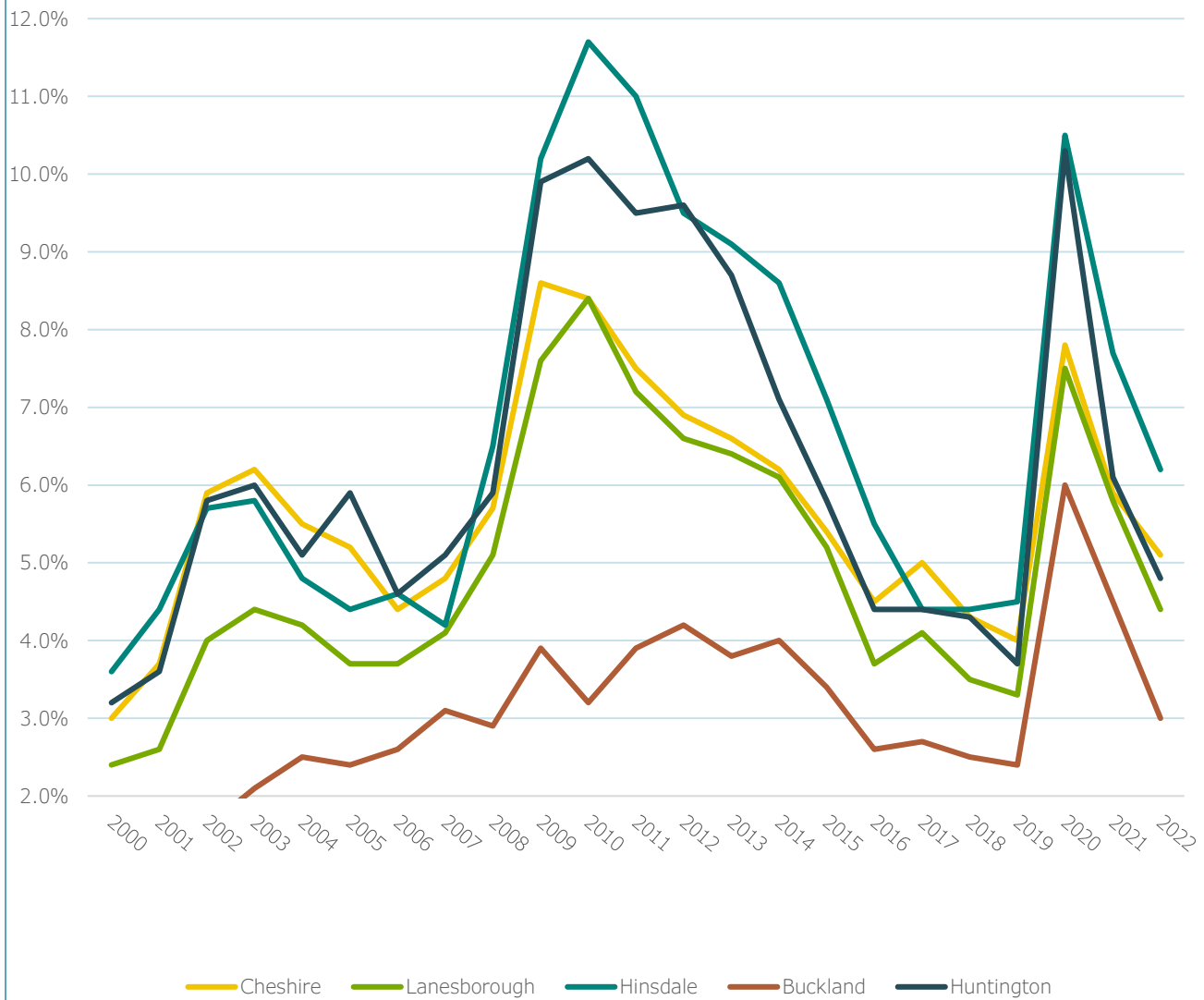


Source: MA Department of Unemployment Assistance, Labor Force And Unemployment. www.berkshirebenchmarks.org.

During the first two years of the COVID-19 pandemic, Cheshire was among the Berkshire County communities identified as Economically Distressed by the federal Economic Development Administration due to 24-month average Unemployment Rate being at least 1 percentage point higher than the national rate. Cheshire was joined in meeting this EDA distress criterion by Adams, Becket, Hinsdale, Lenox, North Adams, Pittsfield, and Savoy during the same time frame. While it was typical for two or three Berkshire County municipalities to meet this criterion pre-pandemic, significant unemployment became more widespread after 2019.

Note about Economic Distress Criteria: EDA's other primary measurement of Economic Distress is Per Capita Income, for which only specific Census Tracts within Pittsfield and North Adams typically qualify.

**Figure 11: Unemployment Rates of 2000 - 2022,
Community Comparisons**



Source: American Communities Survey, 5-year estimates, 2017-2021

When compared with the defined set of comparison communities, Cheshire's unemployment rates follow a similar pattern but do not reach the extremes of either high or low unemployment rates between 2000 and 2022. Cheshire's unemployment rate trends most closely match those of Lanesborough, although Lanesborough has had more a dramatic recovery from 2021 to 2022.

Appendices A and B contain further information regarding current Unemployment Rates of all comparison communities, as well as information about Educational Attainment and Labor Force in Cheshire.

Asset Inventory

Public and Private Realms

To assess the physical conditions in both the public and private realms of primary commercial sections of Cheshire, the study area was divided into four sub-sections. These include the Town Center along Route 8, the Village Center, North State Road, and South State Road. Each sub-section is represented visually below, along with an aggregate ranking of public and private realm conditions. See pages 28 - 32.

Process

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) conducted an on-site assessment of the commercial properties ("Private Realm") in each subsection. Areas that are relatively new are rated as excellent; areas with a substantial number of older buildings requiring some repairs but do not have evidence of structural deficiencies are rated as good; areas in which at least 25% of the commercial properties are worn and show signs of deteriorating surfaces rated fair; and areas where at least 50% of commercial properties showed signs of deterioration are rated as poor.

BRPC conducted a concurrent on-site assessment of "Public Realm" infrastructure including parking, sidewalks, roadbeds and crosswalks, street furniture, wayfinding and signage, and lighting. BRPC did not conduct a technical assessment on the condition of roadways but did acknowledge the presence of surface defects, deformation, cracking, and patches and potholes when evaluating the condition of parking lots and roadbeds.

BRPC determined through the on-site evaluation the presence or lack of appropriate wayfinding, public parking, sidewalks, outdoor displays, and street furniture. The assigned rates include: excellent if the elements are appropriately present; good if the sub-section has overall appropriate elements with some properties lacking appropriate elements; fair for sub-sections in which more than 25% of the subsection lacked appropriate elements; and poor for areas with more than 50% of the subsection lack appropriate elements.

BRPC acknowledges the unique characteristics of each sub-section and de-emphasizes measures that do not align with the characteristics of the current conditions. For example, BRPC weighed lighting in recreational and downtown areas greater than in the more rural, residential, and farming areas. In some instances, BRPC determined that specific metrics are not applicable (n/a) to the subsection.

The assessment process described above is meant to strengthen the Town of Cheshire's preparedness for future grant funding applications. Documenting and prioritizing areas of potential improvement will increase Cheshire's competitiveness in grant programs at the regional, state, and federal levels.

Appendix D contains more thorough information about the reasoning behind each public and private asset condition rating.

Town Center on Route 8



Town Center on Route 8

Public Asset	Condition
Public Parking	n/a
Sidewalks	Fair
Roadbed/Crosswalks	Good
Street Furniture	n/a
Wayfinding	Good
Lighting	Good

South State Road

Private Asset	Condition
Facades	Good
Windows	Good
Signage	Good
Awnings	Good
Lighting	Good
Outdoor Display/Plantings	Good

The Town Center on Route 8 is west of and perpendicular to the village center. It features a mix of new and legacy businesses. The newer structures are in excellent condition, and the legacy businesses have well-maintained buildings. All businesses are appropriately signed and lit. The Route 8 businesses are easily identified and provide private parking. There are two empty commercial buildings in this section as well as two open lots, one of which is in the process of being developed.

The public infrastructure does not connect businesses well. The major commercial operations are along Route 8, which features traffic speed limits of 40 miles per hour, with a limited number of crosswalks. There are sections of sidewalk along each side of Route 8 connecting commercial properties, which would benefit from repair. The sidewalk to the east is narrow and features cracks and the curbing is deteriorating.

Village Center



Village Center

Public Asset	Condition
Public Parking	Fair
Sidewalks	Good
Roadbed/Crosswalks	Fair
Street Furniture	Poor
Wayfinding	Poor
Lighting	Good

Village Center

Private Asset	Condition
Facades	Fair
Windows	Good
Signage	Fair
Awnings	n/a
Lighting	Good
Outdoor Display/Plantings	Excellent

Upon entering the center of town via Route 8, traffic is slowed. The Church Street properties are walkable with mostly good sidewalks, however, curbing has separated from the walkway for long stretches on the south side. Some structures demonstrate signs of aging and deterioration. The Cheshire Community House & Town Offices (former Elementary School) provides a large amount of public parking, though it is not directly adjacent to existing businesses. Limited parking is available for those currently operating, which include a sporting goods – hunting archery & fishing store, a silk screening and embroidery facility, and an ice cream and sandwich shop.

Underutilized properties exist on and adjacent to Church Street, and the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail, which has public parking, presents an opportunity to retain visitors and energize this area. There is a lack of signage along Route 8 to direct visitors downtown. Wayfinding and signage improvements would greatly benefit the Village Center.

South State Road



South State Road

Public Asset	Condition
Public Parking	Fair
Sidewalks	n/a
Roadbed/Crosswalks	Good
Street Furniture	Good
Wayfinding	Fair
Lighting	Good

South State Road

Private Asset	Condition
Facades	Good
Windows	Good
Signage	Good
Awnings	n/a
Lighting	Good
Outdoor Display/Plantings	Excellent

The South State Road gateway to Cheshire's downtown core is burgeoning and includes: a growing enterprise offering sale, installation and relocation of gazebos, garages, and lawn furniture; along with a real estate office & associated ice cream stand, and a bike, kayak, and paddle board rental shop, situated on either side of the Rail Trail and directly across from Hoosac Lake. Moving south, the sub-section also features large, well-established auto-dealerships, and a regional waste hauling company, capping off this vital segment of Cheshire's economic landscape.

Where the rail trail crosses Route 8 at the lakeshore there is adequate parking designated for boat trailers, but the remaining parking area is very narrow and the number of spaces for shoreline fisherman, picnickers, sightseers, and rail trail users is limited. Buildings in this section are in good condition, appropriately signed, well landscaped, and have captivating outdoor displays. The roadway corridor here is not conducive to pedestrian travel and thus businesses are set back and provide private parking.

Continuing down Route 8 south there are two small businesses on the west side of Route 8 – a muffler / vehicle repair shop and drain / plumbing service and a recently opened cord wood operation just south and across the road. The structures associated with the first two businesses are in good condition overall but do show signs of aging and deterioration. The buildings have appropriate signage and provide limited parking. There is no safe pedestrian travel outside of the rail trail, but the commercial usage is destination-based and not businesses pedestrians commonly access it on foot.

The public area at the Farnams Road causeway features plenty of public parking, bathroom facilities, access to the rail trail, access to the lake, and congregating areas. The road shows some signs of deterioration, and the former snack bar is currently not in operation.

Further south just past the causeway across Route 8 is a longstanding industrial products facility and less than a mile down route 8 is a package and variety store plaza.

Just before the Lanesborough town line is the Whitney's Farm Market area, which is a growing destination. The business is in good condition, well maintained, and provides ample parking. The commercial activity centers around Route 8, which is in good condition. There are no sidewalks, nor is the infrastructure conducive to pedestrian travel.

After being acquired by Whitney's HD Reynolds moved from Church St. into a property across Route 8 on Nobody's Road, turning an underutilized parcel into a high-volume commercial business. Nobody's Road is in poor condition, but HD Reynolds is just off Route 8 with private parking and there is no other commercial activity present.



Photo credit: Cheshire Community Association

Whitney's Farm is a well-known destination serving as a gateway to Cheshire.

HD Reynolds is directly adjacent to the Rail Trail and there are no provisions for safe passage across Route 8 to Whitney's, which is problematic.

North State Road



North State Road

Public Asset	Condition
Public Parking	n/a
Sidewalks	n/a
Roadbed/Crosswalks	Good
Street Furniture	n/a
Wayfinding	Good
Lighting	Good

North State Rd.

Private Asset	Condition
Facades	Good
Windows	Good
Signage	Good
Awnings	n/a
Lighting	Good
Outdoor Display/Plantings	Good

The upper portion of North State Road does not feature much business activity. Notable business sites include an inn, a farm, and a former sand & gravel operation. The commercial properties have private parking, and the road conditions are not ideal for foot traffic, therefore measurements of street furniture, public parking, and sidewalks are not applicable to the area.

The area was rated 'good' on facades and windows. The structure at the gravel bed is showing signs of deterioration but the rest of the buildings appear well maintained and welcoming.

All the properties were adequately lit and had appropriate signage. The major roadway is in good condition and overall landscaping and outdoor displays are well kept and appropriate.

Commercial Property Examples from Subsections



Delmolino's (Town Center on Route 8)



Harry's Auto (Town Center on Route 8)



Cheshire Sporting Goods (Village Center)



Bedard Bros Auto Sales (South State Road).



