TOWN OF CHESHIRE

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PHONE (413) 743-1690 | FAX (413) 743-0389

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OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes – September 5, 2023

Pursuant to a notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, a meeting of the Board of Selectmen was held in person at 191 Church Street (Cheshire Community House) on Tuesday September 5, 2023, at 6:30 PM

Board of Selectmen Members Present: Shawn McGrath, Chair
Jason Levesque, Vice-Chair
Ray Killeen, Member
Ron DeAngelis, Member
Michelle Francesconi, Member

Others Present: Jennifer Morse, Town Administrator; Corey McGrath, Facilities Manager; Lynn Melchiori; Peter Traub; Liseann Karandisecky; Daniel Hajdas; Bill Nylic Jr; Kenneth Bleil; Colin Lic; Roger Goodreau Nancy Macland; Aaron Singer; Brian Lancia; Bob Tetlow; Michael Alibozek, Police Chief; Betty Simken.

Summary of Votes:

- Vote to approve the Consent Agenda 5-0
- Vote to approve the Police Seargeant Job Description 5-0
- Vote to revise the Personnel Policies to include Holiday Overtime for Police Department and Highway Department 5-0
- Vote to adjourn the regular meeting and enter executive session 5-0

S. McGrath opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Community House Update

Board members and members of the audience toured the Town Office spaces. The floors have been stripped and waxed throughout, carpets have been done in the Finance and Assessors Office; painting has been done in the Finance Office and Boards/Committee room. Northeast IT is coming on Friday to work on the network and server move, waiting on Spectrum regarding the fiber line that runs into the building. The move date is prior to October 1st for all the offices except for the Town Clerk, which will take longer due to the state election computer.

Consent Agenda

- Minutes of August 22, 2023
- Warrants PR24-05; AP24-06
- Special Event Permit Application – 2nd Annual Bill Lewis Bass Fishing Derby

A motion was made by J. Levesque and seconded by R. DeAngelis to approve the Consent Agenda with edits.

Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes; R. Killeen – Yes; J. Levesque – Yes; M. Francesconi – Yes; S. McGrath- Yes
Motion Carries: 5-0

Discussion/Decision Items

- Facilities Maintenance Position - The Town Administrator shared that one application has been received and she would like to move forward with the interview process. Members of Killeen and DeAngelis will participate along with the DPW Director.
- Shared Street/Spaces Grant Application - The Shared Street/Spaces Grant is opening shortly; the recommended project is replacement of the sidewalk on East Main Street. M. Francesconi suggested that the crosswalk at the intersection of Main Street and E. Main Street be reviewed, she echoed Mark Biagini concern from the prior meeting regarding the intersection. Other members did not find issue with the line of site at that intersection.

Town Administrator Updates

- A sample road sign was presented with a white background and black lettering, all road signs will be transitioned starting with the roads in the Hutchinson area as those signs are not legible.
- Two Community Compact grants were approved, and award notices were received this afternoon. The first one is a $30,000 award to complete a Capital Plan, the second is for $13,000 to complete a Wage/Salary Compensation Study and Plan. Both projects will be in conjunction with the UMASS Collins Center, once the scope of work for the projects is complete, they will be forwarded to the board.
- The Town Administrator shared that a letter to Chapter 61A property owners was in the packet for information purposes from the Board of Assessors
- The Town Administrator shared an update from the MBI Digital Equity Plan grant, a listening session, community outreach and a deliverable report are all end results of the project, with the ability for additional MBI grant funds for future projects.

Announcements from Board Members

Ray Killeen shared that he has been working with the BRTA regarding promoting the new bus stop on Railroad Street and the impact it could have on Chapter 90 funding.

Public Comment

Liseann Karandisecky from the Hoosac Lake District Prudential Committee updated the board that the proposal for the Lake Management Plan is almost complete, and she would like share with the board once is it ready to be reviewed. She also noted that after the resignation of a Prudential Committee member, Gloria Lewis came forward to run for the third position and there may be another potential candidate.

Aaron Singer thanked the board for taking the stance and writing the letter regarding bill HD.4420. Daniel Hajdas also commented that there are many yard signs and appreciates the Town speaking up on an important topic. M. Francesconi stated that she is proud that the letter was signed by the board and the Police Chief. S. McGrath thanked the audience members for attending and showing support for the board's opposition to the proposed legislation.

Police Department Job Descriptions

The Part Time and Part Time Job Descriptions were revised to include the requirement of hours. The Sergeant job description was new and reflects the supervisory role of the officer.

A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded by M. Francesconi to approve the revisions to the job descriptions and approve the Sergeant Job Description.
Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes; J. Levesque- Yes; S. McGrath – Yes; R. Killeen – Yes; M. Francesconi- Yes

Motion Carries: 5-0

Personnel Policy Revision- Holiday Pay

The board reviewed the language within the personnel policies, adding the language from the Union Contract for Highway Department employees and includes language for Police Officers who work holidays.

A motion was made by M. Francesconi and seconded by S. McGrath to approve the revisions the Personnel Policies, Holiday Pay as discussed, clarifying that the Police Officers will be paid 1.5X.
Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes; J. Levesque- Yes; S. McGrath – Yes; R. Killeen – Yes; M. Francesconi- Yes
Motion Carries: 5-0

Public Comments

Betty Simken of 41 Railroad Street requested information regarding the project across from her house questioning why she was not contacted by letter. M. Francesconi explained the BRTA process for changing the bus routes including the public hearings, the project is a new bus terminal on state land, a section of fence has been removed as approved by DCR and the pad for the terminal will be put into place soon. Mrs. Simken expressed her concern about the speed of the buses and the location of the stop.

Executive Session – MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21A, Reason 6 - Youth Center Lease

A motion was made at 7:05 p.m. by S. McGrath and seconded by J. Levesque to enter executive session to consider the exchange, lease, or value of real property if the chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body. The Board will not re-enter into regular session at the conclusion of the meeting.
Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes; J. Levesque- Yes; S. McGrath – Yes; R. Killeen – Yes; M. Francesconi- Yes
Motion Carries: 5-0

Respectfully Submitted:
Jennifer Morse
Town Administrator
September 7, 2023

Document List

1. Agenda, September 5, 2023
2. Police Officer Job Descriptions
3. OT Personnel Policies for Police and Highway
4. Draft Minutes 8/22/23
5. Special Event Application – Bill Lewis Memorial Bass Fishing Derby
6. Highway Report
7. Chapter 61A Letter from Board of Assessors
8. MBI – Digital Equity Plan

Approved: 9/19/23

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OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Board of Selectmen

Meeting Agenda – September 5, 2023
6:30 PM

Cheshire Community House – Cafeteria
(former Cheshire Elementary School)

1. Open Regular Meeting Introductions and Pledge of Allegiance
2. Community House Update
3. Police Department Job Descriptions
4. Personnel Policy Revision regarding Police Holiday Pay
5. Consent Agenda
   a. Minutes of August 22, 2023
   b. Warrants PR24-05, AP24-06
   c. Special Event Permit Application – 2nd Annual Bill Lewis Bass Fishing Derby – October 1, 2023
6. Discussion/Decision Items
   a. Facilities Maintenance Position
   b. Shared Streets/Spaces Grant Application – East Main Street Sidewalk
7. Town Administrator Updates
8. Announcements from Board Members
9. Public Comment
10. Any other business not anticipated 48 hours prior to the meeting.
11. Executive Session - MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21A , Reason 6 Youth Center Inc. Lease
    To consider the purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real property if the chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body.

Submitted by: Jennifer Morse – Town Administrator Posted: 8/31/2023 @ 2:00 p.m.

POSTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF MGL 30A §§18-25.

Officer Job Description
Part Time Patrolman

Reports To: Sergeant, Police Chief (in order)

This position may be responsible for the supervision of other employees and functions.

The Patrol Officer is under the general direction of the Chief of Police and subordinate to the Sergeant. An Officer in Charge (OIC) acts in place of a police supervisor when a higher-ranking supervisor is not available.

Position Description

The police officer is responsible for protecting life and property, enforcing laws, conducting investigations, apprehending suspects and preventing crime through police presence and the patrol function. Police officers respond to calls for service in one of three ways (code 1-3) and are afforded a great amount of discretion (arrest, summons, fine, warning) to properly manage the broad range of calls for service that are received. Summary of a police officer's responsibilities include maintaining public order, ensuring public safety, enforcing state and local laws, and preventing, detecting and investigating suspicious and criminal activities.

Hours of Work

The Part Time Position carries a required minimum of Twenty-Four (24hrs) scheduled hours per month.

The Chief of Police holds the right to waive this requirement. Failure to meet this requirement may result in disciplinary actions including termination.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

Attend relevant schools, seminars, training and meetings, maintain knowledge of procedures, laws and ordinances, understand the proper operation of department technology, state technology and software used in performance of duties. Fairly and impartially enforce the laws and ordinances of the state of Massachusetts and the town of Cheshire.

Respond to calls for service, patrol an assigned area during a specific shift; watch for stolen vehicles and wanted or missing persons, check doors and windows, examine premises of unoccupied buildings or residences in order to detect any suspicious conditions. Check automobiles parked in restricted areas and issue violations when necessary. Respond to motor vehicle accidents, direct traffic, give emergency first-aid treatment to injured persons and assist other agencies when necessary. Maintain order in crowds and attend parades, funerals or other public gatherings.

Conduct investigations and enforce town and state laws, give advice on laws, ordinances and general information to the public. Investigate suspicious conditions and citizen complaints, compile evidence, document evidence and properly secure crime scenes. Utilize officer discretion by making arrests or issuing citations, arrest persons who violate laws and ordinances and process arrestees per department policy. Maintain records and submit completed arrest reports. Transport prisoners to jail or court and oversee custody and care of prisoners when assigned to such duty. Appear in court as an arresting officer.

An employee assigned to this title shall perform a majority, but may not perform all, of the duties listed in this job description. Conversely, minor level duties performed on the job may not be listed. The duties listed above are intended only as illustrations of the various types of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related or a logical assignment to the position. All police officers must be able to successfully pass the police academy and must maintain the mandatory annual certification of firearms training, defensive tactics training, use of force training, de-escalation training, first aid/CPR training, and yearly in service training. Failure to pass these mandatory training programs shall be grounds for discipline up to and including immediate termination. In addition, all police officers must maintain state certification in good standing, pursuant to Chapter 253 of the Act of 2020 (codified in part in Chapter 6E of the Massachusetts General laws), throughout their employment. Pursuant to MGL c. 6E, §11, no law enforcement agency may employ a decertified officer in any capacity. Loss, revocation, or suspension of certification shall be grounds for discipline up to and including termination.

Required Qualifications, Skills and Abilities

- Be at least 21 years of age at the time of appointment.
- Be a United State citizen at time of appointment.
- Possess a valid Massachusetts Driver's License and valid Massachusetts Firearms License.
- Possess a high school diploma or general equivalency diploma (GED). Associates degree or higher is preferred.
- Satisfy all statutory requirements including but not limited to passing a physical fitness test and medical examination.

- Not have been convicted of a felony or a misdemeanor which resulted in confinement to any jail or house of correction as punishment.
- Understand, interpret, apply, enforce, and make decisions in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local policies, laws, and regulations.
- Interpret and explain Town policies and procedures.
- Think clearly and act quickly in a variety of situations.
- Judge situations and or people accurately.
- Effectively use and qualify with law enforcement tools and weapons including firearms, batons, defensive tactics, and other safety equipment.
- Operate specialized law enforcement equipment including specialized police vehicles, radios, video systems, and radars.
- Conduct a variety of criminal and special investigations.
- Gather, assemble, analyze, evaluate, and use facts and evidence.
- Interview victims, complainants, witnesses, and suspects.
- Analyze crime and service patterns to develop effective tactical responses.
- Accurately observe and remember names, faces, numbers, incidents, and places.
- Control violent people and affect arrests.
- Administer first aid.
- Prepare clear and concise reports and routine correspondence.
- Work irregular and on-call hours including weekends, evenings, and holidays.
- Meet and maintain required police officer employment standards.
- Meet and maintain the departmental firearms qualifications standards.
- Meet the physical requirements necessary to safely and effectively perform the assigned duties.
- Possess good oral and written communication skills and the ability to ascertain facts by personal contact, observation and the examination of records.
- Possess an understanding of the geographical and physical layout of the town.
- Possess an understanding of the authority granted to police, the consequences and repercussions associated with such authority and the knowledge that improper actions or decisions may cause substantial life changes, serious injury or death.
- Ability to plan, analyze and interpret police problems and criminal evidence.
- Ability to immediately use discriminatory judgment in emergency situations and make decisions based on professional training and experience.
- Ability to perform duties and follow oral and written instructions under stress. Ability to qualify and remain proficient in the use of firearms
- Ability to react quickly and calmly in emergency situations and determine the proper course of action.
- Ability to establish and maintain effective public relations and communication.
- Ability to effectively use critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Ability to abide by the rules, regulation and military like structure of the department.
- Ability to maintain an effective working relationship with other co-workers, supervisors, elected officials and the public.
- Ability to deal tactfully and diplomatically with all segments of society.

