



Town of Shelburne, Vermont

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Town Manager Report: December 2025



From the desk of Matt Lawless

Celebrating a year of progress

The Town of Shelburne marked some notable achievements and transitions in 2024. We celebrated completion of parks improvements and began building new stormwater assets to care for our environment. We dedicated 94 new homes at Margarets Way and said yes to hundreds of potential homes off Irish Hill. Within our team, we welcomed new staff at every level, and we mourned our Police Chief Michael Thomas. Our finances got stronger and more organized, passing a bond vote and catching up on audits. Public works and first responders kept us safe and healthy. And we chartered a new team for community & economic development, to grow a more vibrant future.



Winter Lights

From carols and a tree lighting, to a visit from Santa on a cold night, to decorations and shopping at local businesses, Shelburne enjoyed a beautiful holiday season. I hope everyone found comfort and joy, whether hosting here in town or travelling away to loved ones.



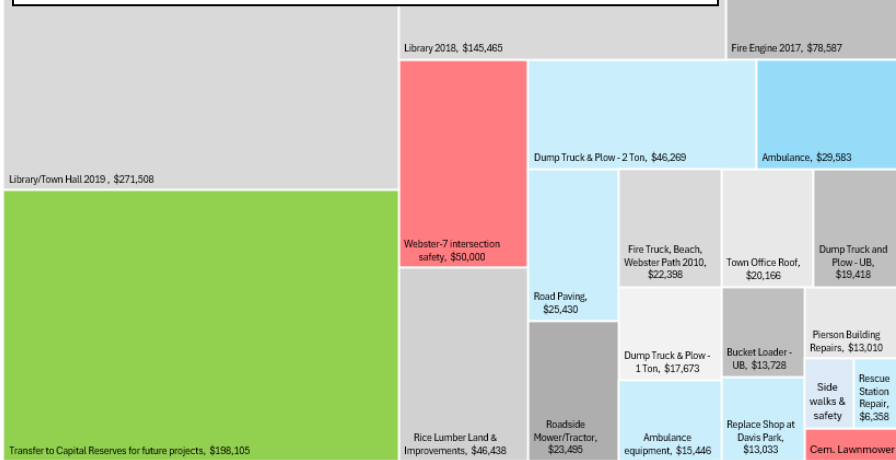
Looking ahead to 2026

In the new year, the Town will bring new improvements to our public services. We'll break ground on the wastewater facilities. We'll plan for repair and restoration of our historic buildings, as the old school, now the town offices, turns 100 years old. New zoning will stimulate new businesses and home building. Our favorite traditions will endure, from farmers market to concerts and the beach. Shelburne's community spirit, and our staff's commitment to service, continues.

Notable Upcoming Public Meetings & Events

- January 4:** finale for Museum Winter Lights
- January 13:** Selectboard budget public hearing
- January 19:** Offices closed for MLK Day
- January 27:** final public hearing on zoning
- January 31:** Winter Carnival

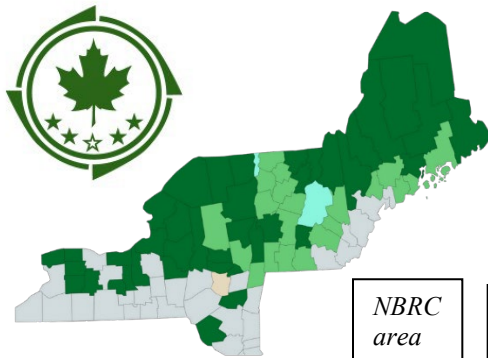
How does Shelburne use the new Local Option Tax?
 This chart shows the use of next year's sales tax. Gray boxes are existing debt payment for past projects. Blue are payments for newly bonded projects on the Town Meeting ballot this year. Red boxes show payments in full for projects too small to issue bonds. Green are savings for future needs.



What's new around town

Budget finishing touches

In recent weeks, the annual budget process has come together. The proposal holds tax increases low and sustains essential services. As shown at right, the Town uses the local option sales tax for capital investments. It pays for debt service on older projects such as the library, and new debt like an ambulance. The Town is also building up reserves for larger projects in the future, like repairs to our historic buildings.



NBRC area



UVM student presentation



Gates Foundation photo

\$1 million grant win

In December, the Town got good news about a major grant award. The [Northern Border Region Commission](#) is a federal agency supporting the economies of VT and parts of NH, ME, NY. They awarded Shelburne \$1 million to support construction of the new wastewater plant, specifically the UV light system used to purify water without chemicals. This grant reduces pressure on sewer bills and helps keep Lake Champlain clean. It was the only award given in Chittenden County this year. Congrats to our wastewater and financial staff! Construction will begin in 2026, a milestone in the new year.

Farmers Market solid

In December the Selectboard also approved a healthy transition for the community's farmers market. The Shelburne Business & Professional Association hosted the market for years but was ready to shift it from pilot project to permanent community asset. The Town worked with UVM graduate students to study some policy options. The best path is a transition of Town management, then organizing the market within the Experience Shelburne effort of community and economic development. Sarah Stillman continues as an outstanding market manager, and the daily look of the market will be similar.

Growing Together

Another successful grant funds a new community partnership. We won \$300,000 from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; they have a program for [Economic Mobility & Opportunity](#). Shelburne is working with three neighbors (Winooski, Essex Junction, S. Burlington) to share a new staff expert on this topic. In the new year, look for increased efforts in job training and other topics to help our local economy better meet the needs of people in poverty and increase their opportunities to achieve economic success.