Sheds 'n Stuff (South State Road)



Harbor House Inn (North State Road)

Underutilized Properties

Within each sub-section, locations with high potential for redevelopment or investment were also identified. While the list below is not exhaustive, it represents properties with high potential for impact on the local economy, most with high visibility due to their placement on major routes or adjacent to well-used recreational facilities. *The locations below are highlighted on a map on page 35.*

921 North State Road (1) – Former site of the Bushika Sand & Gravel operation. Abuts a large solar installation. Privately owned, Zoned A-R.

266 North Steet (2) - Former Graham Engineering offices now vacant and current site of a Self-Storage Facility. Prime Route 8 location with high visibility. Privately owned, Zoned B.

6 Main Street (3) - Prime recreational potential location between the Hoosac River and Rail Trail. Current location of the Hwy Dept & Transfer Station. Town-owned, Zoned B.

6 Railroad Street (4) - Former Train Depot that has been an Auto Repair facility for decades. Prime location adjacent to the Rail Trail. Privately owned, Zoned B.

116-120 Church Street (5) - Three story structure, former Cheshire Mason's Hall. The ground floor has two rental spaces: one set up as a hair salon and the other currently used by a local artist. Privately owned, Zoned B.

38 South Street (6) – Former Cheshire Inn site. Open since the building was razed in 2013. Prime Route 8 location with high visibility. Current location of an attractive "Welcome to Cheshire" sign. Town owned, Zoned B.

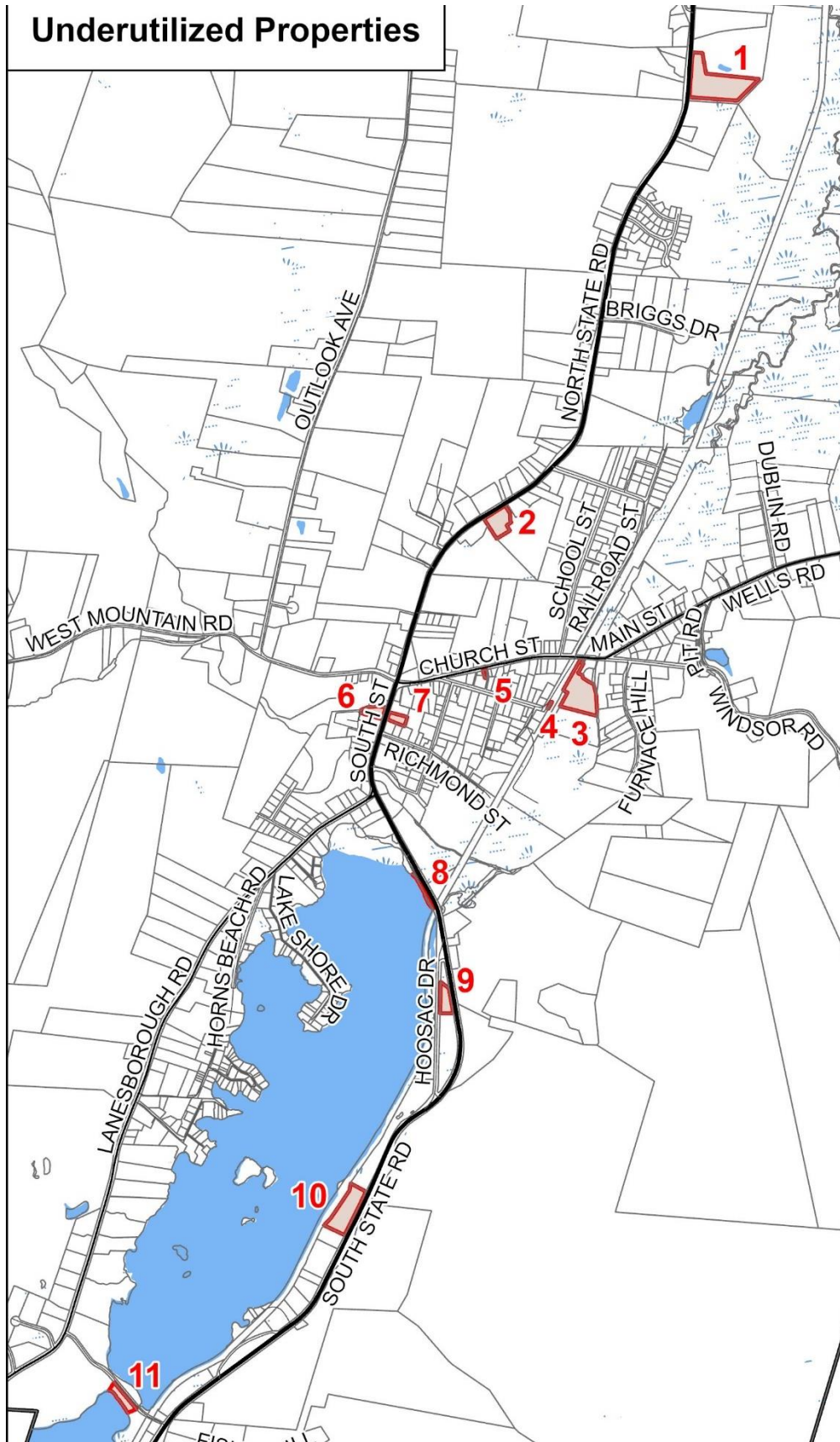
41 South Street (7) - Site history includes use as a laundromat, successful restaurants, and a restaurant/bar. Prime Route 8 location with high visibility. Privately owned, Zoned B.

Lakeshore near Boat Ramp (8) - Vista offers access to the lake and Rail Trail. Currently, parking is limited, and the guardrail impedes access to the shoreline. The land is owned by the state and managed by DCR. Zoned B.

424 South State Road (9) - Former home of a gas station and automotive repair facilities. Prime Route 8 location with high visibility. Privately owned, Zoned B.

750-760 South State Road (10) – Former Chicken Stop and later Country Charm Restaurants. Prime Route 8 location with high visibility. Privately owned, Zoned B.

Land on the South side of Farnams Causeway (11) - High traffic due to Rail Trail and DCR lakeshore amenities on the North side of the causeway. The land includes the boat ramp for the 2nd Hoosac Lake basin and currently has a small wooden platform used as a stage for summer concerts. Privately owned, Zoned L-I.



Potential Actions and Project Opportunities

The Phase 1 Economic Development Assessment in Cheshire suggests or reinforces several possible actions that, should the residents or local government decide to pursue them, could have a positive effect on the business community and economic conditions of the community.

Appendix E contains brief explanations and potential funding sources for each item listed below. A future Economic Development Task Force may explore and build upon these, as suggested by the Financial Management Review.

TABLE 7: Potential Actions and Project Opportunities by Location

Potential Activity/Action (site specific)	Village Center	Route 8/Rail Trail intersection	Church St./Rail Trail intersection
Public Art and/or Façade Improvement Investments	✓		✓
Amenity Improvements	✓	✓	✓
Wayfinding Improvements	✓	✓	✓
Vacant Space Reuse/Temporary Use	✓		
Increased/Improved Outdoor Spaces	✓	✓	✓
Safety Improvements		✓	
Establishment of a Cultural District	✓		✓
Potential Activity/Action (programmatic)	Short Term	Near Term	Longer Term
Engaging Business Community with Networking and Technical Support		↔	
Creation an Online Guide for New Residents and Businesses In Cheshire		↔	
Phase II Economic Dev. Planning		↔	

***Note - Two more longer-term, aspirational projects are worthy of exploration during future phases:

1. Reconfiguration of the Hoosac Lake parking area and boat launch to accommodate more vehicles and improve aesthetics. Additionally, safety enhancements at the Route 8/Rail Trail intersection are worthy of consideration.
2. Repurposing of the land between the Rail Trail and Hoosac River abutting the Father Tom campsite to the south for recreational purposes. (Current home of the Transfer Station and Highway Garage.)

Appendix A

Comparison Communities

Demographic and Economic Data

TABLE 8: Comparison of Demographic & Economic Data (Arranged by Population Size)

Municipality	Total Population	Total Households	Per Capita Income	Median Household Income	Average Household Size	Median Home Value	Median Rent
Cheshire	3,243	1,509	\$38,249	\$69,069	2.2	\$210,500	\$1,250
Lanesborough	3,043	1,368	\$41,710	\$75,156	2.2	\$237,500	\$1,534
Huntington (Hampshire)	2,205	911	\$34,276	\$68,542	2.4	\$231,200	\$1,074
Buckland (Franklin)	2,083	886	\$32,279	\$66,681	2.4	\$252,200	\$852
Hinsdale	1,866	779	\$32,877	\$65,911	2.4	\$174,100	\$849

American Communities Survey, 5-year estimates 2017- 2021

TABLE 9: Comparison of Unemployment Rates, 2022

Cheshire	Lanesborough	Hinsdale	Buckland	Huntington
5.1%	4.4%	6.2%	3.0%	4.4%

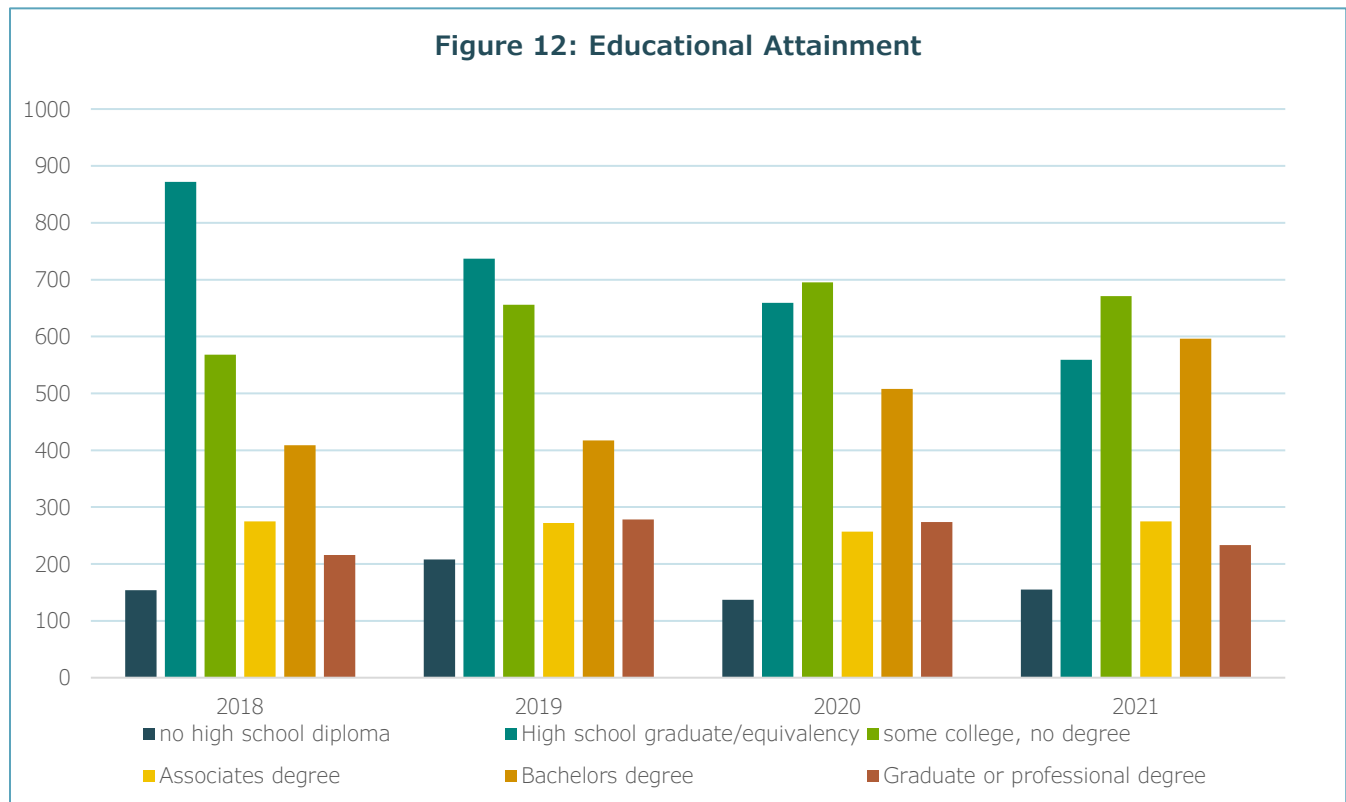
MA Department of Unemployment Assistance, Labor Force And Unemployment.

Appendix B

Additional Demographic and Economic Details

Educational Attainment

The percentage of Cheshire residents with a high school diploma or higher has remained above 90% for the past several years for which data is available. Approximately 11% hold an associate degree, 24% hold a bachelor's degree, and 9% have obtained a graduate or professional degree. Of those without a high school diploma, only a very small percentage (1-2%) have attained less than a 9th grade education. The general trend has been toward increased percentages of college experience and either college level or advanced degrees.