- Must maintain certification requirements through POST Commission.

Work Environment:

At times, the work environment can be physically demanding, highly stressful, fast paced and dangerous. Required work involves simple to difficult and highly varied tasks and irregularity is usual. Tasks can be performed under life and death situations and require alertness under duress and distracting conditions (ex: accidents, gunfire, threats). Work is performed with occasional directions and requires a high degree of initiative to carry out solutions. Officers must be alert and ready to react throughout their entire shift. Varied physical activities from restrain or subduing individuals; walking, running, bending, standing, or sitting for prolonged periods of time; occasionally stopping, bending, kneeling, crouching, reaching, and twisting; occasionally climbing and balancing; regularly pushing, pulling, lifting, and/or carrying light to moderate weights; frequently lifting and/or moving moderate to heavy weights; occasionally lifting and/or moving heavy weights, sitting in a car and driving for extended periods and rendering first aid are associated with normal duties of a police officer. Job requires more than normal physical dexterity and strength to complete tasks. Officers work in all weather conditions which do not exempt accomplishment of normal duties. Officers regularly work at crime scenes and accident scenes and may encounter suffering and the results of violence. Officers are often exposed to sounds and noise levels that are distracting and uncomfortable and work in conditions that frequently involve dust, dirt, heat, cold, noise, mechanical hazards and moving objects. Physical testing and examination are required prior to initial assumption of duties; maintenance of physical fitness standards is suggested.

Officer Job Description
Full Time Patrolman

Reports To: Sergeant, Police Chief (in order)

This position may be responsible for the supervision of other employees and functions.

The Patrol Officer is under the general direction of the Chief of Police and subordinate to the Sergeant. An Officer in Charge (OIC) acts in place of a police supervisor when a higher-ranking supervisor is not available.

Position Description

The police officer is responsible for protecting life and property, enforcing laws, conducting investigations, apprehending suspects and preventing crime through police presence and the patrol function. Police officers respond to calls for service in one of three ways (code 1-3) and are afforded a great amount of discretion (arrest, summons, fine, warning) to properly manage the broad range of calls for service that are received. Summary of a police officer's responsibilities include maintaining public order, ensuring public safety, enforcing state and local laws, and preventing, detecting and investigating suspicious and criminal activities.

Hours of Work

The Full Time Position carries a required minimum of eighty (80hrs) scheduled hours per pay period. The Chief of Police holds the right to waive this requirement. Failure to meet this requirement may result in disciplinary actions including termination.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

Attend relevant schools, seminars, training and meetings, maintain knowledge of procedures, laws and ordinances, understand the proper operation of department technology, state technology and software used in performance of duties. Fairly and impartially enforce the laws and ordinances of the state of Massachusetts and the town of Cheshire.

Respond to calls for service, patrol an assigned area during a specific shift; watch for stolen vehicles and wanted or missing persons, check doors and windows, examine premises of unoccupied buildings or residences in order to detect any suspicious conditions. Check automobiles parked in restricted areas and issue violations when

necessary. Respond to motor vehicle accidents, direct traffic, give emergency first-aid treatment to injured persons and assist other agencies when necessary. Maintain order in crowds and attend parades, funerals or other public gatherings.

Conduct investigations and enforce town and state laws, give advice on laws, ordinances and general information to the public. Investigate suspicious conditions and citizen complaints, compile evidence, document evidence and properly secure crime scenes. Utilize officer discretion by making arrests or issuing citations, arrest persons who violate laws and ordinances and process arrestees per department policy. Maintain records and submit completed arrest reports. Transport prisoners to jail or court and oversee custody and care of prisoners when assigned to such duty. Appear in court as an arresting officer.

An employee assigned to this title shall perform a majority, but may not perform all, of the duties listed in this job description. Conversely, minor level duties performed on the job may not be listed. The duties listed above are intended only as illustrations of the various types of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related or a logical assignment to the position. All police officers must be able to successfully pass the police academy and must maintain the mandatory annual certification of firearms training, defensive tactics training, use of force training, de-escalation training, first aid/CPR training, and yearly in service training. Failure to pass these mandatory training programs shall be grounds for discipline up to and including immediate termination. In addition, all police officers must maintain state certification in good standing, pursuant to Chapter 253 of the Act of 2020 (codified in part in Chapter 6E of the Massachusetts General laws), throughout their employment. Pursuant to MGL c. 6E, §11, no law enforcement agency may employ a decertified officer in any capacity. Loss, revocation, or suspension of certification shall be grounds for discipline up to and including termination.

Required Qualifications, Skills and Abilities

- Be at least 21 years of age at the time of appointment.
- Be a United State citizen at time of appointment.
- Possess a valid Massachusetts Driver's License and valid Massachusetts Firearms License.
- Possess a high school diploma or general equivalency diploma (GED). Associates degree or higher is preferred.
- Satisfy all statutory requirements including but not limited to passing a physical fitness test and medical examination.
- Not have been convicted of a felony or a misdemeanor which resulted in confinement to any jail or house of correction as punishment.
- Understand, interpret, apply, enforce, and make decisions in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local policies, laws, and regulations.
- Interpret and explain Town policies and procedures.

- Think clearly and act quickly in a variety of situations.
- Judge situations and or people accurately.
- Effectively use and qualify with law enforcement tools and weapons including firearms, batons, defensive tactics, and other safety equipment.
- Operate specialized law enforcement equipment including specialized police vehicles, radios, video systems, and radars.
- Conduct a variety of criminal and special investigations.
- Gather, assemble, analyze, evaluate, and use facts and evidence.
- Interview victims, complainants, witnesses, and suspects.
- Analyze crime and service patterns to develop effective tactical responses.
- Accurately observe and remember names, faces, numbers, incidents, and places.
- Control violent people and affect arrests.
- Administer first aid.
- Prepare clear and concise reports and routine correspondence.
- Work irregular and on-call hours including weekends, evenings, and holidays.
- Meet and maintain required police officer employment standards.
- Meet and maintain the departmental firearms qualifications standards.
- Meet the physical requirements necessary to safely and effectively perform the assigned duties.
- Possess good oral and written communication skills and the ability to ascertain facts by personal contact, observation and the examination of records.
- Possess an understanding of the geographical and physical layout of the town.
- Possess an understanding of the authority granted to police, the consequences and repercussions associated with such authority and the knowledge that improper actions or decisions may cause substantial life changes, serious injury or death.
- Ability to plan, analyze and interpret police problems and criminal evidence.
- Ability to immediately use discriminatory judgment in emergency situations and make decisions based on professional training and experience.
- Ability to perform duties and follow oral and written instructions under stress. Ability to qualify and remain proficient in the use of firearms
- Ability to react quickly and calmly in emergency situations and determine the proper course of action.
- Ability to establish and maintain effective public relations and communication.
- Ability to effectively use critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Ability to abide by the rules, regulation and military like structure of the department.
- Ability to maintain an effective working relationship with other co-workers, supervisors, elected officials and the public.
- Ability to deal tactfully and diplomatically with all segments of society.
- Must maintain certification requirements through POST Commission.

Work Environment:

At times, the work environment can be physically demanding, highly stressful, fast paced and dangerous. Required work involves simple to difficult and highly varied tasks and irregularity is usual. Tasks can be performed under life and death situations and require alertness under duress and distracting conditions (ex: accidents, gunfire, threats). Work is performed with occasional directions and requires a high degree of initiative to carry out solutions. Officers must be alert and ready to react throughout their entire shift. Varied physical activities from restrain or subduing individuals; walking, running, bending, standing, or sitting for prolonged periods of time; occasionally stopping, bending, kneeling, crouching, reaching, and twisting; occasionally climbing and balancing; regularly pushing, pulling, lifting, and/or carrying light to moderate weights; frequently lifting and/or moving moderate to heavy weights; occasionally lifting and/or moving heavy weights, sitting in a car and driving for extended periods and rendering first aid are associated with normal duties of a police officer. Job requires more than normal physical dexterity and strength to complete tasks. Officers work in all weather conditions which do not exempt accomplishment of normal duties. Officers regularly work at crime scenes and accident scenes and may encounter suffering and the results of violence. Officers are often exposed to sounds and noise levels that are distracting and uncomfortable and work in conditions that frequently involve dust, dirt, heat, cold, noise, mechanical hazards and moving objects. Physical testing and examination are required prior to initial assumption of duties; maintenance of physical fitness standards is suggested.

Officer Job Description
Police Sergeant

Reports To: Chief of Police

This position is responsible for the supervision of other employees and functions.

The Sergeant is under the general direction of the Chief of Police.

Position Description

The police sergeant is responsible for the performance of administrative duties, conducting performance evaluations, maintaining the standards of the department and enforcing agency policy and regulations. The sergeant is tasked with providing leadership to department staff through planning, organization, direction and control. The sergeant is responsible for the training and development of resources, resolving conflicts among department staff, assigning department staff tasks appropriate to their capabilities and the continuous evaluation of subordinates. In addition to these duties, a police sergeant is responsible for protecting life and property, enforcing laws, conducting investigations, apprehending suspects and preventing crime through police presence and the patrol function. Police sergeants respond to calls for service in one of three ways (code 1-3) and are afforded a great amount of discretion (arrest, summons, fine, warning) to properly manage the broad range of calls for service that are received. Summary of a police sergeant's responsibilities include administrative staff duties, training, enforcing department policies and regulations, maintaining public order, ensuring public safety, enforcing state and local laws, and preventing, detecting and investigating suspicious and criminal activities. state and local laws, and preventing, detecting and investigating suspicious and criminal activities.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

Plan, prioritize, assign, supervise, and review the work of sworn law enforcement staff involved in traffic and field patrol, investigations, crime prevention, community relations, and related services and activities; supervise non-sworn staff in dispatch and records.

Review incident reports, required forms, summons, records, and related documents prepared by subordinates to ensure accuracy and timely completion; correct or instruct officers to make corrections. Respond to major crimes, accident scenes, and emergencies; assume initial command.

Recommend and assist in the implementation of goals and objectives; establish schedules and methods for providing effective law enforcement services; implement approved policies and procedures. Interpret, convey, and ensure implementation of agency policies, procedures, and methods; ensure that personnel have clear guidelines of authority and responsibility. Preparing reports, maintaining logs, and ensuring the upkeep of departmental records.
Speak before groups and represent the department and town at meetings and conferences.

Provide a full range of administrative support to management staff. Relay messages from Police Chief to the police officers. Conduct internal affairs investigations and or investigations of citizen complaints as necessary or at the direction of the Chief of Police.

Attend relevant schools, seminars, training and meetings, maintain knowledge of procedures, laws and ordinances, understand the proper operation of department technology, state technology and software used in performance of duties. Fairly and impartially enforce the laws and ordinances of the state of Massachusetts and the town of Cheshire.

Respond to calls for service, patrol an assigned area during a specific shift; watch for stolen vehicles and wanted or missing persons, check doors and windows, examine premises of unoccupied buildings or residences in order to detect any suspicious conditions. Check automobiles parked in restricted areas and issue violations when necessary. Respond to motor vehicle accidents, direct traffic, give emergency first-aid treatment to injured persons and assist other agencies when necessary. Maintain order in crowds and attend parades, funerals or other public gatherings.

Conduct investigations and enforce town and state laws, give advice on laws, ordinances and general information to the public. Investigate suspicious conditions and citizen complaints, compile evidence, document evidence and properly secure crime scenes. Utilize officer discretion by making arrests or issuing citations, arrest persons who violate laws and ordinances and process arrestees per department policy. Maintain records and submit completed arrest reports. Transport prisoners to jail or court and oversee custody and care of prisoners when assigned to such duty. Appear in court as an arresting officer. Perform duties in accordance with federal, state, and local laws, as well as departmental policies, procedures, and general orders.

An employee assigned to this title shall perform a majority, but may not perform all, of the duties listed in this job description. Conversely, minor level duties performed on the job may not be listed. The duties listed above are intended only as illustrations of the various types of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related or a logical assignment to the position. All police sergeants must be able to successfully pass the police academy and higher-level supervisory training. All police

sergeants must maintain the mandatory annual certification of firearms training, defensive tactics training, use of force training, de-escalation training, first aid/CPR training, and yearly in service training. Failure to pass these mandatory training programs shall be grounds for discipline up to and including immediate termination. In addition, all police officers must maintain state certification in good standing, pursuant to Chapter 253 of the Act of 2020 (codified in part in Chapter 6E of the Massachusetts General laws), throughout their employment. Pursuant to MGL c. 6E, §11, no law enforcement agency may employ a decertified officer in any capacity. Loss, revocation, or suspension of certification shall be grounds for discipline up to and including termination.