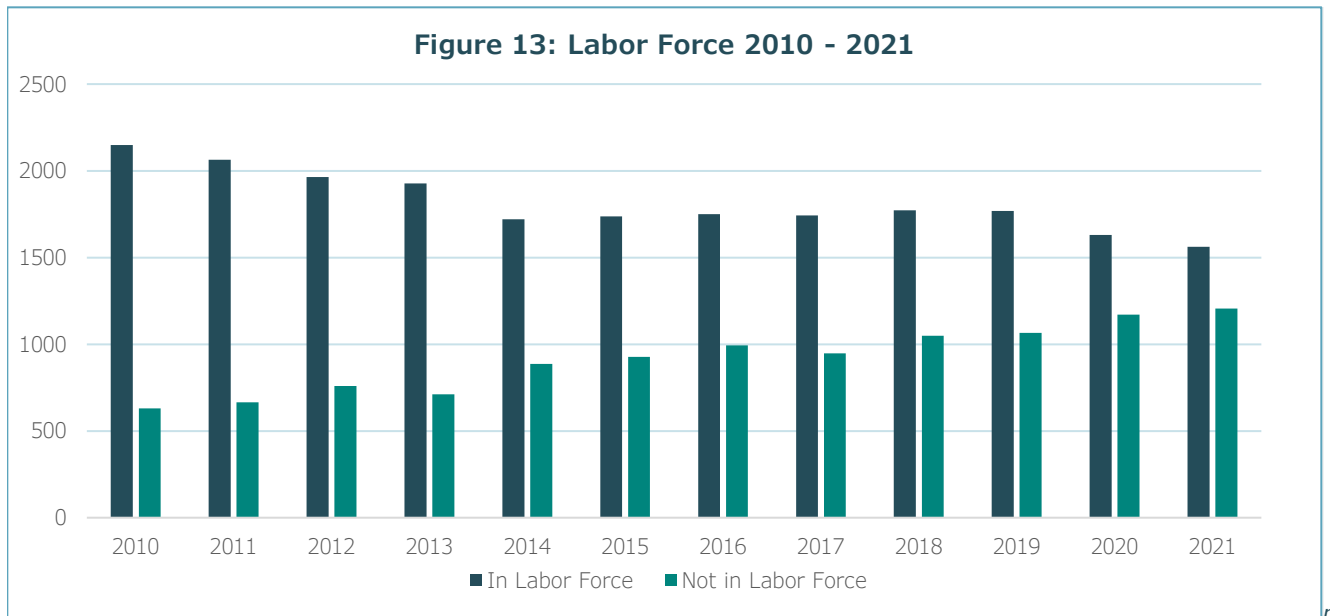


Source: American Communities Survey, 5-year estimates, S1501. www.berkshirebenchmarks.org.

Cheshire is on par with Berkshire County in terms of the total population over age 25 with a high school diploma or equivalency certificate (over 90%). Berkshire County has a higher proportion of residents with bachelor as well as graduate degrees. Educational Attainment in Cheshire compares favorably to the United States.

Labor Force

Cheshire's labor force has decreased by 27% since 2010, from 2,149 to 1,562 people. This decline occurred fairly steadily over the course of the intervening years. **Note about Labor Force definition: the labor force is defined as all those within the given population who are currently employed plus the number of people who are unemployed by actively seeking employment.**



Source: American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, S2301. www.berkshirebenchmarks.org.

Municipal Tax Rates

TABLE 10: Comparison of Municipal Tax Rates, Arranged by Residential Rate (FY23)

Municipality	Residential Tax Rate	Commercial Tax Rate	Industrial Tax Rate	Personal Property Tax Rate
Lanesborough	17.67	17.67	17.67	17.67
Huntington	17.05	17.05	17.05	17.05
Buckland	16.94	16.94	16.94	16.94
Hinsdale	13.49	13.49	13.49	13.49
Cheshire	11.97	11.97	11.97	11.97

Source: Division of Local Services (DLS), Community Comparison Report

Employment by NAICS Sector

TABLE 11: Employment of Cheshire Residents by NAICS Sectors

NAICS Code	Sector	ACS Estimate	Margin of Error
11	Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	8	13
21	Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	0	14
23	Construction	127	86
31-33	Manufacturing	114	59
42	Wholesale Trade	19	22
44-45	Retail Trade	147	61
48-49	Transportation and warehousing	47	35
22	Utilities	74	77
51	Information	0	14
52	Finance and insurance	25	22
53	Real Estate and rental and leasing	32	31
54	Professional, scientific, and technical services	50	44
55	Management of companies and enterprises	0	14
56	Administrative and waste management services	37	38
61	Educational Services	164	96
62	Health care and social assistance	438	139
71	Arts, entertainment, and recreation	33	32
72	Accommodation and food services	73	45
81	Other services, except public administration	67	47
92	Public administration	77	47

Source: American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, S2403.

Appendix C

Regional Context

Population Projections

Berkshire County is currently experiencing a continued decline in population that traces back to the 1970's when the county hit its peak population. As mills and manufacturing began closing throughout the county, young adults left the region to pursue employment in other areas of the country. This departure, which continues today, combined with the global trend of increased urbanization, has led to the state of continual decline in Berkshire County.

The decline in the region's population today is based on the discrepancy between births and deaths and in- and out- migration. For the last 10 years, Berkshire County has been experiencing an average of 280 more deaths than births each year. As a region, it is projected to continue to decline in the number of births and an increase in the number of deaths, which will accelerate the decline, especially as the baby boomers, the largest sector of the population, age.

In addition, the county has been experiencing an average net loss of another 250 people a year due to migration. This is projected to decline slightly but remain as a net loss over the coming decades. Berkshire County is the only county in the state that is experiencing a decline in both vital events and net migration.

Over the last 40 years, the population of the region has become imbalanced based on age. As a region, the Berkshires have a significantly smaller percentage of young adults and fewer children than the state or nation, while having more older adults than the state and nation. This imbalance is the leading reason why the population will continue to decline over the coming decades. The lack of young adults, and the lack of children they have, leads to a continuous decline in the population.

The U.S. Census Bureau produces population estimates at the state, county, and city/town level each year, through the American Communities Survey. Both One Year and Five-Year estimates are provided. Five-Year estimates are considered more reliable because they take overall trends into consideration more thoroughly. More information about the methodology used by the Census Bureau to produce these estimates can be found at the Census website.

With each Census release, The UMass Donahue Institute's [Population Estimates Program \(PEP\)](#) produces a summary report on the estimates for Massachusetts. These reports extract the data for Massachusetts from the Census release and provide context about population trends for researchers and planners. Town- and City-level projections are also developed, and a screenshot of Cheshire's population projections are included on the following page, along with an Age Cohort Wave Chart from 2020-2050.

Figure 14: Population Projections for Cheshire, MA

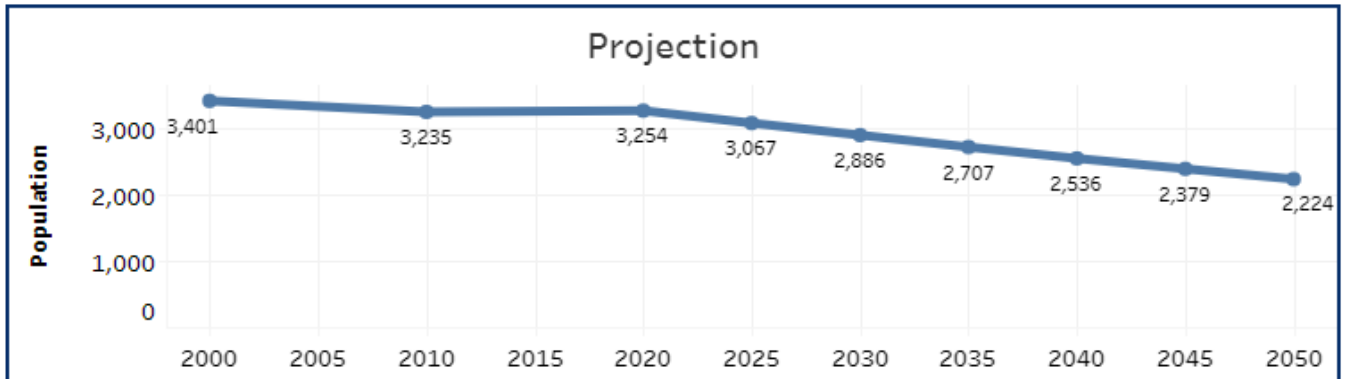
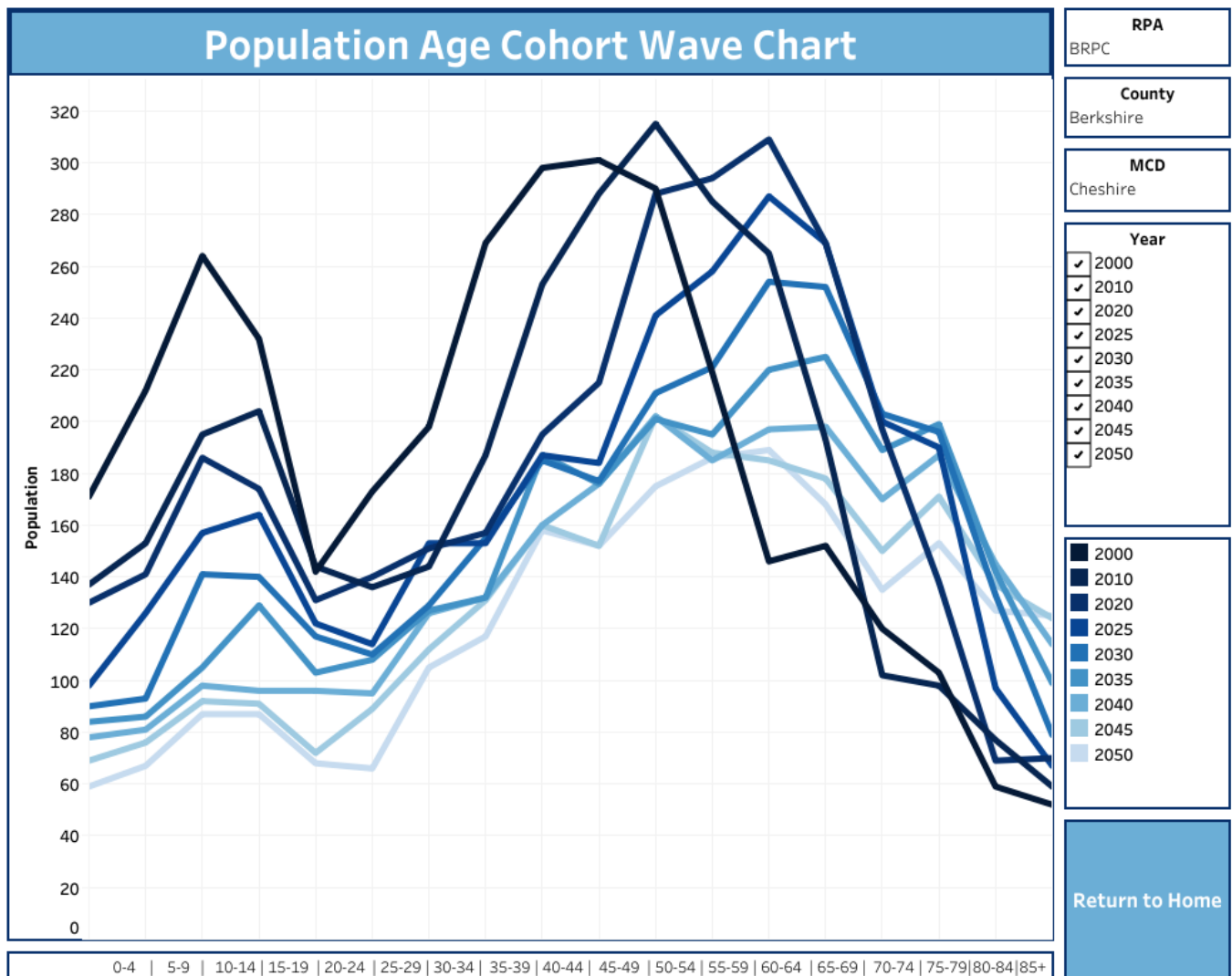


Figure 15: Population Age Cohort Wave Chart for Cheshire, MA, 2000 - 2050



Source: <https://donahue.umass.edu/business-groups/economic-public-policy-research/massachusetts-population-estimates-program/population-projections>

Demographic

The total population of Berkshire County is 125,927, which has been declining since its peak of 149,402 in 1970. Between 1970 and 2020, the region experienced an overall 15.7% drop in total population, though the rate of decline decreased over the last decade. Although Berkshire County contains 8.96% of the land in Massachusetts, its share of the commonwealth's population is only 1.83%, with a population density of 133.1 people per square mile compared to a state average of 650.5.

The median age for Berkshire County residents is 47.2 years as compared to 39.6 for Massachusetts and 38.2 for the nation. Berkshire County's median age is also higher than the Capital District (40.2), and the Pioneer Valley (41). Upper age cohorts (45 and older, 65 and older) have even more pronounced differences with surrounding regions. The age distribution in Berkshire County results in an increasing old-age dependency ratio and a shrinking workforce.

While the population of Berkshire County is predominately White, it is becoming increasingly diverse. In 2010, the non-White population was 11,589, or 8.8% of the population. In 2020, that number and percentage increased to 15,489 or 12.3% of the population. While the total population has declined, the White population dropped by almost 10,000 while the non-White population increased by 5,000.

Over 90% of the total population over age 25 in Berkshire County have obtained a high school diploma or equivalency certificate. Thirty-one percent of the population have obtained at least a bachelor's degree and 13.7% have obtained one or more graduate degrees. In comparison to surrounding regions, Berkshire County residents are more highly educated than those in the U.S. and Pioneer Valley but are surpassed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and New York's Capital District at the college and graduate level.