Required Qualifications, Skills and Abilities

- Possess a high school diploma and have successfully graduated from the MPTC academy and/or Bridge Certified.
- Possess five years of experience as a police officer with a minimum of twelve months experience with the town of Cheshire.
- Supervise, organize, and review the work of lower-level staff.
- Supervise, train, and evaluate staff.
- Take charge and command of subordinates.
- Perform a wide range of law enforcement assignments.
- Possess an understanding of the functions and objectives of the police department and other local, state and federal agencies.
- Possess an understanding of the principles of supervision, training, and performance evaluation.
- Possess an understanding of the principles and practices of effective community policing.
- Understand, interpret, apply, enforce, and make decisions in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local policies, laws, and regulations.
- Interpret and explain town policies and procedures.
- Think clearly and act quickly in a variety of situations.
- Judge situations and or people accurately.
- Effectively use and qualify with law enforcement tools and weapons including firearms, batons, defensive tactics, and other safety equipment.
- Operate specialized law enforcement equipment including specialized police vehicles, radios, video systems, and radars.
- Conduct a variety of criminal and special investigations. Gather, assemble, analyze, evaluate, and use facts and evidence. Interview victims, complainants, witnesses, and suspects.
- Analyze crime and service patterns to develop effective tactical responses.
- Accurately observe and remember names, faces, numbers, incidents, and places.
- Control violent people and affect arrests.
- Administer first aid.
- Prepare clear and concise reports and routine correspondence.

- Work irregular and on-call hours including weekends, evenings, and holidays.
- Meet and maintain required police officer employment standards.
- Meet and maintain the departmental firearms qualifications standards.
- Meet the physical requirements necessary to safely and effectively perform the assigned duties.
- Possess good oral and written communication skills and the ability to ascertain facts by personal contact, observation and the examination of records.
- Possess an understanding of the geographical and physical layout of the town.

- Possess an understanding of the authority granted to police, the consequences and repercussions associated with such authority and the knowledge that improper actions or decisions may cause substantial life changes, serious injury or death.
- Ability to plan, analyze and interpret police problems and criminal evidence.
- Ability to immediately use discriminatory judgment in emergency situations and make decisions based on professional training and experience.
- Ability to perform duties and follow oral and written instructions under stress.
- Ability to react quickly and calmly in emergency situations and determine the proper course of action.
- Ability to establish and maintain effective public relations and communication.
- Ability to effectively use critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Ability to abide by the rules, regulation and military like structure of the department.
- Ability to maintain an effective working relationship with other co-workers, supervisors, elected officials and the public.
- Ability to deal tactfully and diplomatically with all segments of society.
- Must maintain certification through the POST Commission.

Work Environment:

At times, the work environment can be physically demanding, highly stressful, fast paced and dangerous. Required work involves simple to difficult and highly varied tasks and irregularity is usual. Tasks can be performed under life and death situations and require alertness under duress and distracting conditions (ex: accidents, gunfire, threats). Work is performed with occasional directions and requires a high degree of initiative to carry out solutions. Officers must be alert and ready to react throughout their entire shift. Varied physical activities from restrain or subduing individuals; walking, running, bending, standing, or sitting for prolonged periods of time; occasionally stopping, bending, kneeling, crouching, reaching, and twisting; occasionally climbing and balancing; regularly pushing, pulling, lifting, and/or carrying light to moderate weights; frequently lifting and/or moving moderate to heavy weights; occasionally lifting and/or moving heavy weights, sitting in a car and driving for extended periods and rendering first aid are associated with normal duties of a police sergeant. Job requires more than normal physical dexterity and strength to complete tasks. Sergeants work in all weather conditions which do not

exempt accomplishment of normal duties. Sergeants regularly work at crime scenes and accident scenes and may encounter suffering and the results of violence. Sergeants are often exposed to sounds and noise levels that are distracting and uncomfortable and work in conditions that frequently involve dust, dirt, heat, cold, noise, mechanical hazards and moving objects. Physical testing and examination are required prior to initial assumption of duties; maintenance of physical fitness standards is suggested.

5.1 PAID HOLIDAYS

The Town allows the paid holidays listed below based on an employee's standard workday. They are:

New Year's Day*	Juneteenth Independence Day	Thanksgiving Day *
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	Independence Day	Day After Thanksgiving*
President's Day	Labor Day	Christmas Day*
Patriots' Day	Columbus Day	
Memorial Day	Veterans' Day	

A paid holiday that falls on a Saturday will be observed on the preceding Friday, and a paid holiday falling on a Sunday will be observed on the following Monday. A new employee is entitled to holiday pay during the introductory period.

Standard Workdays are days scheduled to work by the Supervisor/Dept. Head. For example if an employee is scheduled to work Monday – Thursday and the holiday falls on a Friday the employee is not entitled to paid time off.

Police Department Holiday Overtime: All employees who work a holiday will be paid 1x per hour.

Highway Department: Holiday Overtime: All employees who work on a PREMIUM* holiday will be paid a rate of two (2x) their regular hourly rate of pay for the actual hours worked in addition to their eight (8) hours of holiday pay at their regular rate. All other holidays will be paid a rate of One and One Half (1.5x) time their regular rate of pay for actual hours worked in addition to their eight (8) hours of holiday pay at their regular rate. In the event of a call back, the employee will be guaranteed at least three (3) hours of paid time for the first event or call back and two (2) hours of paid time for each additional event or call back.

TOWN OF CHESHIRE

80 CHURCH STREET | CHESHIRE, MASSACHUSETTS 01225
PHONE (413) 743-1690 | FAX (413) 743-0389

WWW.CHESHIRE-MA.GOV

OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes – August 22, 2023

Pursuant to a notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, a meeting of the Board of Selectmen was held in person at 191 Church Street (Cheshire Community House) on Tuesday August 22, 2023, at 6:30 PM

Board of Selectmen Members Present: Shawn McGrath, Chair
Jason Levesque, Vice Chair
Ron DeAngelis, Member
Michelle Francesconi, Member

Board of Selectmen Member Absent: Ray Killeen, Member

Others Present: Jennifer Morse, Town Administrator; Rick Gurney, Water Commissioner; Corey McGrath, Facilities Manager; Tom Francesconi, Fire Chief; Lynn Melchiori; Peter Traub; Dick Scholtz; Art Kaufman; Mark Biagini.

Summary of Votes:

- Vote to hire Ed Bunn as Primary Water Operator 4-0
- Vote to hire Steve Hakes as Custodian 4-0
- Vote to approve September Cheshire Rod & Gun liquor licenses 4-0
- Vote to approve Consent Agenda with edits to the 8/15/23 minutes 4-0
- Vote to enter Executive Session - Highway Foreman position 4-0
- Vote to hire Corey Swistak as Highway Foreman, non-bargaining position 4-0
- Vote to adjourn at 8:40 p.m. 4-0

S. McGrath opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Primary Water Operator Position

Water Commission Chair, Rick Gurney joined the board to recommend the hiring of Ed Bunn as Primary Water Operator. Mr. Bunn shadowed the water department last week and all questions have been resolved. The DPW Director also recommended Mr. Bunn for the position. He has the required licenses except for the T1, and he is set to obtain that license by year end. The position will start at $52,000 per year, once the T1 license is obtained the salary will increase to $60,000 per year.

A motion was made by M. Francesconi and seconded by J. Levesque to offer the Primary Water Operator position to Edward Bunn IV.

Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes; J. Levesque- Yes; S. McGrath – Yes; M. Francesconi- Yes

Motion Carries: 4-0

AFG Award

Chief Tom Francesconi joined the board to announce that the Fire Department is the recipient of another AFG award. This grant will provide the Fire Department with 1- CPR Device (Lucas) and 4 – AED's. Current AED's will be distributed to various buildings including the Town Hall, Transfer Station, and Community House. Discussion on applying for a drone in the next round of funding and a truck. The Fire Department has put together an apparatus committee to make recommendations. The Fire Chief thanked the Town Administrator for her work on the grant.

Consent Agenda

- Minutes – August 8, 2023; August 15, 2023
- Warrants – PR 24-04; AP 24-05

A motion was made by M. Francesconi and R. DeAngelis to approve the consent agenda with edits to the August 15, 2023, minutes.

Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes; J. Levesque- Yes; S. McGrath – Yes; M. Francesconi- Yes
Motion Carries: 4-0

Discussion/Decision Items

Custodian Position

The Town Administrator shared that she met with current cemetery groundkeeper Steve Hakes who is interested in the position, she is recommending that the board hire Mr. Hakes to the custodian position at 15 hours per week. Steve will continue to work for the cemetery department for the remainder of this season.

A motion was made by R. DeAngelis and seconded by S. McGrath to hire Steve Hakes as Custodian.

Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes; J. Levesque- Yes; S. McGrath – Yes; M. Francesconi- Yes
Motion Carries : 4-0

Cheshire Rod & Gun Club – September 2, September 9, September 16, September 17, September 23, September 30

A motion was made by M. Francesconi and seconded by S. McGrath to approve the Cheshire Rod & Gun Club September liquor licenses.

Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes; J. Levesque- Abstain; S. McGrath – Yes; M. Francesconi- Yes
Motion Carries: 3-0-1

Wells Park/Meadowbrook Lane

Meadowbrook Lane properties have no frontage and there was discussion about taking steps to make the private way a town owned roadway. Discussion on private roadways, it was noted that Meadowbrook Lane is not a private roadway but a driveway The DPW Director and Town Administrator will research all private ways maintained by the Town and bring them to a future meeting of the board for discussion.

Move Veteran Memorial from Town Hall Complex to the Community House

Discussion on moving the Veteran Memorials from the Town Hall common to the Community House. M. Francesconi spoke about the current parade route and how the new location of the memorials would allow for the parade to start/stop in one location followed by the ceremony in a less congested location of town. Audience members Mark Biagini and Art Kaufman spoke about the historical location of the monuments and concern about moving the memorials without community input. R. DeAngelis felt that the memorials would have more visibility at the new location, S. McGrath agreed. M. Francesconi shared her opinion that the Town Hall common is visually cluttered with the horse troth, crab apple tree, memorial, flagpole, and memorial all in one location at the intersection. The Town Administrator noted that if the monuments were to be re-located then the library would

have more space for outdoor activities. The Town Administrator will post the website and Facebook seeking input from residents before any decisions are made.

Community House to Do List Update - School District request for extension if needed.

The Town Administrator shared that the flooring will be done the first weekend in September, the painters will be providing estimates this week, furniture has been ordered. The School District is set to move the remainder of their belongings on Friday August 25, 2023. Superintendent Dean did request a space if needed after September 1st, the Town Administrator shared that they are having a problem with Verizon and their internet services. It was agreed to allow the School District one office space for up to one month if needed.

Draft Letter to legislators regarding HD 4420

The draft letter was reviewed by the Board. The board requested that the draft be sent to Chief Alibozek to see if he is willing to sign. Audience member Dick Scholtz made comments regarding the proposed bill.

BRPC – Request for Cheshire Board of Selectmen Representative

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission is looking for a representative from the board to participate in the North Central Berkshire subregional caucus to appoint a representative and alternate to the Berkshire Metropolitan Planning Organization. S. McGrath will serve as the Board of Selectman representative.

Town Administrator Updates

Community Compact – Best Practices Grants – Capital Planning, Wage/Salary

The grant round has opened, and the Town is eligible to apply for up to two best practice grants. The Town Administrator shared that she has been working with UMASS Collins Center on two projects, one to do a Capital Plan and one to do a Wage/Salary comparison.

Chapter 70 Workshop – September 12

The Town Administrator and S. McGrath will be attending a workshop on September 12 on Chapter 70 funding.

DPW Director shared that Steve Petrie from Northeast -3D, LLC provided the Twon will scale and dimensioned exterior views of the old section of the Community House including a digital scan. Corey demonstrated the details in the scan of the roof and the Town Administrator will forward the details to board members. All the work was done free of charge by Steve and a thank you letter will be sent to him on behalf of the town.

MSPCA Grant - The town applied for a received a grant for bearproof trash receptacles that will be placed on the Community Center grounds, the award is for 2 – 110-gallon metal containers.

Announcements from Board Members

M. Francesconi shared that Cruise Night was a success, however clean up volunteers were disgusted with the amount of trash left behind. It was noted that there were parking issues and that there was not a lot of police presence at the event.

J. Levesque asked about progress on the Sandmill Bridge. The Town Administrator shared that correspondence has been sent to all abutters affected by the temporary and permanent easement. An appraisal company has been contracted to provide appraisals which will then be sent to town counsel for review before any steps are taken int the process. The project is set to go out to bid in February for construction next summer.

Public Comment

Dick Scholtz shared historical information regarding a song composed by John Lealand called “the morning trumpet” the information will be passed on to the Historical Commission.

Mark Biagini spoke about safety concerns related to the fence on private property at the intersection of Main and East Main St. Mark felt that it was dangerous as it impacts the line of vision when turning onto East Main Street. The Twon Administrator shared that the Police Department looked at the situation as did the Highway Department. Members will look and add the topic to a future agenda if necessary.

Art Kaufman noted that there are invasive weeds along Curran Road as well as large potholes. The DPW director is aware and noted that roadside mowing and pothole repair is on the list for repair this fall.

Executive Session – MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21A Highway Foreman Position

A motion was made at 7:55 p.m. by S. McGrath and seconded by J. Levesque to enter executive session to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel.

Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes; J. Levesque- Yes; S. McGrath – Yes; M. Francesconi- Yes

Motion Carries: 4-0

Return to Open Session at 8:30 p.m.

A motion was made by M. Francesconi and seconded by R. DeAngelis to hire Corey Swistak as Highway Foreman at a rate of $24.98 per hour plus a $250 stipend per week. The position will not be a part of the bargaining unit and will allow for a $250 boot allowance and 90 days of sick day accumulation.

Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis- Yes; J. Levesque – Yes, M. Francesconi – Yes

Motion Carries: 4-0

Adjournment

A motion was made by M. Francesconi and seconded by J. Levesque to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes; J. Levesque- Yes; S. McGrath – Yes; M. Francesconi- Yes

Motion Carries: 4-0

Respectfully Submitted:
Jennifer Morse
Town Administrator
August 24, 2023

Document List

1. Agenda – August 22, 2023
2. AFG Award Letter
3. Draft Minutes – August 8, 2023
4. Draft Minutes – August 15, 2023
5. Email BRPC regarding Subregional Rep. to Berkshire MPO
6. Highway Department Report
7. COA July Report
8. Historical Talk and Slide Show Flyer
9. BRPC and BCSA Invite to 2023 Annual Meeting and Reception

TOWN OF CHESHIRE

80 CHURCH STREET | CHESHIRE, MASSACHUSETTS 01225
PHONE (413) 743-1690 X.18 | EMAIL: JMORSE@CHESHIRE-MA.GOV
WWW.CHESHIRE-MA.GOV

OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Special Event Permit Application

Please complete the application form, sign, date and attach a legible site plan for your event. Your application will not be processed without a completed form and applicant signature. You must consult with all the required Town Departments, contact information can be found at the end of this application packet.

What requires a Special Event Permit application? In general, any scheduled outdoor public gathering regardless of size, involving the use of, or having an impact on, town property, town facilities, town parks, town streets (including roadside parking), town sidewalks, town parking lots and town-owned open space requires an Event Permit from the Cheshire Board of Selectmen.

You may be required to obtain a police detail or other additional municipal services. Costs for these are the responsibility of the applicant and prepayment, a deposit, or surety for payment may be required.

Approval of the permit is based upon the Board of Selectmen's determination that the event will not pose a risk of endangering public health, safety, or welfare, based upon their application of public safety criteria.

Example of events that may require a Special Event Permit from the Board of Selectmen are:

- Road Races
- Motor Cross and Off Road Vehicle Activities
- Cycling Events
- Festivals
- Outdoor Events (concerts, weddings, etc.)
- Parades

This application with supporting documentation must be submitted to the Town Administrator's Office located at 80 Church Street, Cheshire, MA 01225 or via email to jmorse@cheshire-ma.gov , not less than (21) business days prior to the special event date to insure proper processing.

TOWN OF CHESHIRE SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT APPLICATION

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Organization: Cheshire Fire Dept. Date: 8/21/23

Name: CJ Garner Phone #: 413-281-5020

Address:
29 South St. Cheshire, MA 01225

Email: Cgarnercheshirebbq@gmail.com

Name of Event: 2nd Annual Bill Lewis Memorial Bass Fishing Tournament

Type of Event: Fishing Tournament + picnic

Event Location: 1st + 2nd lakes, Picnic on Causeway

Event Date: 10/1/23 Start Time: 7:00 AM End Time: 5:00 PM

Proposed Rain Date: — Number of People: 100+

Please answer the following:

1. Clearly describe your event (Please attach letter if more space is required)

Bass fishing tournament on both lakes from 7am - 1pm followed by awards and picnic on the causeway with food by Cheshire Fire and Bell by B.B.C.

2. Please attached an event map and site plan with the following indicated:
   - Detailed event layout/route with directional arrows and street names
   - Identify and road or sidewalks that will be blocked or closed.
   - Placement of collection of signage, traffic control devices, barricades.
   - Location of event staff, volunteers along the proposed locations where police details are required, emergency medical stations, food service, port-a potties, etc.
   - Trash generated by the event must be removed immediately after the event. Event signage, port-a potties, and all other equipment should be removed within 48 hours.

3. Insurance Information: _____

   Issuing Company: _____

   Public Liability Coverage: _____

APPLICATION CERTIFICATION

The applicant certifies that he/she has read and examined this application and agrees to comply with the terms and conditions contained herein.

Signature of Applicant: _____

Date: 8/29/2023

***PUBLIC SAFETY SIGNATURES ***

Signature of Police Chief or Deputy Police Chief **(Mandatory)**
Conditions:

Signature of Fire Chief or Deputy Fire Chief **(Mandatory)**
Conditions:

Signature from Highway/DPW Department **(Mandatory)**
Conditions:

Signature from Board of Health **(Mandatory)**
Conditions:

FINAL APPROVAL

BOARD OF SELECTMEN/TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

Complete Application ◯ **Yes** ◯ **No** **Date Available** ◯ **Yes** ◯ **No**

Indemnification (if required) ◯ **Yes** ◯ **No** **Intended Route** ◯ **Yes** ◯ **No**

Comments/Conditions: _____

_____

Select Board Approval: _____ Date: _____
(Board of Selectmen Chair)

Cheshire Highway Department

Activity Log

Monday – Graded hill on Brough, put new window switch in dodge, started ditch work on RT116, fixed stone driveway on Windsor/Notch, picked up loose blacktop on Depot ST/Cheese Factory, placed loam @ 66 Depot ST edge of road/seeded, picked up materials for generator pad.

Tuesday – Made generator pad at highway garage, continued ditch work on RT 116.

Wednesday – Continued ditch work on 116, mowed fire station/cheese press/islands/shop

Thursday – Continued ditch work on RT116 (6 loads hauled out form Stewart White-Savoy line), picked up parts for boom mower in Greenwich, NY

Friday – stripped radiator out of boom mower and cleaned and prepped for new one, painted hallway by bathrooms/prepped for new shelves for cleaning supplies, unblocked pipe on Nobodys RD, Swept waterways on RT116.\

Sat/Sun – Nothing

Monday – Graded Richmond Hill, fixed washouts on Sandmill Hill RD, removed fence/tree at new bus stop, made gravel pad for bus stop and framed in.

Tuesday – Saw cut and did 4 driveway aprons on Stafford Hill (water was entering their properties), remaining blacktop patched the Stafford Rd/116 connector and entrance to the shop.

Wednesday – Started putting new radiator/pump in boom mower, Brough RD separated and made pile of trees'brush for removal

Thursday – 3 ton patch on Outlook Ave, started removing tree's brush from Brough

Notes :

* Waterways on some parts of 116 haven't been done in over 35yrs (residents were excited it got done)

* Great job on cleaning the lake (Ron and company), lots of good compliments on how good it looks.

* The 4 who don't have Osha 10 are scheduled to take it in Becket at the end of September.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Town of Cheshire
Massachusetts

OFFICE OF
THE BOARD OF ASSESSORS

P. O. Box 0
Cheshire, MA 01225
Tel. (413) 743-3929
Fax (413) 743-4916

August 31, 2023

Dear Taxpayer:

As a continued courtesy, we are enclosing your FY 2025 application(s) for Chapter 61A or 61B tax classification. Please be sure to review all data entered for accuracy and completeness, making sure the acreage is stated under the appropriate category/categories in section B; then sign the application, as well as the Property Owner's Acknowledgement of Rights and Obligations.

Please note if you are classifying land under Chapter 61A, which, under Massachusetts General Law must be actively devoted to agricultural or horticultural use in order to qualify for and retain such classification, **we are requiring a copy of your most recent Federal Income Tax Return Schedule F**, verifying your farm income. Fiscal year 2025 is a recertification year. Among other valuation practice reviews, the Department of Revenue will be scrutinizing our Chapter 61, 61A and 61B files to make sure that all qualifying factors are being adhered to.

Please be sure to return all documents by the deadline of October 1, 2023. We are enclosing a self-addressed envelope for your convenience. We will not be able to classify your property unless all documents are timely filed.

Thank you for your anticipated cooperation.