For more information about Berkshire County demographics, see www.berkshirebenchmarks.org.

Economic

The per capita income (PCI) for Berkshire County in 2020 was \$37,025, \$1,409 higher (4%) than the 2019 per capita income of \$35,616. Berkshire County's per capita income remained slightly above the national PCI and substantially below the statewide PCI. Among surrounding regions, Berkshire County's per capita income is approximately average, being higher than the Pioneer Valley and lower than the Capital District.

In 2020, the median household income for Berkshire County was \$62,166. This was a \$2,939 increase (5%) over the 2019 median household income of \$59,230. Median household income in Berkshire County continues to be slightly lower than the national median household income and substantially lower than the statewide median household income. Of note, the growth rate for Berkshire County's median household income is faster than that of the nation, as well as the Pioneer Valley and Capital District. It lags the Massachusetts growth rate by less than half a percent.

Berkshire County's unemployment rate by 2021 was 6.7%, a dramatic reduction from the COVID-19-induced 2020 unemployment rate of 9.1%. It was still above pre-pandemic levels and nearly equal to the level of unemployment Berkshire County experienced in the years following the Great Financial Crisis. Data from 2022 indicates that tight labor conditions have moved the regional unemployment rate closer to pre-pandemic levels.

The county's labor force increased from 2000 to 2002, held somewhat steady from 2002 through 2008, then declined rapidly in 2010, declining at a slower pace since. Between 2020 and 2021, the Berkshire County labor force increased by 296 workers (0.5%) from 62,370 to 62,666. The labor force remained 6,756 workers (10%) below the 2000 level of 69,422 and 9,691 (13.2%) from the peak of 73,357 in 2006.

Although the year-over-year increase in the labor force is encouraging, it can likely be attributed to workers returning after the sharp drop in labor force between 2019 and 2020 caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Key Industries

The top sectors by average monthly employment in Berkshire County are Health Care and Social Assistance, Retail Trade, Educational Services, Accommodation and Food Services, and Manufacturing. Together, these five industries employed a monthly average of 36,922 people and accounted for approximately 65% of the monthly average of 56,008 people employed across all sectors as of 2021.

Of these five industries, three had average weekly wages below the median average weekly wage of \$1,131, including Health Care and Social Assistance and Retail Trade, the two sectors comprising the largest shares of average monthly employment. The sectors with the highest average weekly wages in 2021 were Utilities, Finance and Insurance, Professional and Technical Services, Information, and Wholesale Trade, with average weekly wages ranging from \$1,418 to \$1,993 during the same time period.

In 2021, Berkshire County workers earned on average less than their counterparts in other regions. For every NAICS sector, the average annual pay was less for Berkshire County workers than in other regions of Massachusetts, with Berkshire County sectors commanding an average of 69.8% of the average annual pay of their state counterparts. This relationship largely held when Berkshire County was compared to the nation, with the average Berkshire County worker making less than their national counterpart in every sector except Educational Services and Accommodation and Food Services. Berkshire County workers commanded an average of 82.3% of the average annual pay of their national counterparts.

1Berkshire's [Berkshire Blueprint 2.0](#), launched in 2019, identifies five primary industry clusters. These include Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering (with a gross regional product of over \$917,000,000), Creative Economy (with a 62% higher concentration of employers than the national rate and 9.5% job growth since 2010), Food and Agriculture (with a strong regional identity in farming and fine dining, as well as a 4% job growth since 2010), Healthcare (the largest single industry cluster in terms of employment and a 50% higher concentration of health care businesses than the national concentration), and Hospitality and Tourism (with direct visitor spending of \$641 million in 2022 and a total economic impact of tourism in the Berkshires of \$960 million).

More recently, Outdoor Recreation has emerged as a primary economic driver in the Berkshires and will be added as the sixth Primary Cluster in the next update to the Blueprint 2.0. Fostering this industry is especially meaningful for northern Berkshire communities, including neighboring Adams, with the long-awaited launch of development at Greylock Glen and in North Adams on several fronts, including the goal of establishing the Adventure Trail between North Adams and Williamstown for pedestrian and cycling activity. The outdoor recreation economy stands to grow in the region as 1Berkshire's visitor marketing reaches younger audiences with more relevant content for younger generations and families with children.

The 2020 Outdoor Recreation Plan for Berkshire County, as well as the 2021 Addendum, recognizes the increasing impact of outdoor recreation as people sought safer entertainment options during the COVID-19 pandemic. Coordination with the state-designated Destination Marketing Organization, 1Berkshire, and with Berkshire Regional Planning Commission's new outdoor recreation website (launching in early 2024) can help to ensure reciprocal benefits for the town.

Business Environment

Cheshire is situated within a region containing several small local Chambers of Commerce and business associations (Adams, Lee, Lenox, Pittsfield, Williamstown), sub-regional Chambers (Southern Berkshire, North Adams), Community Development Corporations (CDC of South Berkshire, Pittsfield Economic Revitalization Corporation), and the state-designated Regional Economic Development Organization, or “REDO”, 1Berkshire.

These organizations, along with other entities involved in supporting businesses such as the MA Small Business Development Center Network, EforAll Berkshire County, LEVER, and the Berkshire Black Economic Council, have achieved greater coordination in the past few years, somewhat out of necessity due to the COVID-19 pandemic conditions and need to connect small business owners with relief funding and resiliency resources. This increased coordination will provide long-term benefits to the business community, as service providers have a better understanding of what fellow providers have to offer and can make efficient, effective referrals back and forth.

Business owners in Berkshire County have access to the services of the MassHire Berkshire Workforce Board and MassHire Career Center. These agencies provide training programs, training grant funds, internship programs, and job postings, as well as intake coordination to connect job seekers with openings.

The region also benefits from the 2020 opening of the Berkshire Innovation Center (BIC), based in Pittsfield but serving companies of all sizes from all corners of the county. With a significant federal investment of ARPA funding via the Economic Development Administration (EDA), the BIC has launched the Berkshire Manufacturing Academy, which assists with both incumbent workers up-skilling and cooperative exploration of new technologies – or repurposing of existing equipment technologies – to allow Berkshire-based manufacturers to branch out into new product lines or end markets.

Additionally, federal funding in the form of a multi-year CARES Act grant allowed Berkshire Regional Planning Commission to partner with both 1Berkshire and the Nonprofit Center of the Berkshires to provide over 50 technical assistance workshops and webinars to help small businesses and non-profits increase their working knowledge of marketing and communications, bookkeeping, fundraising (including crowdfunding techniques), and grant writing and management. The project will also support the development of a Small Business Resiliency Template to help business owners prepare for future economic disruptions.

Considering the rural nature of the region, as well as the high number of home-based or very small (fewer than five employees) businesses, it remains challenging for entrepreneurs and even established business owners to navigate the business ecosystem. There are persistent gaps in services, even within the network described above, as well as a lack of access to capital, especially for startups. A primary goal of the 2023-2027 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for Berkshire County is to ***create a stronger business environment, providing a streamlined ecosystem of support for a diverse range of businesses through access to capital, technical assistance, and opportunities for expansion.*** More information about this CEDS Goal and associated objectives can be found on page 42 of the 2023-2027 Berkshire County CEDS: <https://berkshireplanning.org/initiatives/berkshire-comprehensive-economic-development-strategy-ceds/>

Appendix D

Inventories

Appendix D contains several tables of supporting data for sections within the Phase 1 report, including:

Table 12 – Historic site inventory – National Historic Register listings

Table 13 – Historic Site Inventory – all Cheshire properties and assets listed in MACRIS

Table 14 – Outdoor Recreation Asset Inventory

Tables 15-18 – Raw data from Public and Private Realm assessments, split into four sub-sections

Table 19 – Business inventory – combined Dun & Bradstreet Hoovers and locally registered, sorted by size

TABLE 12: Historic Site Inventory: Properties on the National Historic Register

Property Name	Listed on National Historic Register	Physical Address	Architect/Builder Info
Cheshire Town Hall Complex	3/7/20217	80-84 Church and 23 Depot Streets	Ellsworth. Emory A.; Waters, F.M.
Farnams Village Historic District	4/27/2000	Farnams Road, Lanesborough Road, and Cheshire Road	
Hall's Tavern	3/10/1983	31 North Street	Hall, Calvin; Leland, John, Jr.
Old Churchyard Cemetery	4/16/2012	Adjacent to 918 Jenks Rd.	
Stafford Hill Memorial	2/14/1986	Stafford Hill Road	Bowern, Eugene B.; Bond, Newton C.

Source: National Archives

Table 13: Assets listed on the MA Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS)

MHC No.	Property Name	Physical Address	Year	Designations*
CHS.A	Cheshire Town Center			
CHS.B	Farnams Village Historic District			NRDIS
CHS.C	Mount Greylock State Reservation			

CHS.D	Old Church-yard Cemetery			NRIND
CHS.E	Cheshire Town Hall Complex			NRDIS
CHS.59	Capen - Ross - Curtiss House	Church St		
CHS.901	Cheshire Cheese Monument	Church St	1940	
CHS.958	Cheshire Honor Roll	Church St	1998	NRDIS
CHS.959	Cheshire Town Hall Flagpole	Church St	R 1980	NRDIS
CHS.960	Cheshire Town Hall Granite Benches	Church St	2011	NRDIS
CHS.961	Cheshire Town Hall Photovoltaic Panel	Church St	2011	NRDIS
CHS.920	Cheshire World War I Memorial	Church St	1921	NRDIS
CHS.921	Memorial Revolutionary War Watering Trough	Church St	1914	NRDIS
CHS.78	Tanner - Chapman - Brown House	22 Church St	C 1858	
CHS.79	Cheshire Old Baptist Parsonage	27 Church St	C 1849	
CHS.76	Martin, George House	28-30 Church St	1885	
CHS.77	Reed, Moses - Cole, Dr. L. J. House	41 Church St	1815	
CHS.75	Wolcott Store	52-54 Church St	C 1844	
CHS.73		77 Church St		
CHS.74	Cheshire Town Hall	80 Church St	1898	NRDIS
CHS.109	Cheshire Trolley Station - Ticket Office	82 Church St	1906	NRDIS
CHS.110	Cheshire Trolley Power Plant	84 Church St	1906	NRDIS
CHS.72	Brown, Henry House	93 Church St	1843	
CHS.69	Foster, E. D. Store	100-106 Church St	C 1845	

CHS.68	Dean, J. B. House	108 Church St		
CHS.67	Mechanics Hall	116-120 Church St	C 1850	
CHS.70	Wood - Harkness - Martin House	123-125 Church St	C 1843	
CHS.66	Fairfield, Paul Blacksmith Shop	136-140 Church St	C 1840	
CHS.63	Rider House	142 Church St		
CHS.65	Chapman - Wood House	175-177 Church St	C 1858	
CHS.58	Jenks House	180 Church St	C 1858	
CHS.64	Bliss - Jenks - Chapman House	185 Church St	C 1858	
CHS.62	Cheshire United Methodist Church	197 Church St	1848	
CHS.61	Methodist Church Parsonage	203 Church St	C 1848	
CHS.60	Foster, Capt. Edmund House	221 Church St	C 1858	
CHS.104	Farnam-Cheshire Limestone Company Worker Housing	54 Crusher Rd	C 1910	NRDIS
CHS.101	Farnam-Cheshire Limestone Company Worker Housing	70 Crusher Rd	C 1910	NRDIS
CHS.43	Bulfinch - Reynolds House	43 Dean St	1858	
CHS.42	Stowell House	50-52 Dean St		
CHS.74	Cheshire Town Hall	80 Church St	1898	NRDIS
CHS.109	Cheshire Trolley Station - Ticket Office	82 Church St	1906	NRDIS
CHS.110	Cheshire Trolley Power Plant	84 Church St	1906	NRDIS
CHS.72	Brown, Henry House	93 Church St	1843	

CHS.69	Foster, E. D. Store	100-106 Church St	C 1845	
CHS.68	Dean, J. B. House	108 Church St		
CHS.67	Mechanics Hall	116-120 Church St	C 1850	
CHS.70	Wood - Harkness - Martin House	123-125 Church St	C 1843	
CHS.66	Fairfield, Paul Blacksmith Shop	136-140 Church St	C 1840	
CHS.63	Rider House	142 Church St		
CHS.65	Chapman - Wood House	175-177 Church St	C 1858	
CHS.58	Jenks House	180 Church St	C 1858	
CHS.64	Bliss - Jenks - Chapman House	185 Church St	C 1858	
CHS.62	Cheshire United Methodist Church	197 Church St	1848	
CHS.61	Methodist Church Parsonage	203 Church St	C 1848	
CHS.60	Foster, Capt. Edmund House	221 Church St	C 1858	
CHS.104	Farnam-Cheshire Limestone Company Worker Housing	54 Crusher Rd	C 1910	NRDIS
CHS.101	Farnam-Cheshire Limestone Company Worker Housing	70 Crusher Rd	C 1910	NRDIS
CHS.41	Bryant - Fish House	64-66 Dean St		
CHS.40	Brown - Leonard House	99 Dean St		
CHS.52	Jenks - Archibald House	42 Depot St	C 1858	