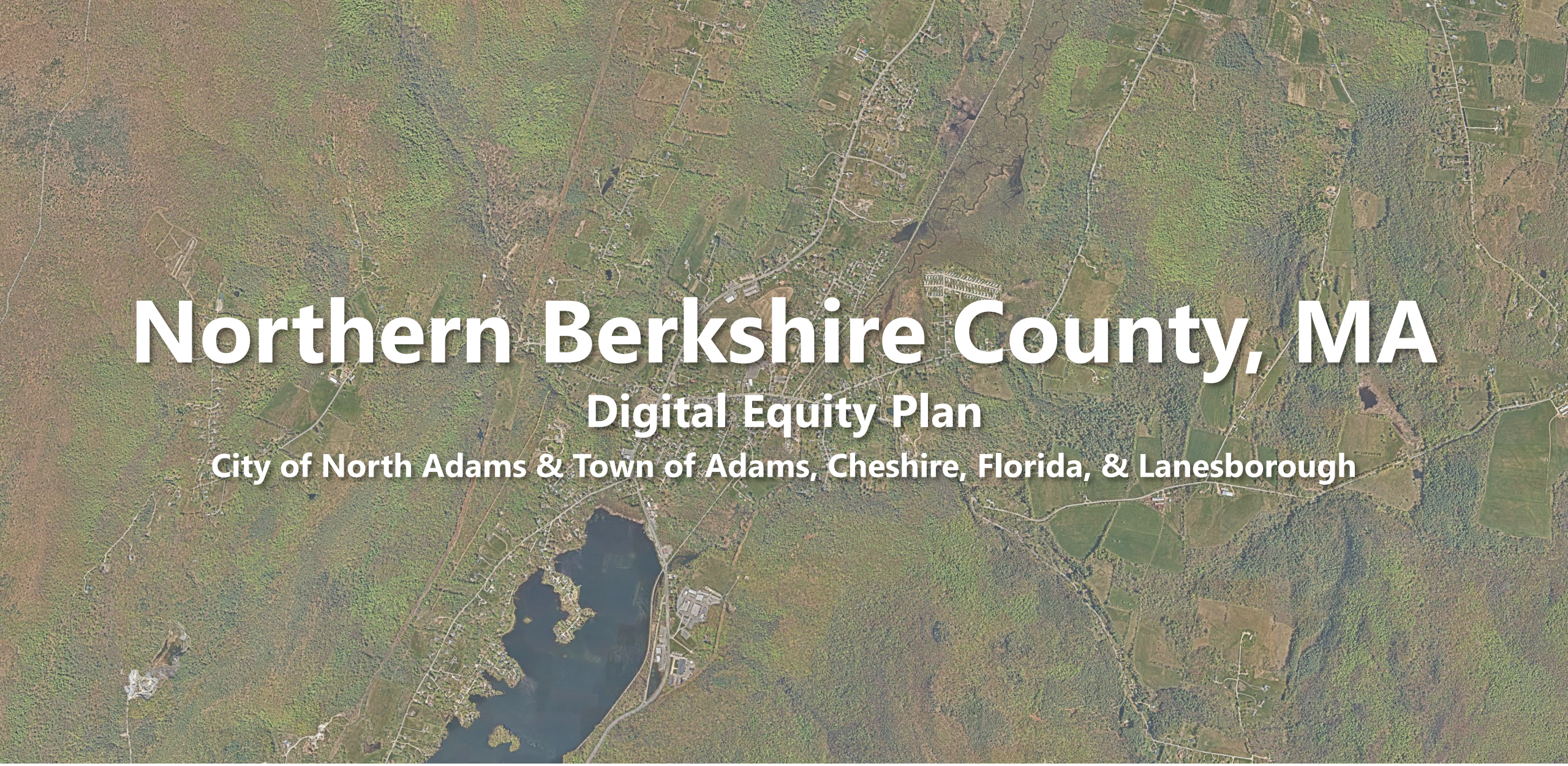
Very truly yours,

Barbara Astorino

Nancy Delorey

Kellie Lahey

Enclosures



Northern Berkshire County, MA

Digital Equity Plan

City of North Adams & Town of Adams, Cheshire, Florida, & Lanesborough

vhb

July 2023

MBI
MASSACHUSETTS
BROADBAND INSTITUTE

at the MassTech
Collaborative

Contents

1. Project Overview
2. What is Digital Equity?
3. Baseline Conditions
4. Next Steps

vhb

MBI
MASSACHUSETTS
BROADBAND INSTITUTE

at the MassTech
Collaborative

1. Project Overview

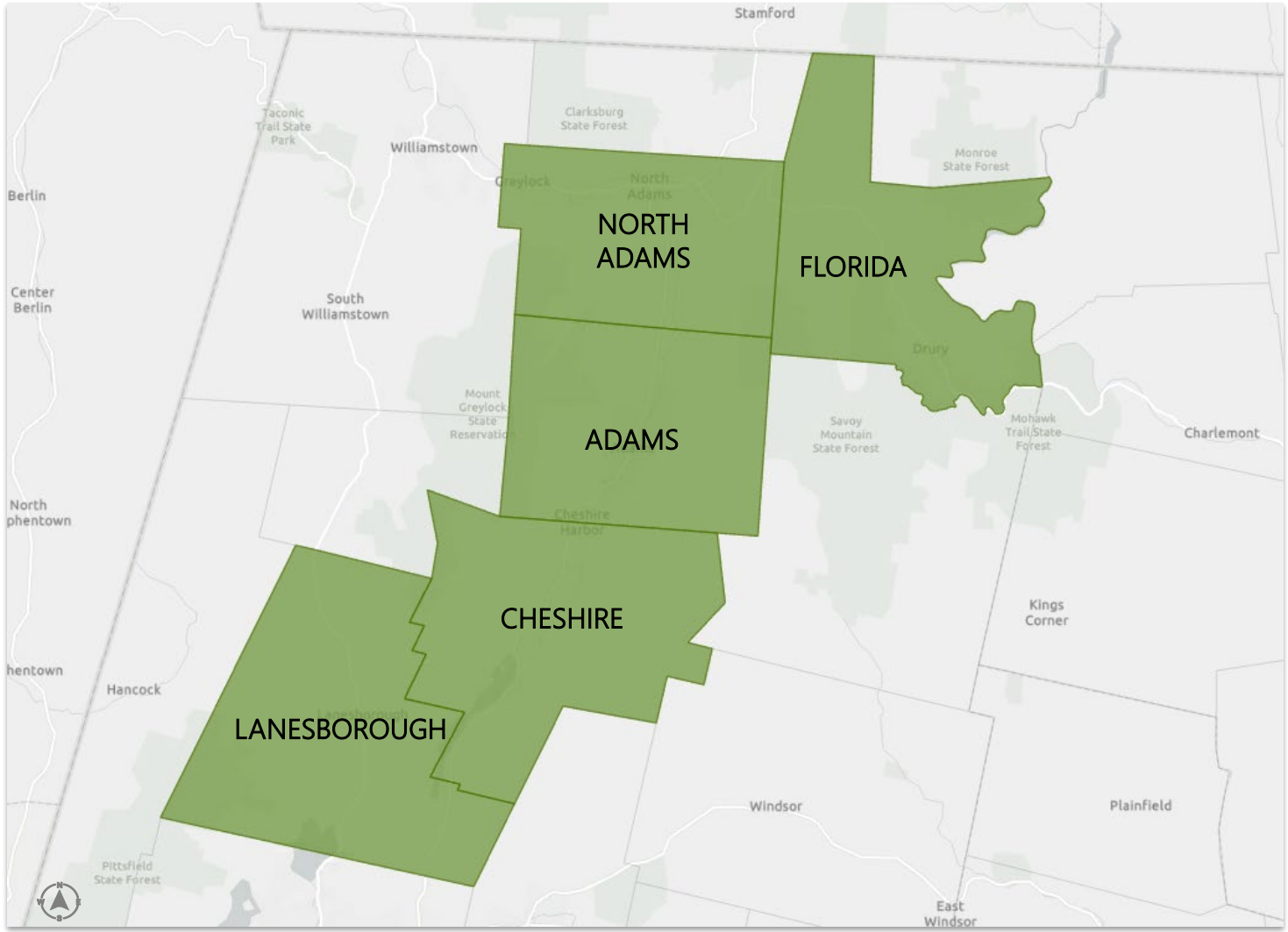
VHB will work with the Towns of Adams, Cheshire, Florida, Lanesborough, and the City of North Adams to prepare a digital equity plan.

The intent of the project is to achieve the following:

1. Guide the communities decision-making and investments related to services and infrastructure that will increase access, adoption, and usage of the internet throughout the community.
2. Prepare the communities to apply for funding from existing or forthcoming state and federal programs to support investment in digital equity.

This study will include:

- Property research regarding baseline conditions in the communities.
- A series of public meetings and meetings with key stakeholders to disseminate information and gather input on key issues and opportunities facing the area.
- Preparation of a vision, goals, and implementation strategies identifying required specific actions and projects.



RESEARCH

Existing Conditions Analysis

Kick-Off Meeting: **July 20th**

DIALOGUE

Stakeholder Sessions x6: **Aug/Sept**

Public Meeting 01: **October 24**

Prepare Draft Vision, Goals, Objectives

Public Meeting 02: **December (TBD)**

Pop-Up Events x2: **Local Events (TBD)**

SYNTHESIS

Prepare Draft & Final Digital Equity Plan

Presentation of Digital Equity Plan

Contents

1. Project Overview
2. What is Digital Equity?
3. Baseline Conditions
4. Next Steps

vhb

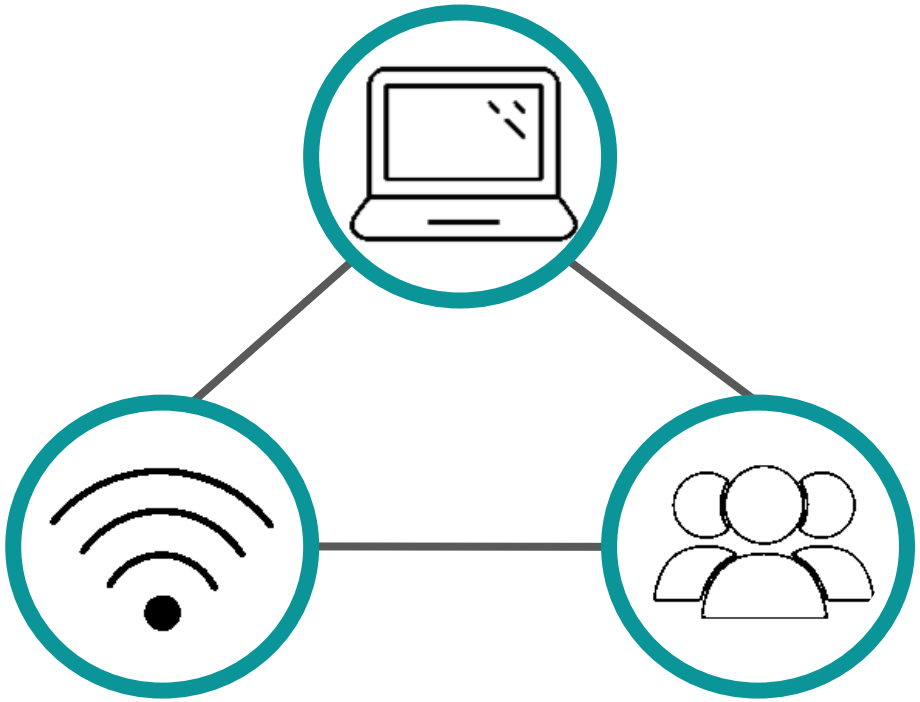
MBI MASSACHUSETTS BROADBAND INSTITUTE at the MassTech Collaborative

The gap between those who have affordable access, skills and support to effectively engage online and those who do not.

The digital divide disproportionately affects marginalized groups including people of color, households with low incomes, people with disabilities, people in rural areas and older adults.

Digital Inclusion:

The activities necessary to ensure that all individuals and communities, including the most disadvantaged, have access to and use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).



Digital Equity:

A condition in which all individuals and communities have the information technology capacity needed for full participation in our society, democracy, and economy.

Digital divide is the issue.
Digital inclusion is the work.
Digital equity is the goal.



BROADBAND

- ✖ Unaffordable
- ✖ Unreliable Services
- ✖ Digital Redlining



DEVICES

- ✖ Unaffordable
- ✖ Outdated software
- ✖ No access to device
- ✖ Device is not matching the needs of the user



DIGITAL SKILLS

- ✖ Limited digital skills
- ✖ Trainings are not accessible
- ✖ Fear & shame
- ✖ Privacy concerns

vhb

NDIA NATIONAL DIGITAL INCLUSION ALLIANCE

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- ✔ Most Portable device
- ✔ Multiple connection options
- ✔ Long battery
- ✖ Does not replace a laptop



- ✔ Great for accessibility
- ✔ Long battery
- ✖ Cannot make calls without a cellular data plan



- ✔ Mandatory for many jobs and applications
- ✔ Large storage
- ✖ Shorter battery life
- ✖ Least affordable option

Contents

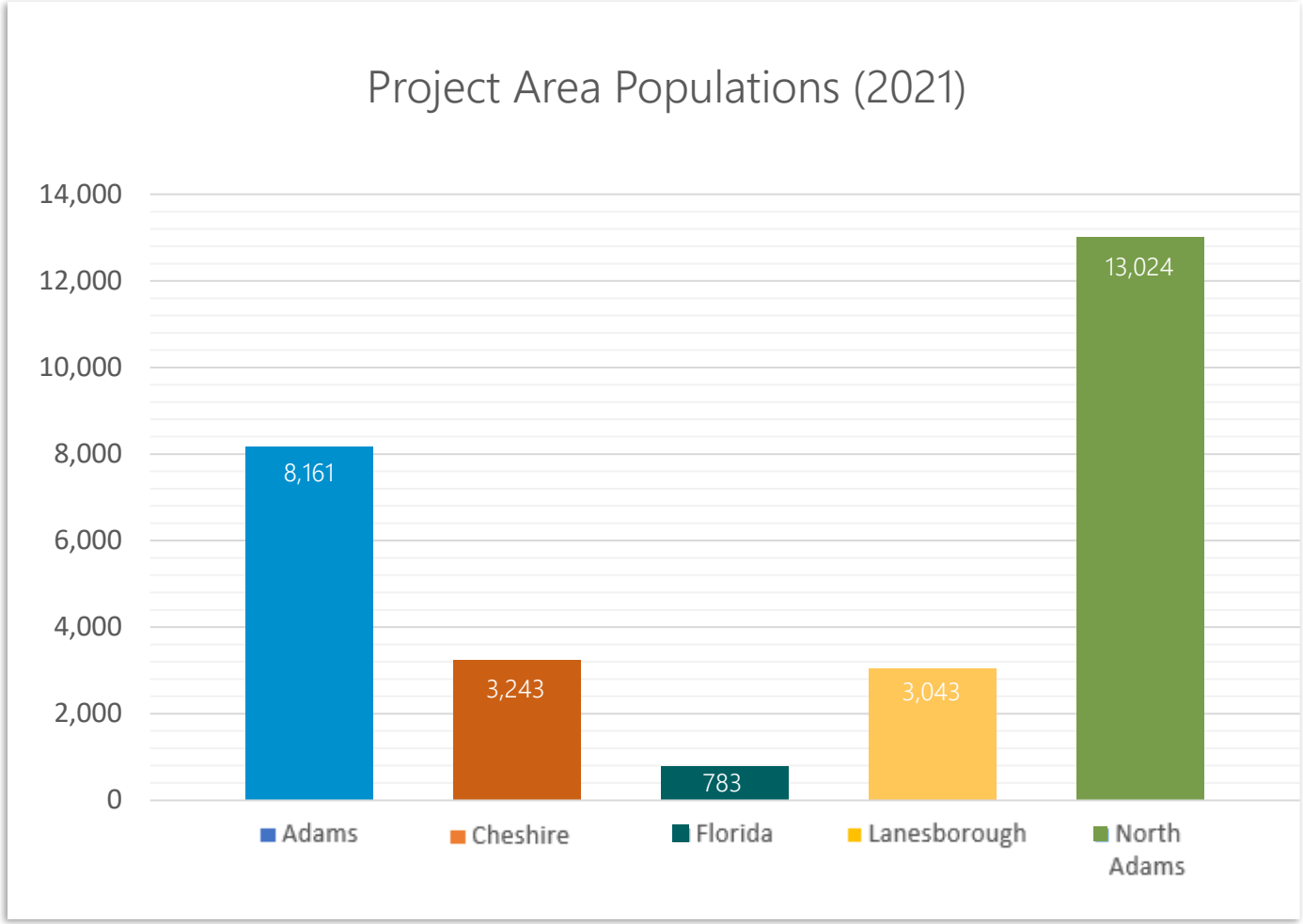
1. Project Overview
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POPULATIONS