CHS.51	Brown - Mason - Harner House	52 Depot St	C 1858	
CHS.50	Brown, Werden House	66 Depot St	C 1876	
CHS.54	U. S. Post Office - Old Cheshire Branch	67-69 Depot St	C 1845	
CHS.53	Northrup House	75-79 Depot St	C 1858	
CHS.49	Bennet - Ingalls House	78-84 Depot St	C 1858	
CHS.48	Bliss - Martin House	98-100 Depot St		
CHS.47	Tomkins - Nickerson House	105 Depot St	C 1845	
CHS.45	Pristol - Olin - Haskins House	113 Depot St	C 1858	
CHS.46	Brown - Trotier House	114 Depot St	C 1858	
CHS.8	Campbell House	127 Depot St	C 1863	
CHS.17	Buffington - Jenks - Harrington House	247 East Harbor Rd	C 1858	
CHS.907	East Main Street Bridge over South Brook	East Main St	1939	
CHS.806	Fales Road - Sand Mill Road Cemetery	Fales Rd	C 1799	
CHS.36	Smith, Capt. Daniel House	306 Fales Rd	1805	
CHS.912	Berkshire Street Railway Railroad Bed and Trestle	Farnams Rd	C 1900	NRDIS
CHS.911	Cheshire Reservoir	Farnams Rd	C 1866	NRDIS
CHS.910	Farnams Road Causeway	Farnams Rd	C 1858	NRDIS

CHS.10	Cole, Dexter Farm	Fred Mason Rd	C 1830	
CHS.33	Mason House	265 Fred Mason Rd	C 1858	
CHS.34	Browning - Brown House	456 Fred Mason Rd	C 1858	
CHS.16	Edmonds - Edmunds House	Harbor Rd	C 1858	
CHS.15	Wells - Richmond - Briggs House	273-275 Harbor Rd	C 1858	
CHS.808	Ingalls Road Cemetery	Ingalls Rd	C 1813	
CHS.803	Old Church-yard Cemetery	Jenks Rd	1785	NRIND
CHS.945	Old Church-yard Cemetery - Briggs, Nancy B. Stone	Jenks Rd	1818	NRIND
CHS.947	Old Church-yard Cemetery - Brown, Allan Stone	Jenks Rd	1820	NRIND
CHS.935	Old Church-yard Cemetery - Brown, Benjamin Stone	Jenks Rd	1809	NRIND
CHS.932	Old Church-yard Cemetery - Brown, Joseph Stone	Jenks Rd	1807	NRIND
CHS.928	Old Church-yard Cemetery - Brown, Lucey Stone	Jenks Rd	1794	NRIND
CHS.924	Old Church-yard Cemetery - Carpenter, Amey Stone	Jenks Rd	1785	NRIND
CHS.941	Old Church-yard Cemetery - Carpenter, S. Stone	Jenks Rd	1815	NRIND
CHS.951	Old Church-yard Cemetery - Converse, Capt. C. Stne	Jenks Rd	1830	NRIND
CHS.953	Old Church-yard Cemetery - Converse, Rebecca Stone	Jenks Rd	1835	NRIND

CHS.940	Old Church-yard Cemetery - Cushing, Dr. D. Stone	Jenks Rd	1814	NRIND
CHS.954	Old Church-yard Cemetery - Cushing, Freeloove Stone	Jenks Rd	1843	NRIND
CHS.950	Old Church-yard Cemetery - Cushing, Julia Stone	Jenks Rd	1829	NRIND
CHS.942	Old Church-yard Cemetery - Dexter, Hopestill Stone	Jenks Rd	1815	NRIND
CHS.933	Old Church-yard Cemetery - Fisk, Lydia Stone	Jenks Rd	1807	NRIND
CHS.946	Old Church-yard Cemetery - Fisk, Lydia Stone	Jenks Rd	1819	NRIND
CHS.930	Old Church-yard Cemetery - Flack, Melindy Stone	Jenks Rd	1796	NRIND
CHS.936	Old Church-yard Cemetery - Goff, Elijah Stone	Jenks Rd	1812	NRIND
CHS.931	Old Church-yard Cemetery - Hathaway, Isaac Stone	Jenks Rd	1798	NRIND
CHS.925	Old Church-yard Cemetery - Hathaway, Phoebe Stone	Jenks Rd	1785	NRIND
CHS.927	Old Church-yard Cemetery - Hoskins, Hannah Stone	Jenks Rd	1792	NRIND
CHS.929	Old Church-yard Cemetery - Jenks, Dr. W. Stone	Jenks Rd	1794	NRIND
CHS.949	Old Church-yard Cemetery - Luther, Rebecca Stone	Jenks Rd	1822	NRIND
CHS.948	Old Church-yard Cemetery - Manchester, J. Stone	Jenks Rd	1821	NRIND
CHS.939	Old Church-yard Cemetery - Mason, Capt. P. Stone	Jenks Rd	1813	NRIND
CHS.937	Old Church-yard Cemetery - Mason, Chloe Stone	Jenks Rd	1812	NRIND

CHS.952	Old Church-yard Cemetery - Mason, Lt. T. Stone	Jenks Rd	1832	NRIND
CHS.943	Old Church-yard Cemetery - Read, Betsy Stone	Jenks Rd	1815	NRIND
CHS.955	Old Church-yard Cemetery - Wells, Capt. S. Stone	Jenks Rd	1848	NRIND
CHS.944	Old Church-yard Cemetery - Werden, Capt. P. Stone	Jenks Rd	1816	NRIND
CHS.934	Old Church-yard Cemetery - Werden, Rev. P. Stone	Jenks Rd	1808	NRIND
CHS.926	Old Church-yard Cemetery - Willmarth, E. Stone	Jenks Rd	1785	NRIND
CHS.938	Old Church-yard Cemetery - Wilmarth, C. Stone	Jenks Rd	1812	NRIND
CHS.922	Old Church-yard Cemetery Perimeter Stone Wall	Jenks Rd	1913	NRIND
CHS.923	Old Church-yard Cemetery Wood Sign	Jenks Rd	R 1970	NRIND
CHS.20	Brown, Nicholas House	411 Jenks Rd	C 1770	
CHS.21	Low, Capt. Samuel House	800 Jenks Rd	C 1768	
CHS.809	Bucklin, Jerusha Grave	801 Jenks Rd	1776	
CHS.99	Carney, H. - Curtis, Seth Barn	Lanesborough Rd	C 1870	NRDI
CHS.914	Farnams-Cheshire Limestone Company Railroad Tunnel	Lanesborough Rd	1916	NRDIS
CHS.909	Farnams-Cheshire Limestone Company Tramway Bed	Lanesborough Rd	1909	NRDIS
CHS.102	Farnam-Cheshire Limestone Company Worker Housing	668 Lanesborough Rd	C 1920	NRDIS

CHS.103	Farnam-Cheshire Limestone Company Worker Housing	678 Lanesborough Rd	C 1920	NRDIS
CHS.93	Farnams-Cheshire Limestone Company Worker Housing	708 Lanesborough Rd	C 1910	NRDIS
CHS.96	Farnams-Cheshire Limestone Company Worker Housing	766 Lanesborough Rd	C 1910	NRDIS
CHS.91	Curtis, Henry H. House	778 Lanesborough Rd	C 1865	NRDIS
CHS.97	Bliss, Orrin House	790 Lanesborough Rd	C 1850	NRDIS
CHS.98	Farnam Village Fire Station	790 Lanesborough Rd	C 1900	NRDIS
CHS.100	Farnam-Cheshire Lime Company Processing Mill	805-839 Lanesborough Rd	R 1915	NRDIS
CHS.107	Farnam-Cheshire Limestone Company Paymaster Office	805-839 Lanesborough Rd	1921	NRDIS
CHS.94	Farnams-Cheshire Limestone Company Carpentry Shop	805-839 Lanesborough Rd	C 1920	NRDIS
CHS.92	Farnams-Cheshire Limestone Company Power House	805-839 Lanesborough Rd	C 1915	NRDIS
CHS.90	Farnum Brothers Lime Company Stock Room	805-839 Lanesborough Rd	C 1880	NRDIS
CHS.105	Farnam-Cheshire Limestone Company Worker Housing	858 Lanesborough Rd	C 1910	NRDIS
CHS.108	Jenks, Frank J. House	931 Lanesborough Rd	C 1880	NRDIS
CHS.956	Main Street Bridge over Hoosic River	Main St		
CHS.71	Brown - Martin House	137-139 Main St		
CHS.900	Berkshire Volunteer Monument	North St	1932	
CHS.802	North Street Cemetery	North St	1775	

CHS.4	Cole Brother's Store	11 North St	1808	
CHS.5	Hall's Tavern	31 North St	1804	NRIND
CHS.84	First Baptist Church	32 North St	1849	
CHS.82	Morgan, Roxey House	43 North St	C 1920	
CHS.83	Lockwood House	61 North St	R 1904	
CHS.89	Brown, Werden House	64 North St	C 1870	
CHS.85	Brown - Wood House	68 North St	C 1876	
CHS.86	Slade - Brown - Foster House	78 North St		
CHS.87	Dean, Alanson P. House	120 North St	1853	
CHS.88	Jarvis - Dean House	121-123 North St	C 1858	
CHS.6	Bradford - Cole House	North State Rd	1790	
CHS.11	Cushing - Martin House	North State Rd	1791	
CHS.7	Richardson House	725 North State Rd	C 1792	
CHS.9	Jenks, Elisha Cotton Mill	1490 North State Rd	R 1825	
CHS.37	Brown, William - Stafford, Richard House	867 Notch Rd	C 1792	
CHS.12	Miller - Card House	54 Pleasant View Dr		
CHS.917	Farnams Limestone Quarry	Quarry Rd	C 1874	NRDIS
CHS.916	Farnum, A. S. Lime Kilns Dynamite Shed Ruins	Quarry Rd	C 1840	NRDIS
CHS.903	Farnum, A. S. Lime Kilns Quarrying Equipment	Quarry Rd	R 1895	NRDIS

CHS.915	Northup, Stephen Small Limestone Quarry	Quarry Rd	C 1840	NRDIS
CHS.913	Quarry Road	Quarry Rd	R 1850	NRDIS
CHS.95	Farnams-Cheshire Limestone Company Worker Housing	84 Quarry Rd	C 1910	NRDIS
CHS.106	Farnam-Cheshire Limestone Company Worker Housing	103-109 Quarry Rd	C 1910	NRDIS
CHS.44	Cheshire Railroad Station	6 Railroad St	1849	
CHS.957	Cheshire Harbor Trolley Bridge	Reservoir Rd	R 1896	
CHS.55	Bowen, H. C. House	Richardson St	C 1860	
CHS.38	Burt - Farnum House	27-29 Richmond St	C 1860	
CHS.39	Saunders House	36 Richmond St	C 1845	
CHS.805	Burt Cemetery	Rt 116	C 1817	
CHS.906	Choquettas Bridge	Rt 116	1940	
CHS.905	Pumpkin Hook Bridge - Hook Arch Bridge	Rt 116	1929	
CHS.35	Lincoln, S. L. House	920 Sand Mill Rd		
CHS.57	Cheshire Old Grange Hall	56-64 School St	R 1920	
CHS.56	Wheelock, Jerome M. House	200 School St	R 1880	
CHS.3	Barker, Ezra Farm	South St	C 1785	
CHS.904	South Street Bridge	South St	1901	
CHS.2	Beechwood Rest Home	12 South St	1795	

CHS.1	Tiffany Green	38 South St	1790	
CHS.81	Turtle, Owen House	57 South St	C 1876	
CHS.80	Brown, Luther House	81-101 South St	C 1858	
CHS.902	Stafford Hill Memorial	Stafford Hill Rd	1927	NRIN
CHS.18	Bowen, Valentine House	10 Stafford Hill Rd	C 1776	
CHS.19	Richardson - Brayton House	184 Stafford Hill Rd	C 1775	
CHS.804	Jenks - Wells Road Cemetery	Wells Rd	1841	
CHS.24	Jenks, Jesse Farm	761 Wells Rd	C 1791	
CHS.23	Coman, Daniel - Bennett, Joseph House	1051-1053 Wells Rd	C 1768	
CHS.22	Jenks, Jabes House	1524 Wells Rd	C 1825	
CHS.800	Cheshire Cemetery	West Mountain Rd	1859	
CHS.919	Dumont Memorial	West Mountain Rd	1897	
CHS.918	Jenks Family Memorial	West Mountain Rd		
CHS.25	Cole, R. M. House	18 West Mountain Rd	1820	
CHS.26	Mason - Tanner - Cropper House	195 West Mountain Rd	1815	
CHS.27	Whitmarsh, Toleman House	198 West Mountain Rd	C 1780	
CHS.29	Mason - Coles - Lamb House	231-233 West Mountain Rd		
CHS.28	Whitmarsh, Toleman Forge	232 West Mountain Rd	C 1800	
CHS.30	Weskit - Cole House	478 West Mountain Rd	C 1770	

CHS.31	Northrop, Stephen Jr. House	550 West Mountain Rd	C 1858	
CHS.32	Wood - Lamb House	612 West Mountain Rd	C 1858	
CHS.807	Wells - The Notch Cemetery	Windsor Rd	C 1773	
CHS.13	Nestle Down	77 Windsor Rd	C 1858	
CHS.14	Bloody Brook Tavern	1015 Windsor Rd		

Source: www.mhc-macris.net, maintained by the Massachusetts Historical Commission

*NRDIS = National Register (of Historic Places) District; NRIND = National Register (of Historic Places) Individual Property

TABLE 14: Primary Outdoor Recreation Assets in Cheshire

Site/Facility	Site Manager	Asset/Access Point	Primary Use
Adams Fire District Land	Adams Fire & Water District	Adams Watershed (Bassett Brook Trail)	Hiking
Appalachian Trail Corridor	Massachusetts DCR	AT Trailhead - Outlook Avenue	Hiking
Ashuwillticook Rail Trail	Massachusetts DCR	*Ashuwillticook Rail Trail - Railroad Street	Cycling
Chalet Wildlife Management Area	Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife	*Cheshire Cobble Trailhead	Hiking
Chalet Wildlife Management Area	Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife	South State Road Parking Area	Hunting
Chalet Wildlife Management Area	Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife	Windsor Road Parking Area	Hunting
Cheshire Reservoir	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	*Cheshire Reservoir Boat Launch	Motorboat Launch
Cheshire Rod And Gun Club	Cheshire Rob & Gun Club	Cheshire Rod & Gun Club	Hunting
Farnams Causeway	Town of Cheshire	*Farnams Causeway	Picnic
Mount Greylock State Reservation	Massachusetts DCR	*Jones Nose Trailhead	Hiking
Mount Greylock State Reservation	Massachusetts DCR	Woodason Spring Trailhead	Hiking
Stafford Hill Wildlife Management Area	Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife	Stafford Hill Rd Parking Area South	Hunting
Stafford Hill Wildlife Management Area	Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife	Stafford Hill Rd Parking Area North	Hunting

Source: BRPC's inventory of outdoor recreation assets: www.berkshiresoutside.org *indicates top five locations in terms of usage.

TABLE 15: Rating Detail – Town Center on Route 8 subsection

Public Metric	Grade	Comments
Public Parking	N/A	There is no public parking available. The lots are private.
Sidewalks	Fair	Sidewalks are present in some sections but not both sides of the road and some are in poor condition.
Roadbed and Crosswalks	Good	The commercial activities are along Route 8, which is in good condition.
Street Furniture (benches, trash bins, bike racks)	N/A	There is no street furniture for pedestrians visiting multiple businesses other than a bus stop.
Wayfinding/Signage	Good	There is appropriate signage but further wayfinding toward the village center could be useful.
Lighting	Good	Businesses are appropriately lit.
Private Metric	Grade	Comments
Facades	Good	Most businesses are either new and/or well maintained.
Windows	Good	Most businesses are either new and/or well maintained.
Signage	Good	Businesses have appropriate signage.
Awnings	Good	The buildings with awnings are in good condition.
Lighting	Good	The businesses are appropriately lit.
Outdoor Displays/Plantings/Surroundings	Good	The landscaping is good.

In-person site visits were conducted during the summer of 2023 by BRPC staff.

TABLE 16: Rating Detail – Village Center subsection

Public Metric	Grade	Comments
Public Parking	Fair	There is public parking available at the Cheshire Community House, but not directly adjacent to existing businesses.
Sidewalks	Good	Sidewalks connect commercial activities and are in an overall good condition.
Roadbed and Crosswalks	Fair	The roadways show signs of wear and tear but remain in good condition.
Street Furniture (benches, trash bins, bike racks)	Poor	Despite a very walkable downtown, there are no trash, benches, or bike racks.
Wayfinding/Signage	Poor	There is limited signage to direct visitors to destinations. Overall, the wayfinding system lacks cohesiveness.
Lighting	Good	The downtown is appropriately lit.
Private Metric	Grade	Comments
Facades	Fair	The buildings do not have notable structural deterioration but the majority show signs of aging.
Windows	Good	The majority of the windows and window displays are excellent.
Signage	Fair	The businesses have signage, but in some cases it is in disrepair and/or inconsistent.
Awnings	N/A	The businesses do not have awnings.
Lighting	Good	The businesses have appropriate lighting.
Outdoor Displays/Plantings/Surroundings	Excellent	The businesses are well landscaped, publicly-owned displays are engaging and eye-pleasing.

In-person site visits were conducted during the summer of 2023 by BRPC staff.

TABLE 17: Rating Detail – South State Road subsection

Public Metric	Grade	Comments
Public Parking	Fair	There is adequate parking at Farnum's Road and limited parking at the boat ramp. The parking at the boat ramp is narrow in some places but spots are clearly marked and provide access to natural and recreational resources.
Sidewalks	Poor/ n/a	There are no sidewalks connecting the Rail Trail to the businesses.
Roadbed and Crosswalks	Good	The roadways are in good condition overall and crosswalks are available at appropriate locations along the rail trail. Curbing could use some repair.
Street Furniture (benches, trash bins, bike racks)	Good	There are benches in the areas of public congregation.
Wayfinding/Signage	Fair	There is signage to direct people to attractions, some of it has aged and some are unutilized. Display boards in open space areas could use updating.
Lighting	Good	The lighting is adequate for current activity.
Private Metric	Grade	Comments
Facades	Good	Most commercial properties are in good condition with little to no structural issues.
Windows	Good	Windows are fitting for the types of businesses.
Signage	Good	Businesses signs are clear and in good condition.
Awnings	N/A	There are no awnings.
Lighting	Good	The lighting is adequate for the current activities.
Outdoor Displays/Plantings/Surroundings	Excellent	Outdoor displays are tactful and engaging.

In-person site visits were conducted during the summer of 2023 by BRPC staff.

TABLE 18: Rating Detail – North State Road subsection

Public Metric	Grade	Comments
Public Parking	N/A	There is no public parking available.
Sidewalks	Poor	There are no sidewalks, but commercial activities are not conducive to pedestrian traffic.
Roadbed and Crosswalks	Good	The commercial center is along Route 8, which is in good condition.
Street Furniture (benches, trash bins, bike racks)	Poor	The conditions do not support foot traffic.
Wayfinding/Signage	Good	Wayfinding signage is appropriate.
Lighting	Good	The area is appropriately lit for the activities.
Private Metric	Grade	Comments
Facades	Good	Most buildings appeared well-maintained and welcoming.
Windows	Good	Most buildings appeared well-maintained and welcoming.
Signage	Good	Businesses have appropriate signage.
Awnings	N/A	There are no awnings in this sub-section.
Lighting	Good	The commercial properties are appropriately lit.
Outdoor Displays/Plantings/Surroundings	Good	The landscaping and maintenance overall is good.

In-person site visits were conducted during the summer of 2023 by BRPC staff.

NOTE: The table below includes business names and locations produced by combining these entities with a DUNS number and findable in the Dun & Bradstreet Hoovers database with those that have registered with the Town of Cheshire for business certificates. The list totals nearly 400 businesses, some of which are undoubtedly out of operation. Presenting this in its entirety will hopefully lead to a refinement of the list and more accurate understanding of the size, industry type, and location of businesses in Cheshire for future economic development planning efforts.

Less than 60 businesses are recognized as either minority-owned (MBE) or woman-owned (WBE) entities. It is likely that the actual number is higher, but official certification is recognized to be arduous at both the state and federal levels.

TABLE 19: Cheshire Business Inventory, Arranged Alphabetically

Company Name	Address	2-digit NAICS	URL
51 Locust, LLC	135 Stafford Hill Rd	99	
A & K Cleaners Inc	222 Brough Rd	56	https://aandkinc.com/
A Little Bit of Everything	97 Ingalls Rd		
A.T-Bicycle Works & Outfitters	144 Church St	44	
Absolute Heating & Cooling	299 West Mt Rd		
Adams Building & Remodeling	951 West Mt Rd		
Adams Cheshire Regional School District	191 Church St	61	www.acrsd.net
Adams Community Bank	75 South St	52	www.adamscommunity.com
African Integrity Missions Inc	117 Dean St	81	
Aitken Cleaning Connection	264 W Mountain Rd	56	
Akshar Ji Corp.	104 South St	56	
Alan Efficient Homes	858 West Mt. Rd.		
Alan W. Pause	231 Lake Shore Dr	23	
Alice Kirk	213 Sand Mill Rd	56	

Alicia A. Gwozdz Photography	500 Fales Rd	54	
All American Plumbing	65 Old Cheshire Rd	23	www.allamericanplumbingservices.com
All Seasons Realty Group, Inc.	287 S State Rd	53	www.allseasonsrealtygroup.com
Allied Waste Services of Pittsfield	485 South State Rd	56	
American Pest Solutions, Inc.	48 South St	56	www.413pestfree.com
Arclight Fabrication and Design	861 Wells Rd		
Argri Mart Inc	109 Daniels Ter	42	
Aries Entertainment Management	157 North St	71	
Ashley's Lawn Maintenance	987 West Mountain Rd		
Asrg, LLC	287 S State Rd	99	
Assumption Parish	159 Church St	81	www.stmaryscheshire.com
AWI Svc. of MA LLC	485 South State Rd	56	
B & R Boat Restoration	32 Old State Rd		
Bator Service & Sales	534 Savoy Rd		
Bator's Mail Service	218 Shadowland Cove Rd	56	
Bedard Bros Auto Sales, Inc.	3931-393 S State Rd	44	www.bedardbros.com
Bedard Bros Chevrolet	393 S State Rd	71	www.bedardbroschevrolet.com
Bedard Brothers Volvo Cars	395 South State Rd	44	
Berkshire Bathworks	630 Outlook Ave	44	

Berkshire Canine Service	147 Brough Rd		
Berkshire Carpentry	708 Lanesboro Rd	23	www.berkshirecarpentry.com
Berkshire Contracting Associates	122 Depot St		
Berkshire Crochet Company	119 Daniels Terrace		
Berkshire Dance Theatre I	159 Church St	61	www.berkshiredance.org
Berkshire Electric Company	122 Depot St		
Berkshire Farm	1115 Sandmill Road	11	
Berkshire Inflatable Rentals	55 West Mountain Rd		
Berkshire Interiors	180 Church St		
Berkshire Mountain Gifts	8 2nd Ave		
Berkshire Nursing Families Inc.	790 Lanesboro Rd	62	www.berkshirenursingfamilies.org
Berkshire Photos	30 Crest Dr	54	
Berkshire Quality Painting	336 North St	23	
Berkshire Radon LLC	128 Fales Rd	54	www.berkshireradon.com
Berkshire Red Carpet Limo Service	395 East Harbor Rd		
Berkshire Scenic Treks	Cheshire Lake		
Berkshire Theraputic Message	21 Meadowview Dr	62	
Be-Tel Cleaning Services	130 Jenks Rd	56	
BFI Cheshire Hauling	485 South State Rd	48	
BFI Waster Systems	485 South State Rd	56	

Bilrite Construction	180 Curran Rd	23	www.bilriteconstruction.com
Biros Properties LLC	110 Richardson St	53	
Blair RC Tax Preparation	462 Savoy Rd	54	
Bleier Home Improvement	16 Eastview Dr	23	
Blessings	325 Wells Rd		
Blossoming Resistance	669 Sandmill Rd		
Bluebird Farm Sanctuary Wildlife Rehab	631 Outlook Ave		
Boombaks Entertainment	21 Daniels Terrace	71	
Brazeau Masonry	601 Savoy Rd	23	
Brian's Repair	918 South State Rd		
Brighter Paws	74 Devonshire Dr	81	
Brookside Bookkeeping	860 Sandmill Rd		
Brookside Farm	325 Savoy Rd	11	
Bryant Electric	336 Sandmill Rd	54	
Bucolic Woods	223 Lakeshore Dr		
Bull Moose Man Made Products	350 E Harbor Rd	99	
C & R Construction	33 Arnold Court		
C M E Trucking	138 Hutchinson Lane	48	
C. Walsh Builders, Inc.	1245 W Mountain Rd	23	www.cwalshbuilders.com
Cains Foods LLP	51 Mill Hill Rd	44	
Campbell Vacuum Brazing Solutions	310 Ingalls Rd		
Canine Connection	1613 South State Rd		

CDM Enterprise	293 North St		
Charlie Fix It	778 Lanesboro Rd		
Checked Flag Auto Sales	452 South State Rd	44	
Cheshire Auto Co	358 W Mountain Rd	44	
Cheshire Auto Co. (Larabee)	376 West Mountain Rd		
Cheshire Autobody	10 Main St	81	
Cheshire Building & Remodeling Co	88 Curran Rd		
Cheshire Cat Book	61 East Main St.	44	
Cheshire Cobbles LLC	585 Lanesboro Rd	99	
Cheshire Fire Department		92	www.cheshirefiredepartment.com
Cheshire GlassWorks	24 South St	44	
Cheshire Mahant Beverage Inc	104 South St	42	
Cheshire Militia	335 Outlook Ave	56	
Cheshire Police Dept	150 Meadowview Dr	92	www.cheshirect.org
Cheshire Pramukh Realty LLC	104 South St	53	
Cheshire Public Library Association	23 Depot St	51	cheshirepubliclibrary.wordpress.com
Cheshire Umc	197 Church St	81	www.cheshireumc.com
Cheshire Volunteer Fire Department	70 Meadowview Dr	92	www.cheshirefiredepartment.com
Cheshire Wood Products	254 Wells Rd	44	
Chic's Auto & Repair	6 Railroad St	44	