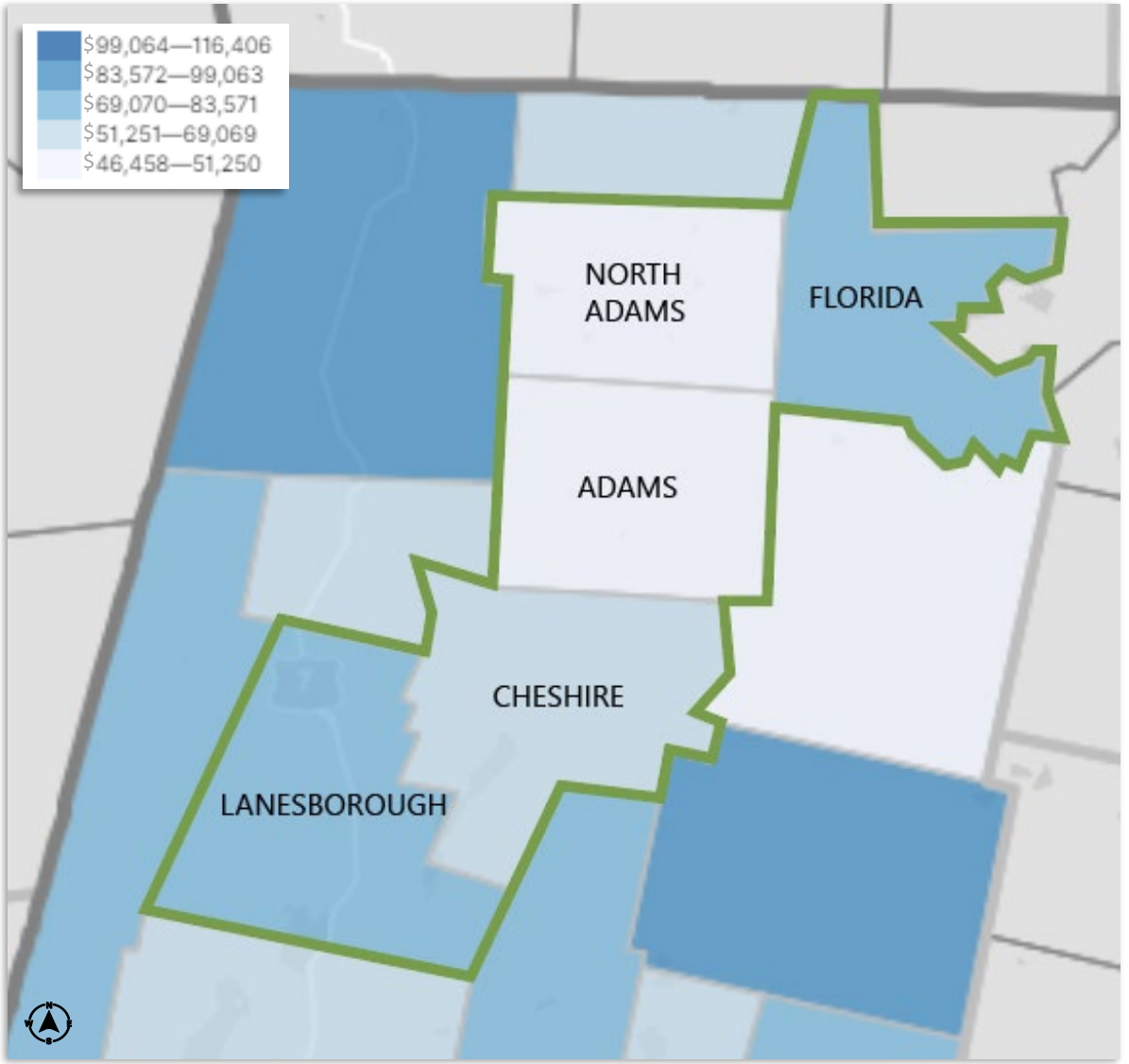
As of 2021, the total population of the subject area is 28,254.



Source: U.S. Census, 2021 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates (DP05)

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME (2021)

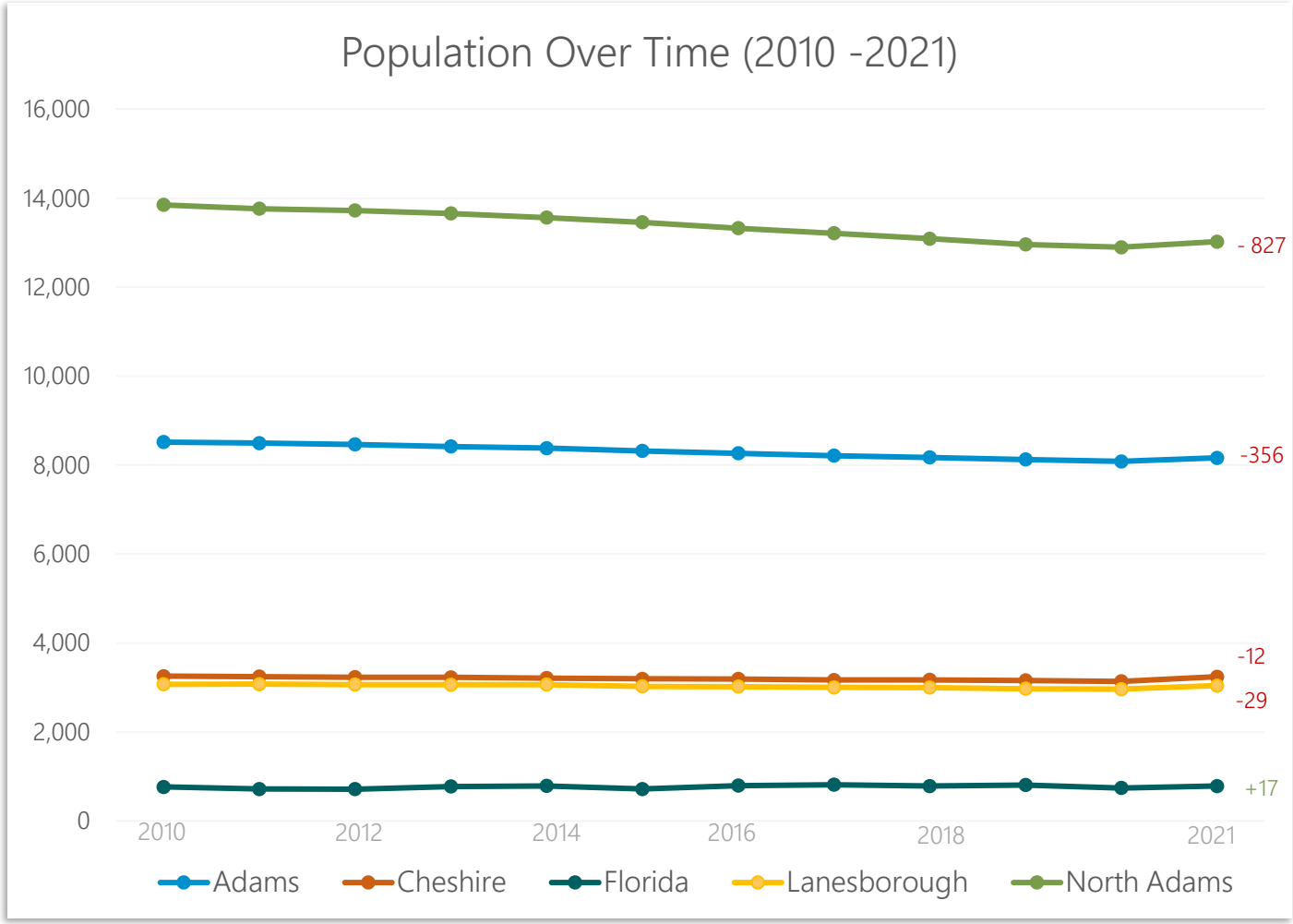
- In 2021, the median household income varied throughout the project area.
- All communities were below the state average median income of $89,645.
- Lanesborough is the community with the highest median household income at $75,156 and Florida has the second highest median household income at $74,333.
- Cheshire is in the mid-range for household income at $69,069 which is above the Berkshire County average income of $60,749.
- The Town of Adams and City of North Adams have the lowest median household incomes at $49,691 and $48,575, respectively.



Source: U.S. Census, 2021 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates (S1903)

POPULATION CHANGE

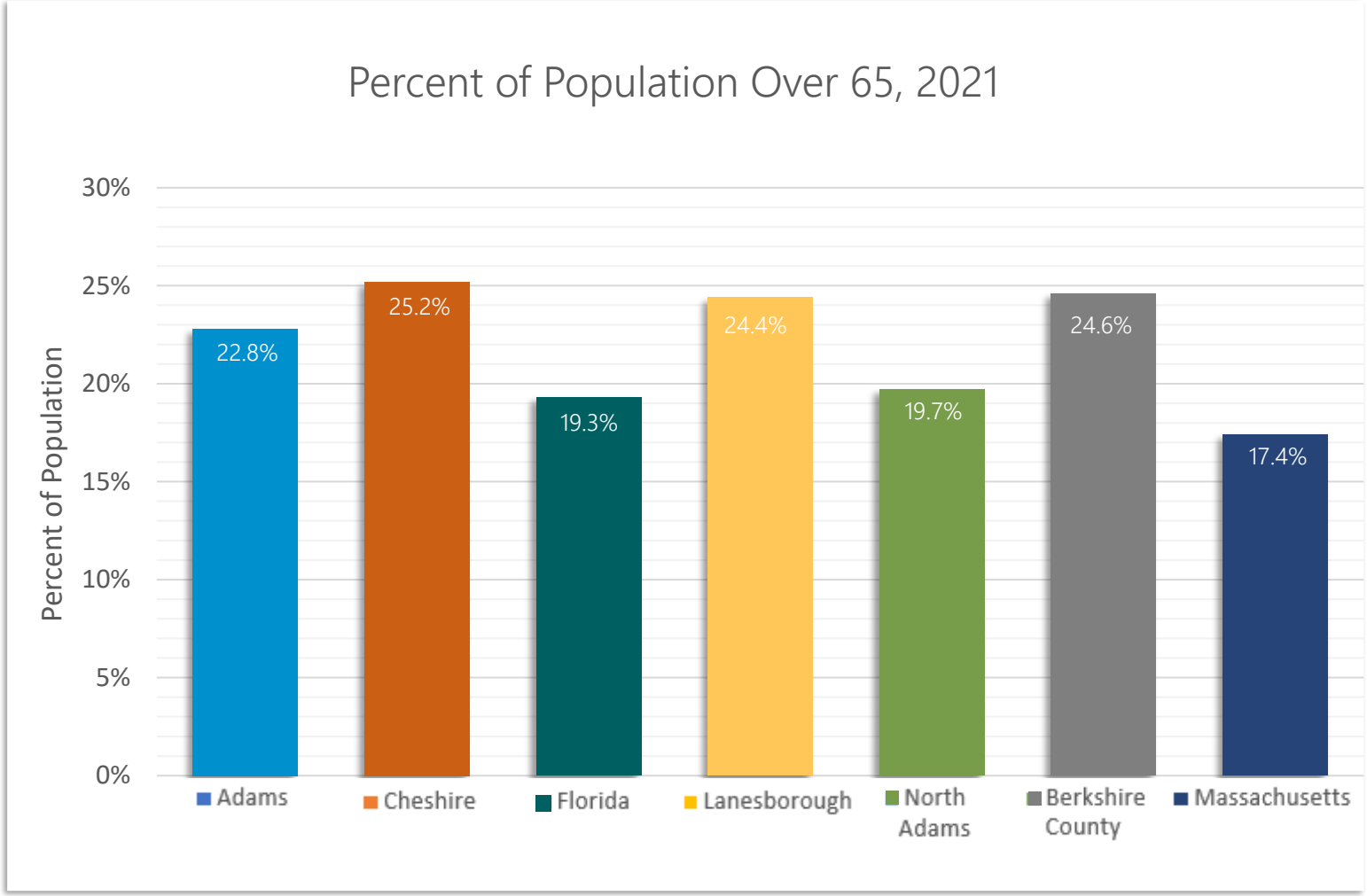
Since 2010, the communities within the project area have remained reasonably steady in population with a very subtle overall decline in population over time.



Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles

AGE DISTRIBUTION

- **Each municipality in the project area has a higher percentage of population over the age of 65 than the state average of 17.4%.**
- The Town of Cheshire has **25.2%** of it's population over the age of 65 and is the only community with a higher percentage than Berkshire County's average of 24.6%.

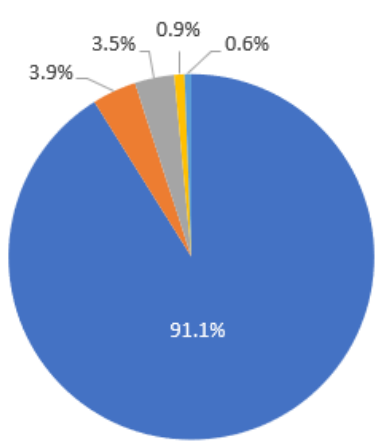


Source: U.S. Census, 2010-2020 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates (DP05)

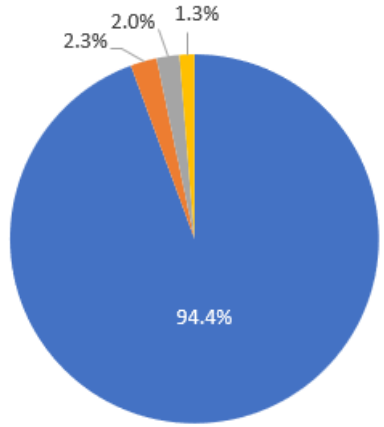
LANGUAGES SPOKEN AT HOME (2021)[1]

- The majority of the population within the project area speaks English only.
- North Adams has the highest Spanish speaking population with 3.9%.
- Lanesborough has the highest population who speak other Indo-European Languages at 3.8%.
- Adams has the largest percent of Asian and Pacific Islander Language speakers with 1.3%.