Chiellini Enterprises, Inc.	20 Mill Hill Rd	54	
Chris Lawson Drywall & Paint	478 W Mountain Rd	23	
Cobble View Home Improvement	108 Furnance Hill Road	23	
Cobbleview, LLC	391 S State Rd	44	
Collectible Heirloom Teddy Bears	91 Richmond St		
Collins PC Sales	500 N State Rd	44	
Community Consulting Service	45 Willow Lane		
Countryside Taxidermy	170 S State Rd	81	
Crafter's Cottage	180 Willow Cove Rd	45	
Crossfire Endeavors, LLC	135 Dean St	99	
Cruise One	197 Lakeshore Dr		
Custom Landmark Builders	42 Fisher Hill		
Cycle X-Press	329 S State Rd	44	www.cyclex-press.com
Czar Enterprises LLC	1339 S State Rd	99	
D & S Home Improvements	585 Lanesboro Rd	23	
D.Icardi Concrete Contractors	Pine Valley Park		
Daniel Lee Speth	88 Hutchinson Ln	48	
Daniels Excavation D S	295 Richmond HI	23	
DC Farms Hide Protein LLC	8 Depot St	11	
Dee's Lots of Stuff	147 Dean St		

Delmolino & Sons Inc	275 North St	56	www.delmolinoandsons.com
Delmolino Painting	112 Main St	23	
Dery Funeral Home	121 North St	81	
Diane's Twist	13 Main St	72	
DLS Trucking	88 Hutchinson Ln		
Dlt Properties, LLC	64 Dean St	53	
Dmg2, LLC	384 Ingalls Rd	99	
Dog Training with Julie	1613 South State Rd		
Dolgencorp, LLC / Dollar General	236 North St	45	www.dollargeneral.com
Dr. Frederic Mach, Vetrinarian	1897 South State Rd	54	
Dunkin' Donuts	173 North St	44	www.dunkindonuts.com
Dupee Appraisals	58 Dublin Rd	53	
E and K Maintenance and Lawncare	688 North State Rd		
Edwin Clairmont	1181 Savoy Rd	53	
Elias Casal Painting	19 Yorkshire Dr	23	
Elmartin Farm	594 Windsor Rd	11	
Elves Farm	659 Savoy Rd	11	
Emergency Nursing Association		81	
Emily Eats and Explores LLC	28 Furnace Hill Rd	99	www.emilyeatsandexplores.com
Epod Transportation	53 Wells Rd	48	
Equipment Sales & Service	1251 Windsor Rd		

etangents	1285 Savoy Rd		
Fancy Paws Pet Shop	59 Furnace Hill Road	44	
Farm Myc, LLC	828 Wells Rd	11	
Farnams Goodlife Corp	84 Quarry Rd # L	56	
Filkins	485 South State Rd		
First Baptist Church	32 North St	81	
Flipping To Feed Our Family, LLC	6 Arnold Ct	56	
Four Seasons Landscaping	54 Lakeshore Dr		
Frank K Piekos	95 Windsor Rd	44	
Fran's Installations	1031 Sandmill Rd		
Fred S Balawender	924 Notch Rd	11	
Frederick Properties	441 Savoy Rd	53	
Future Homes Co.	155 Lanesboro Rd		
G & C Consulting	110 Stafford Hill		
Gale Floor Covering	28 Eastview Dr	44	www.galefloorcovering.com
Garner Builders	184 W Mountain Rd	23	
Gaylord Construction	83 Richardson St		
Geary Building & Remodeling	165 Eastview Dr	23	www.ecmelectronics.com
George Baumann	106 Curran Rd	56	www.georgebaumanntrucking.com
Get Out Mindgames	20 Pleasant View Dr	99	
Gigliotti Electric, Inc.	52 Hutchinson Ln	23	www.gigliottielectricma.com
Global Montello Group Corp	173 North St		

Goebel Ventures LLC	408 Lanesboro Rd	99	
Grady & Jennings Concrete Inc	384 Ingalls Rd	23	www.gradyandjennings.com
Graham Engineering	145 Outlook Ave	54	
Grapevine Embroidery & Design	69 Wells Rd		
Greater Berkshire Board of Baseball Officials	76 Outlook Ave	71	
Green Acres Package & Variety	1613 S State Rd	42	www.greenacresdeli.com
Greylock Compliance Services	64 North St		
Greylock Custom Metal Roofing	870 Stafford hill		
Greylock Physical Therapy, Inc.	800 Notch Rd	62	www.greylockpt.com
Greylock Pro LLC	58 Greylock Rd	99	
Ground Effects	36 Nobodys Rd	56	
Ground Xero Paintball	278 East Harbor Rd	71	
Gulf Farms	1181 Savoy Rd	11	
H D Reynolds General Merchandise Inc	52 Church St	44	www.reynoldslawnmower.com
Hand, Heart & Health	44 Richmond St		
Harbour House Inn B & B	725 North State Rd		
Hard House Nutrition LLC	44 Briggs Dr	99	www.hardhousenutrition.com
Harris & Son Excavation Inc	898 S State Rd	23	www.mrrooter.com
Harris Floor Coverings	1617 South State Rd	44	

Harry's Auto Sales Inc	239 North St	44	www.harrysautosales.com
Healthy Image	106 Curran Rd	54	www.healthyimagema.com
Helga McConnell Reflexology	114 Devonshire Dr	62	
Hemlock Hideaway	836 Outlook Ave		
Housedoc 2000	22 4th Ave		
Inform, LLC	135 Stafford Hill Rd	99	
Insights In Automation	44 Briggs Dr		
Instrumental Affairs	19 Fisk St		
Integrity Medical Staffing LLC	53 Depot St	62	www.integritymedicalstaffing.com
J & D Trucking	674 Notch Rd	48	
J Crew Properties, LLC	43 Yorkshire Dr	53	
J Landscaping Co	89 Depot St		
J Richardson Contracting LLC	135 Stafford Hill Rd	23	
J. Edward Dery, Inc. (Funeral Homes)	North State Rd		
J. W. Enterprises	200 Fales Rd		
J.C.B. Bait	105 Depot St		
J.Smith Wood Floor Co.	645 Ingalls Rd		
Jajko & Sons	920 Wells Rd		
Jake Ryan Properties, LLC	800 Notch Rd	53	
James Jarvis II - Electrician LLC	108 Furnace Hill Rd	22	
James Rose Inc	813 Outlook Ave	56	

Jamie Zdon Income Tax Preparation	53 Wells Rd	54	
Jarden Home Brands	184 Lanesboro Rd	99	
Jay Krishna Corp	1613 S State Rd	81	
Jay's Modern Bends	912 South State Rd		
Jeffrey P Sweet	1139 W Mountain Rd	54	
Jenifer Smithers Massage Therapy	105 Quarry Rd	62	
Jennifer Gadbois	102 Main St	99	www.pilatesofcheshire.com
Jeremiah R Wojcik	89 Depot St	56	
JMZ Property Maintenance	504 Lanesboro Rd	56	
Joanie's Twin Twist	98 Meadowview Dr		
John M Burdon	190 Outlook Ave	56	
JP Parent Company LLC	53 Wells Rd	81	
Keep It Clean	31 2nd Ave		
Kelly Damms Photography	126 Ingalls Rd	54	
Klammer Plumbing & Heating	374 Savoy Rd	23	
Kolin E Lic	100 Horns Beach Rd	48	
Krzeminski, Del	440 Sand Mill Rd	56	
Laiken's Home Staging & Inter. Design	22 Wilshire Dr	56	
Lambert Brick Work	940 West Mountain Rd		
Lampiasi's Repair Service	41 Curran Rd		

Laperle Plumbing & Heating	611 Notch Rd	23	
Larabee Landscaping & Lawncare	47 Dublin Rd	56	
Lasting Memoires	443 Windsor Rd		
Lawn Wrangler LLC	121 Richardson St	56	
Lewis Service Center	239 North St	81	www.harrysautobodyinc.com
Lightwing Institute In Berkshires		81	
Lm Lahey Contracting	1361 Windsor Rd	23	
Lm Property Management LLC	1021 Sand Mill Rd	56	
Lord Trucking	560 Stafford Hill Rd	48	
Lorraine Faucher	570 Wells Rd	99	
Lovallo Metalspinning	915 N State Rd	33	
Lrb Auto, Inc.	393 S State Rd	81	www.lrb.co.uk
M & C Distributors LLC	965 Outlook Ave	42	
M Kevin Kordana	18 Stonehedge Rd	23	
Maloney's Flooring	581 Stafford Hill Rd	44	
Mason Hill Holdings LLC	195 W Mountain Rd	23	
Massachusetts Department of State Police	1141 N State Rd	92	
Massage for Life	678 Lanesboro Rd		
MasterMix Sound Entertainment	15 Fisher Hill Rd	71	
Mattco Tent Rental	395 East Harbor Rd	53	

Max Engineering & Design	98 Meadowview Dr	54	
Mc Excavating	329 Stewart White Rd	23	
Meadowview Lawncare	38 Meadowview Dr		
Medtrans Digital	184 W Mountain Rd	56	
Melchiori Technologies	34 Wells Park	54	www.melchioritechnologies.com
Michael Lemanski	951 W Mountain Rd	23	
Michael Urquhart	61 North St	99	
Missy's Home Day Care	68 Meadowview Dr		
Mjs Productions	96 Fisher Hill Rd	51	
ML Builders, LLC	85 Fisher Hill Rd	23	
Modern Bends Muffler Auto	912 Route 8	81	
Mountain View Estates	66 Briggs Dr		
MOUNTAINTOP WRAPS	8 5th Ave	72	
MT Cleaning Services	114 Devonshire Rd	56	
MVP Promotions	53 Wells Rd		
N & H, LLC	384 Ingalls Rd	99	
Nickum Telecom Services	951 N State Rd	56	www.sanantoniocenter.com
Northeast-3d LLC	286 Lanesboro Rd	99	www.northeast-3d.com
Novak Remodeling	99 Meadowview Dr		
Nsg Engineering, Inc.	266 North St	54	
Oak Cleaners Inc	222 Brough Rd	56	
O'Connell Convenience Plus	173 North St	44	

O'Connell Oil Associates, Inc.	173 North St	45	www.oconnelloil.com
Old Creek Farm	91 Sandmill Rd		
Old English Excavation LLC	506 Richmond HI	99	
Old New England Property Maintenance	93 North St		
One Spirit Haven Holistic Healing Center	805 Lanesboro Rd		
Outlook Builders	836 Outlook Ave		
Party Haus Videos LLC	113 Church St	99	
Passion Parties By Stephanie	601 Savoy Rd	45	
Past Perfect Antiques	273 Harbor Rd	44	
Patrick Klammer	560 Stafford Hill Rd	23	
Paul Cantarella	42 Yorkshire Dr	56	
Paul Joppich	490 Wells Rd	56	
Paul Martino	58 Mallard Cv	56	
Peace of Mind Prop. Management	85 Fisher Hill Rd	56	
Perini Environmental Tech		99	
Personal Healing	90 Yorkshire Dr		
Peter B. Franz P.E.	16 Depot St		
Pete's Vintage Automotive	580 Fred Mason Rd	81	www.jdmuscleusa.com
Photo Baks Photography	21 Daniels Terrace	54	
Pierpont Plan LLC Stacie's Cookie World	132 Curran Rd	99	

Pilates of Cheshire	100 Main St	71	
Pine Grove Farm	1031 Sandmill Rd	11	
Pine Valley Mobile Home Park	Dublin Rd		
Pnh Realty LLC	1245 W Mountain Rd	53	
Positive Outlook Childcare	124 Outlook Ave	62	
Powder Chef Coatings & Customs LLC	231 Lake Shore Dr	99	
Pravia d/b/a Pravia Express	Wells Rd		
Premier Excavation, LLC	504 Lanesboro Rd	99	
Prime Realty	67 Maple Dr		
Prime Tools	880 W Mountain Rd	44	www.primetools.com
Proper Home Improvement	93 Furnace Hill Rd	81	
Quality Home Improvement	136 South St	23	
Quality Lawncare & Landscaping	777 Sandmill Rd		
Quinn's Legacy Foundation Inc	66 Dean St	81	
Quirk's Menagerie, LLC	147 E Harbor Rd	99	
R & R Property 1, LLC	1021 Sand Mill Rd	53	
R & R Property 3, LLC	1021 Sand Mill Rd	53	
R. Condron Const.	71 Daniels Terrace		
Rail Trail Trends	193 Railroad St		
Rainbow's End	32 South St		

Randy's Lawn Care LLC	33 Shadowland Cove Rd	56	
Reflections Cleaning Service	8 2nd Ave		
Regal Lawn Care & Snowplowing Ser.	Pine Valley Park		
Regalis Farms LLC	195 W Mountain Rd	11	www.regalisfoods.com
Republic Services, Inc.	485 South State Rd	56	www.republicservices.com
Reynolds Properties LLC	52 Church St	53	
Rolf Hansen Studio	708 Lanesboro Rd	54	www.rolfhansen.com
Rolling Acres	743 North State Rd		
Ronald S Duda	58 Fales Rd	56	
Roto-Rooter	896 South State Rd		
Roviaro Excavation	76 Fisher Hill Rd		
Royal Property Group LLC	680 Stafford Hill Rd	53	www.royalpropertygroup.com
Ryan & Noey	58 Greylock Rd		
S & L Provos Inc	500 Stafford Hill Rd	72	
S&R Berkshire Realty Group LLC	115 Lake Shore Dr	53	www.berkshirekeyrealty.com
S. Zarek & Company	115 Church St		
Safe Haven Wildlife Rehabilitation Inc.	630 Outlook Ave	62	www.safehavenwildlife.com
Safety Floor and Tub Solutions of Massachusetts LLC	193 S State Rd	44	
Saldo Auto Salvage	36-40 Nobody's Rd		
Scholz Consulting	790 Stafford Hill Rd	54	www.scholzcp.com