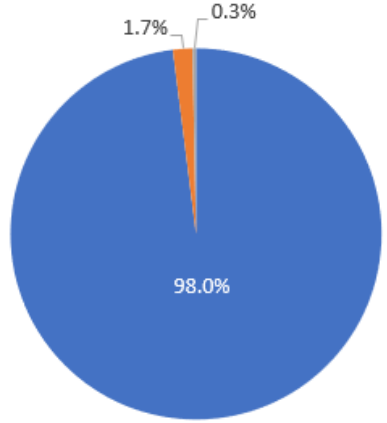
NORTH ADAMS

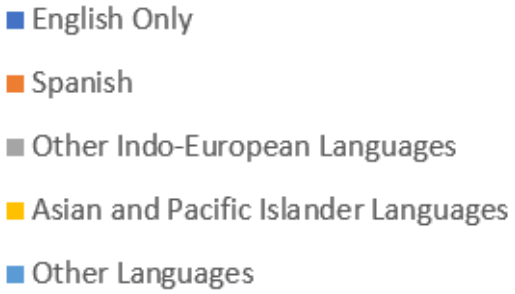


ADAMS

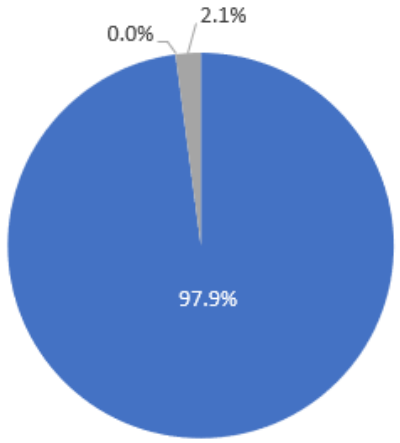


CHESHIRE

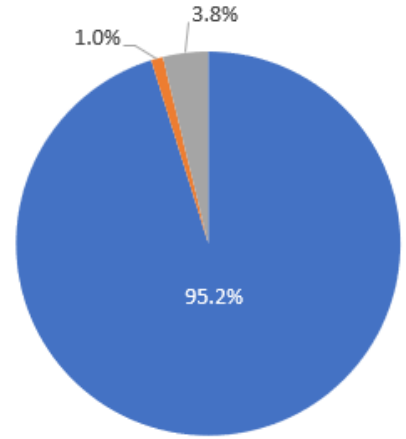




FLORIDA



LANESBOROUGH

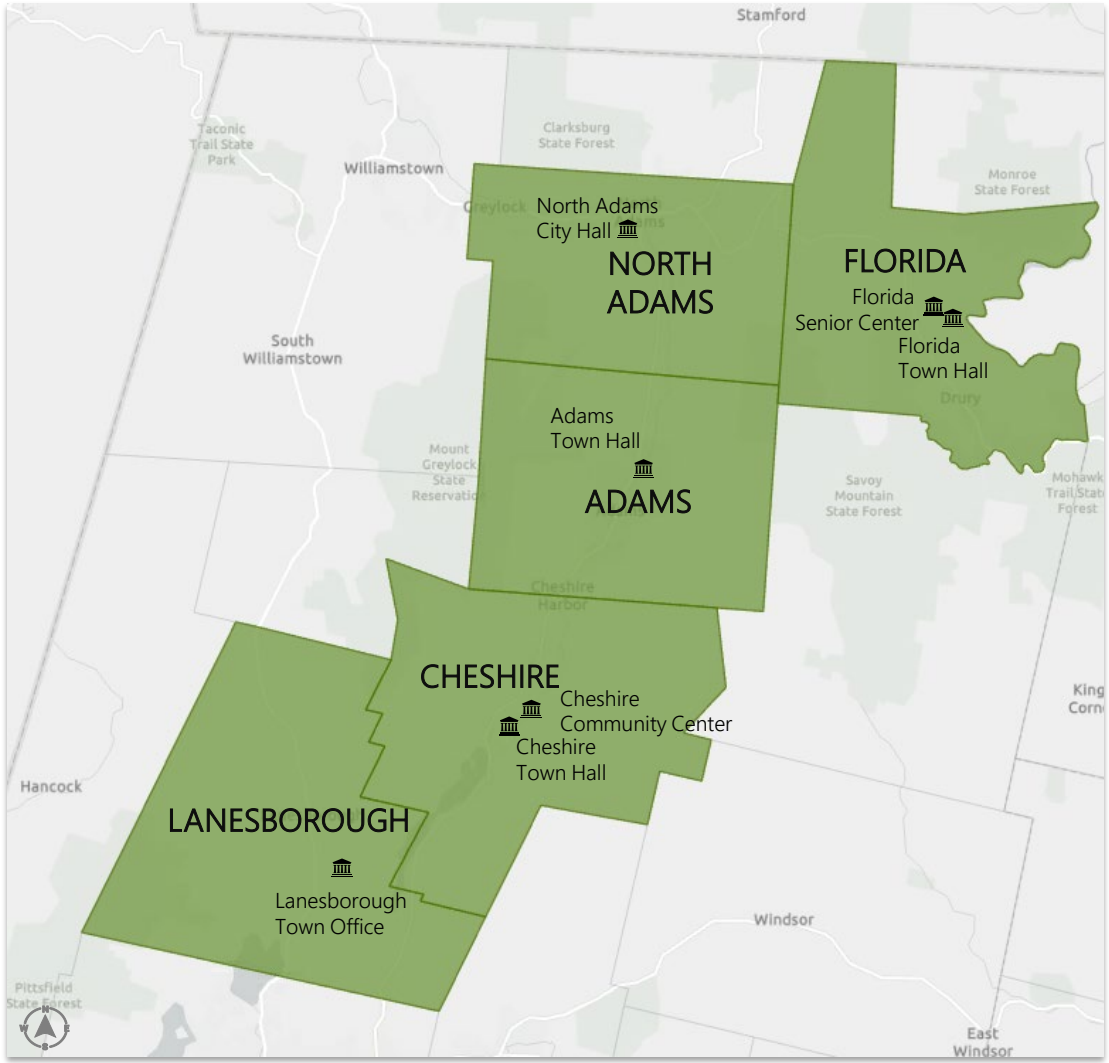


1. Source: U.S. Census, 2021 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates (S16101)

PUBLIC FACILITIES

MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS & PUBLIC FACILITIES

- Florida Town Hall
- Florida Senior Center
- North Adams City Hall
- Adams Town Hall
- Cheshire Town Hall
- Cheshire Community/Senior Center
- Lanesborough Town Office



Public Facilities in the Project Area

SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL DISTRICTS

SCHOOLS

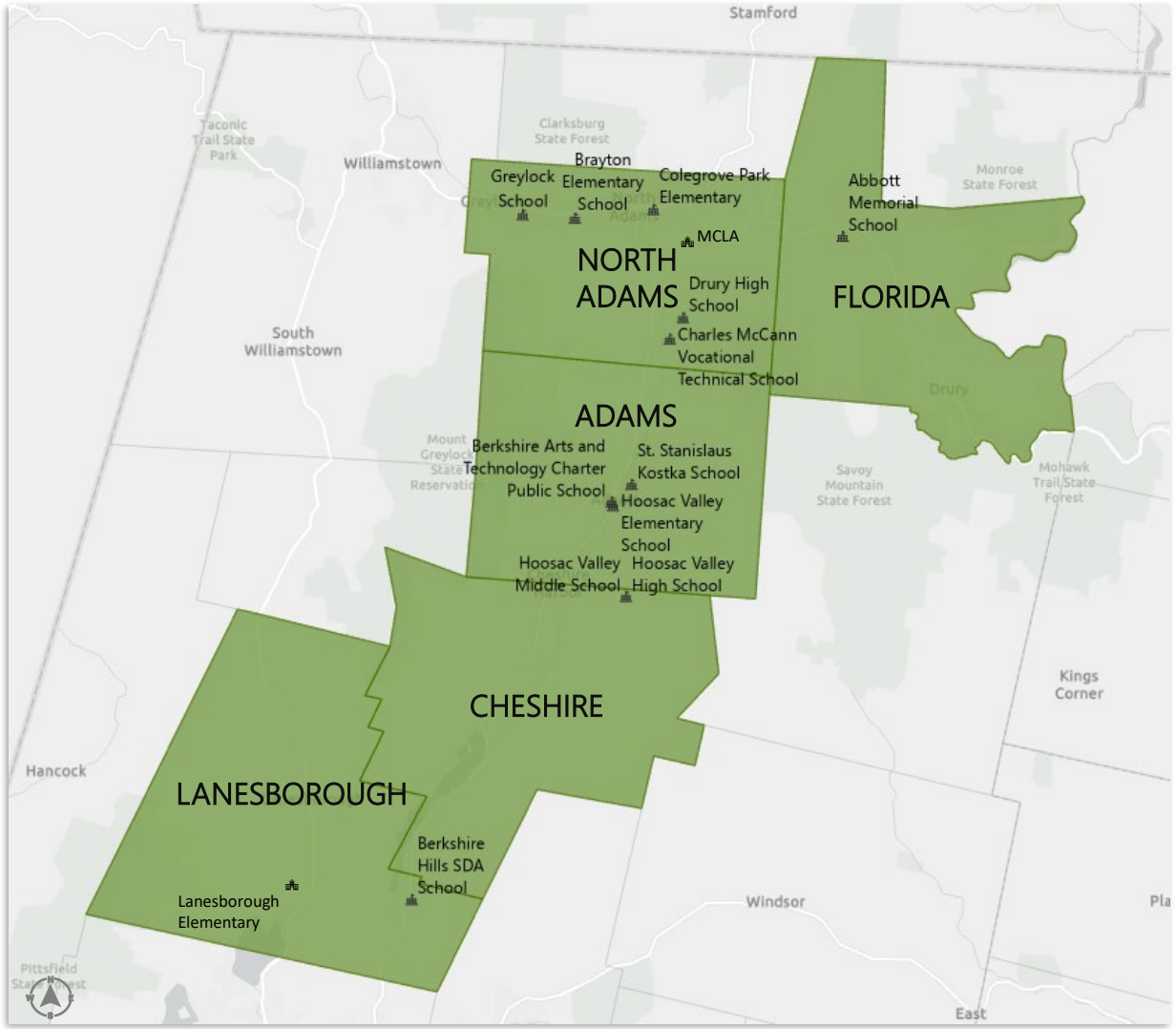
There are 14 schools located within the subject area[1]:

- 2 private schools *(St. Sanislaus Kostka & Berkshire Hills SDA)*
- 1 public college *(Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts)*
- 1 charter school *(Berkshire Arts and Tech Charter)*
- 1 vocational school *(Charles McCann Voc. Tech)*

SCHOOL DISTRICTS

There are 4 separate school districts in the project area:

- North Adams School District *(Florida residents for high school)*
- Hoosac Valley Regional School District *(Adams & Cheshire)*
- Mount Greylock Regional School District *(Lanesborough & Williamstown)*
- Florida School Union *(PK – 08 only)*



Schools in the Project Area

1. Data Source: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

SCHOOL DIGITAL LITERACY RESOURCES

NORTHERN BERKSHIRE ADULT EDUCATION (NBAE)

Free adult classes and tutoring offered through North Adams Public Schools including:

- Basic and advanced literacy and math classes
- Science/social studies
- Financial literacy
- Career exploration and workforce readiness classes
- College preparatory/pre-employment and transition to college courses
- Beginner, intermediate and advanced ESOL English language classes
- **Computer literacy classes** – covering computers, smart phones, internet, email, & Google Suite.

BERKSHIRE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES K12 (BERK12)

- Working with the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) to develop and recommend solutions to declining enrollments, rising operational costs, declining/flat municipal revenues, and reductions in the diversity and range of educational programs available to students across Berkshire County.



Drury High School (North Adams)

OTHER DIGITAL LITERACY EDUCATION PROGRAMMING & INITIATIVES

MCLA NORTHERN BERKSHIRE ADULT BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAM

- Adult Basic Education (ABE) Improve basic reading, writing and math skills
- Adult Secondary Education (ASE) Prepare for the new High School Equivalency Test/GED
- Blended Learning Preparation for the High School Equivalency Test and college and career & Career Readiness in class & online
- ESOL - English for Speakers of Other Languages Classes - are for non-fluent English speakers who want to improve their language skills. Curriculum is designed to help with personal, social and business communications & prepare for U.S. citizenship.
- Digital Literacy Class offered using the North Star Digital Literacy Program. Students participating in this program will be eligible to take a certification exam to demonstrate competency in Digital Literacy.

BERKSHIRE REMOTE LEARNING INITIATIVE

- BRPC led project for school districts in Berkshire County procure an online learning platform & software program and to educate on using the system.