Sell It Now	1615 South State Rd		
Shawn Tierney	44 Briggs Dr	56	
Sheds and Stuff Inc	211 S State Rd	44	www.berkshiresheds.com
Shree Hari Ji Corp	106 South St	48	
Shree Lalgi Krupa Corporation	104 South St	56	
Simple Blessings	65 Church St		
Skull Automotive	534 Savoy Rd		
Small Building Movers, Inc.	211 S State Rd	48	
Specialty Wood Products	920 Wells Rd		
St. Eithne Rd. LLC	987 West Mountain Rd	99	
Stafford Green, Inc	80 Stafford Hill Rd	99	www.staffordgreeninc.com
Stafford Hill Wildlife Control	1454 Windsor Rd		
Stafford Ventures	790 Stafford Hill Rd		
Starbird	659 Savoy Rd		
Sunnyside Auto Repair	971 North State Rd		
Superior Spring & Mfg. Co., Incorporated	Rt 8	42	www.superiorspring.net
Superior Spring & Mfg. Inc.	11 Ingalls Rd		
T & M Leasing	408 Lanesboro Rd		
Technical Talk	273 Railroad St	54	www.technicaltalk.com
Tender Lawn Care	88 Wilshire Dr		
The Boat Doctor	1427 North State Rd		

The Cheshire Cat	527 North State Rd		
The Cheshire Salon	118 Church St	81	
The Clarity Ops LLC	680 Stafford Hill Rd	54	www.theclarityops.com
The Cutting Edge	Pine Valley Park		
The Farm in East Cheshire	500 Fales Rd	11	
The Linden Street Laundramat	33 Shadowland Cove Rd	81	
The Pampered Palette	24 Dean St	72	
The Third Act Project	70 Crusher Rd		
The Wedding Party Bridal Consultants	140 Fred Mason Rd		
Theodore Jayko	1053 Wells Rd	11	
Tiwari Properties, LLC	127 South St Unit 112A	53	
Tjh Property Solutions LLC	33 Fisk St	53	
Tom Ayotte Construction	247 East Harbor Rd	23	
Town of Cheshire	80 Church St	92	www.cheshire-ma.gov
Town of Cheshire	951 W Mountain Rd	92	www.cheshirect.org
Town of Cheshire	90 Church St	92	www.cheshire-ma.gov
Traditional Acupuncture	805 Lanesboro Rd		
Trance Works Hypnosis	805 Lanesboro Rd		
Trout One Charters	310 Sandmill Rd	71	
Trudeau Enterprises	595 Outlook Ave		
U Haul Neighborhood Dealer	720 Chesire Rd	53	www.uhaul.com

Uncle Pete's Dairy Bar	1775 South State Rd	72	
United Rooter	1617 S State Rd	81	
United States Postal Service	214 Church St	49	www.usps.com
United Uniforms	1617 South State Rd		
Van Berkshire Company Inc	1191 W Mountain Rd	99	
Vargas Income Tax	153 Main St	54	
Vera Socha	1500 Wells Rd	56	
Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary Department of Massachusetts Inc	250 Stewart White Rd	81	
Vincent Brazeau Jr	601 Savoy Rd	56	
Vincent Brosseau	586 Stafford Hill Rd	23	
W.T. White Building Contractors	55 Wilshire Dr		
Waterman Excavating, Inc.	97 Main St	23	
Wendy Elaine Warner P.T.A.	231 W Mountain Rd	81	
Western Mass Construction LLC	99 Meadowview Dr	23	www.westernmassconstruction.com
White & Son Landscaping& Prop.Mgt.	22 2nd Ave	56	
Whitney's Farm Inc. DBA H D Reynolds	36 Nobody's Rd		
Whitney's Farm Market, LLC	1775 S State Rd	45	www.whitneysfarm.com
Whitney's Farm Market, LLC	221 Ingalls Rd	11	www.whitneysfarm.com

Whitney's Farm, Inc.	221 Ingalls Rd	11	
Whitney's Land Rental, LLC	221 Ingalls Rd	53	
Williamstown Realty, LLC	71 Briggs Dr	53	www.harschrealestate.com
Winter Brook Farm Antiques	450 North State Rd	45	
Wonderfully Made Masterpieces	68 North St		
Wood Electric Co	1007 N State Rd	23	
Woodrow Witter	33 Richardson St	52	
Young Propertys		53	
Your Hometown Real Estate Team	504 Lanesboro Rd	53	
Zepka Apiary & Farm	150 Furnace Hill	11	

Appendix E

Potential Actions and Project Opportunities

The potential actions listed below are chosen in part because they are relatively low-cost and modest effort undertakings that could benefit from the availability of dedicated volunteers within the Cheshire community.

Public Art and/or Façade Improvement Investments



Modest improvements to public spaces, or private realm exteriors visible to the public, can make a substantial impact on the overall visual impression of commercial districts. During the assessment of existing public and private commercial conditions for this Phase 1 economic development study, several examples of weather-worn or otherwise distressed exteriors were observed.

FUNDING INFO -

Best Food Forward Façade Improvement Program: Through specific funding set aside for this purpose from the Mass Office of Business Development (MOBD), 1Berkshire has conducted a micro-grant program during 2022 and 2023 to assist Berkshire County small businesses with façade improvements such as power washing, painting, window washing or repair, awning repair or replacement, signage, and seasonal plantings. Applications are simple and straightforward, and awarded on a first-come, first-served basis.

[Mass Cultural Council Festivals and Projects Program](#): supports efforts that celebrate a vibrant cultural landscape. These \$2,500 grants to organizations fund public activities that incorporate the arts, humanities, or sciences. Funded projects do not need to include in-person programming.

[Community Preservation Act \(CPA\)](#): If Cheshire adopts this funding method in the future, The town could choose to use funds for open space improvements.

Amenity and Wayfinding Improvements



As with façade improvements, the addition or upgrade of amenities such as seating, lighting, seasonal plantings, and especially wayfinding signage can have a transformative effect. Relatively low-cost investments such as park benches or bike racks signal a welcoming environment, while improved lighting increases safety and communicates vibrancy. Cheshire's admirable seasonal plantings near the current Town Hall, Library, and Police Station may be expanded into other commercial areas a sense of pride and positivity. Specific target areas for improved signage, including wayfinding to key features such as the Cheese Press monument, include the approach to Church Street from the north or south on Route 8, or the borders on Route 8 between Cheshire and Lanesborough or Adams, as well as the informational kiosk near the intersection of Route 8 and the Ashuwillticook.

FUNDING INFO -

[Community One Stop for Growth](#): The Community One Stop for Growth is a single application portal and collaborative review process of community development grant programs that make targeted investments based on a Development Continuum. Since its inception, the “One Stop” has expanded each year to include additional Commonwealth grant programs. Some potential leads for this category include the Rural and Small Town Development Fund and the Commonwealth Places Program, as well as the [Mass Downtown Initiative](#) for design of wayfinding and/or public space improvements.

Reuse or Temporary Use of Vacant Spaces and Storefronts



In addition to the Underutilized and High Potential locations discussed above, there are several commercial spaces that could contribute to the revitalization of the downtown and other surrounding commercial areas of Cheshire.

FUNDING INFO -

[Community Compact Best Practices Program](#): Under Economic Development Best Practices, the following is listed: Identify and establish Priority Development Sites through community planning and site assembly efforts that engage diverse stakeholders and include necessary zoning changes and/or local permitting process enhancements that proactively address obstacles to housing/job creation. Note: this program has been carried forward by the Healey-Driscoll Administration, with changes in the list of Best Practices.

[Massachusetts Vacant Storefront Program \(MVSP\)](#): The purpose of the program is to help municipalities of the Commonwealth in their efforts to revitalize their downtowns and commercial areas. Municipalities may apply to the Economic Assistance Coordinating Council (EACC) for certification to designate a defined downtown or other commercial area as a Certified Vacant Storefront District. After achieving such a designation and achieving a commitment of local matching funds, businesses or individuals may apply to the EACC for refundable EDIP tax credits for leasing and occupying a vacant storefront in that district. This subsequent application is to become a Certified Vacant Storefronts Project.

Creation of an Online Guide for Doing Business In Cheshire

Business owners interested in relocating to or expanding within Cheshire would benefit from a comprehensive guide to the appropriate steps to ensure their business is meeting the guidelines and taking full advantage of the services offered to the business community by the local government. Permitting and other requirements often differ between municipalities and clear instructions in writing can help to avoid issues of non-compliance and encourage cooperation.

FUNDING INFO -

Cheshire may consider making a request to the District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) program managed by Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (contingent upon annual state funding.)

[Community Compact Best Practices Program](#): Under Economic Development Best Practices, the following is listed: Create and Distribute a Business Guide to not only promote development goals and priorities, but also clearly outline the community’s policies and procedures related to zoning and permitting. Note: this program has been carried forward by the Healey-Driscoll Administration, with changes in the list of Best Practices.

Engaging the Business Community with Networking and Technical Support



While the establishment of a local Chamber of Commerce or formal business association would be time-consuming and costly, some smaller communities in Berkshire County have found success in providing a few “typical” chamber-like services through an Economic Development Committee or similar arrangement. This group, or future partnerships within Cheshire, may consider taking a more active role in connecting members of the Cheshire business community with technical assistance services, and with the adoption of the Commonwealth’s PACE program or other initiatives.

FUNDING INFO -

[Community Compact Best Practices Program](#): Under Economic Development, the following is listed: Create a District Management Entity, such as a Business Improvement District, that engages public/private stakeholders to develop and support downtown revitalization efforts. Note: this program has been carried forward by the Healey-Driscoll Administration, with changes in the list of Best Practices.

Ongoing implementation of these efforts may require a combination of municipal investment, combined with efforts of the Cheshire Community Association and/or involvement from the [Shared Economic Development Planning \(SEDP\)](#) program at BRPC, which can assist with the implementation of the PACE program, and connect the business community with a wide array of technical assistance providers.

Increased/Improved Outdoor Gathering Space



Cheshire benefits from being at the crossroads of the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail and the Appalachian Trail and is a designated Appalachian Trail Community. The Father Tom Campsite exemplifies the community’s ability to rally around a project that will augment these experiences and celebrate the unique siting of Cheshire. The community should consider ways to leverage both the AT Community designation and its unique history as the Home of the Mammoth Cheshire Cheese. The kiosk at Town Beach is one example of a low-cost mechanism for marketing.

FUNDING INFO -

[Massachusetts PARC Program](#): The Commonwealth has a program to assist municipalities in the development of new parks and renovation of existing parks. It is administered through the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA).

[Community Preservation Act \(CPA\)](#): If Cheshire adopts this funding method in the future, The town could choose to use funds for open space improvements.

Phase 2 Economic Development Planning/Implementation



Using the contents and findings of this Phase 1 Economic Development Report, the Town of Cheshire and/or the Cheshire Community Association may pursue more detailed information or select elements to explore from the list of Potential Actions and Project Opportunities. This may also be done in conjunction with an Economic Development Task Force appointed by the Town and provides an opportunity for extensive community participation.

FUNDING INFO –

[Community One Stop for Growth](#): The Community One Stop for Growth is a single application portal and collaborative review process of state grant programs that make targeted investments based on a Development Continuum. Since its inception, the “One Stop” has expanded each year to include additional Commonwealth grant programs. Potential leads include the Community Planning Grant Program.

[Community Compact Best Practices Program](#): Under Economic Development Best Practices, the following is listed: Create an Economic Development Plan that engages diverse stakeholders, leverages local and regional economic strengths and assets, encourages innovation and entrepreneurship, and/or promotes workforce development planning and implementation. Note: this program has been carried forward by the Healey-Driscoll Administration, with changes in the list of Best Practices.

[BRPC Shared Economic Development Planning program](#): Several communities within Berkshire County engage the BRPC Economic Development Program to access planning and implementation coordination on an annual basis. These arrangements take the form of staff support for between 2 and 7 hours per week, depending on the needs and budget of the communities.

As Phase 1 work was successfully funded through a state earmark request, Cheshire may consider future earmarks and private foundation funding as ways to support additional economic development planning.

Establishment of a MCC-designated Cultural District



Cultural Districts in Massachusetts are designated by the Mass Cultural Council, and designation includes an annual grant award to the municipality hosting the District (as MA budget allows) Cultural Districts draw attention to creative activity, including but not limited to, festivals, special events, galleries, museums and theaters, and individual artists within a community. Some choose to produce original programming, but many simply serve as a promotional partner for existing programming. There are five designated districts in Berkshire County: Williamstown, North Adams, Pittsfield, Lenox, and Great Barrington, with Adams pursuing designation.

FUNDING INFO –

District designation has become less arduous in recent years, but the process can still take a year or more including the time constraints of MCC staff. BRPC has staffed designation efforts in both Great Barrington and Lenox and could provide similar support through a fee-for-service or its [Shared Economic Development Planning program](#). Once designated, MCC grants have recently been at the \$15,000/year level to all Districts throughout the commonwealth.