TOWN OF FLORIDA

- Two available internet hot spots:
  - One at the Senior/Community Center and one on River Road
  - It is an open connection available with no password

TOWN OF LANESBOROUGH

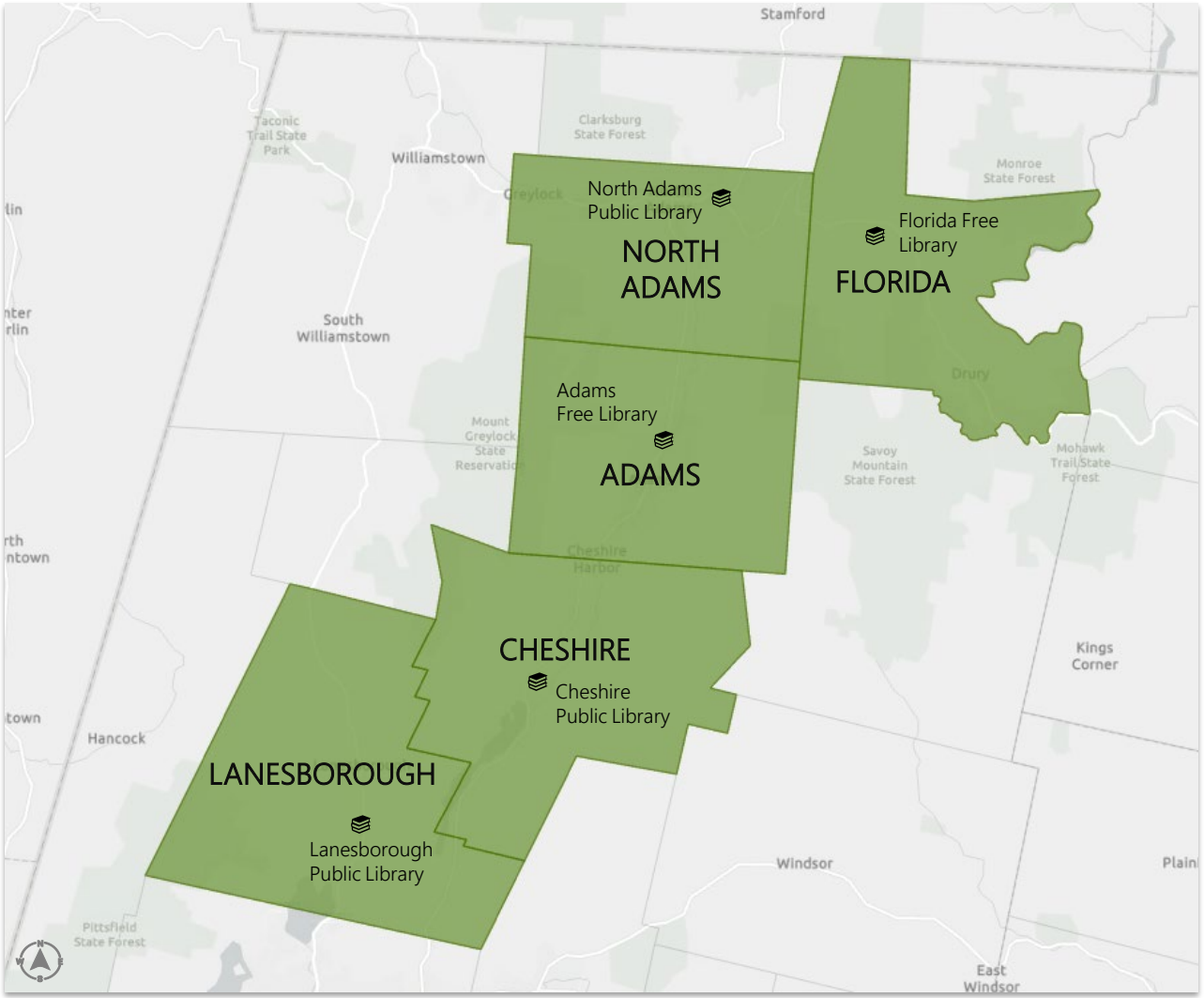
- If any resident is having poor cell service in Town, they are encouraged to reach out to the selectboard.

LIBRARY RESOURCES

EXISTING LIBRARY PROGRAMS

All 5 of the libraries within the subject area are a part of the **Central/Western Massachusetts Automated Resource Sharing (C/W MARS)** library network which covers most of central and western Massachusetts. Resources offered include:

- Open wi-fi networks
- Free access to information in the forms of books, audiobooks, movies, and other materials
- Public computers, study area, reference help and searchable databases
- Career and training resources
- North Adams Public Library Hotspots
  - 10 T-Mobile hotspots for loan to library patrons
- Lanesborough Public Library Hotspot Lending Policy



Libraries in the Project Area

PUBLIC PARKS

ADAMS

- Russell & Bowe Fields
- Adams Visitor Center
- Ashuwillticook Rail Trail
- Thunderbolt Ski Area
- Greylock Glen

CHESHIRE

- Cheshire Reservoir
- Cheshire Harbor Trail
- Ashuwillticook Rail Trail
- The Cobbles

FLORIDA

- Florida State Forest
- Savoy Mountain State Forest
- Monroe State Forest (partial)

LANESBOROUGH

- Mount Greylock State Reservation
- Balance Rock State Park
- Ashuwillticook Rail Trail
- Pontoosuc Lake

NORTH ADAMS

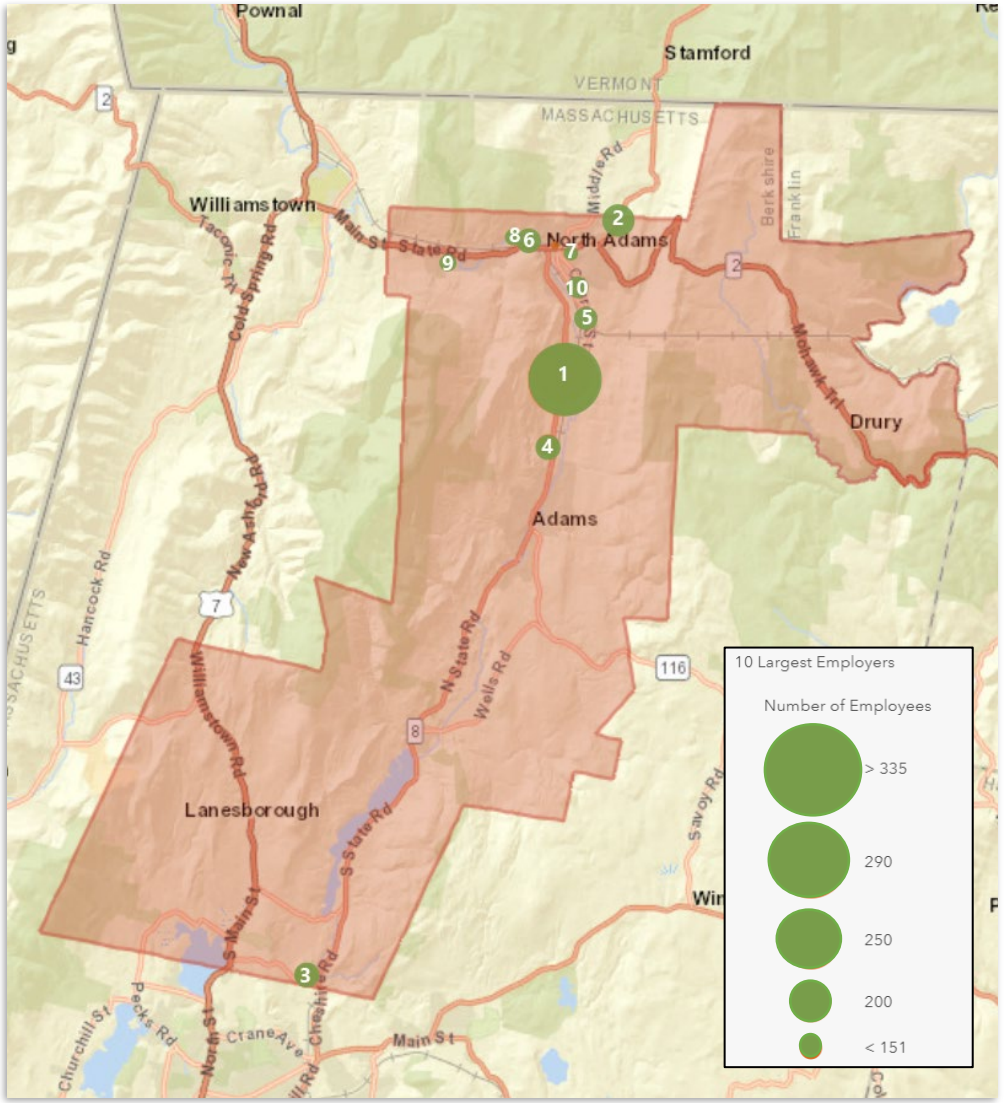
- Historic Valley Campground.
- Natural Bridge State Park.
- Peter W. Foote Vietnam Veterans Memorial Skating Park.
- Recreation Areas.
- Western Gateway Heritage State Park.
- Windsor Lake.



Mount Greylock State Reservation

EMPLOYMENT

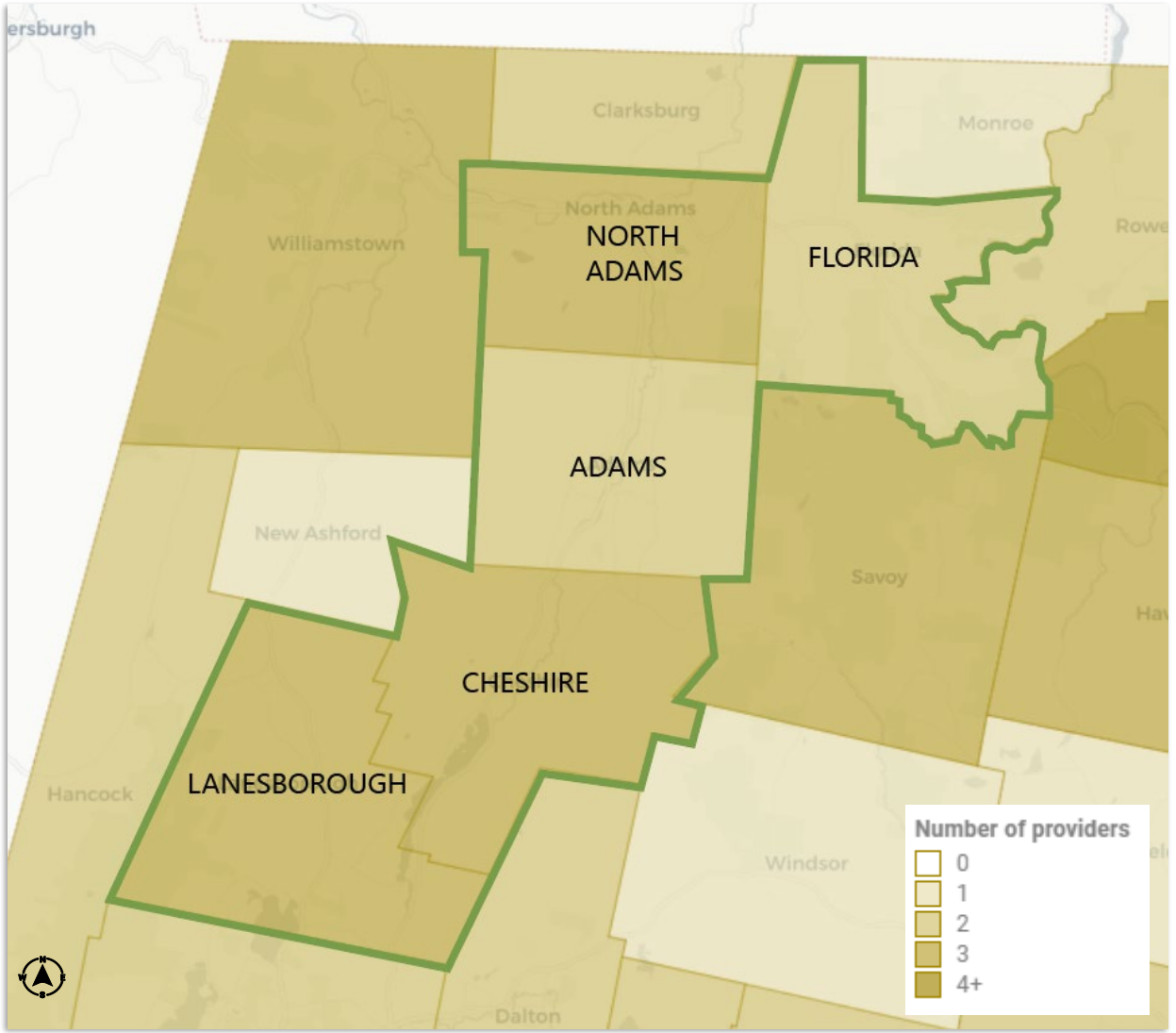
- In 2023, the Project Area had an estimated total **992** businesses and **9,914** employees.
- Since Crane & Co in North Adams (with 400 employees) closed operations in 2020, **Walmart Supercenter** is now the largest employer in the Project Area, with **335** employees.
- Other large employers include North Adams Commons Nursing & Rehabilitation Center (North Adams), Target (Lanesborough), and Specialty Minerals, Inc (Adams).



Source: Esri Business Summary, Data Axle, & MassGIS

NUMBER OF INTERNET PROVIDERS

- This project area is one of the least served areas in Massachusetts.
- According to MBI's data, Charter Communications, Inc. (Spectrum) provides high-speed cable internet to the communities of Lanesborough, Cheshire, Adams and North Adams.
- Charter Communications (Spectrum) is the only high-speed cable provider available in Adams and North Adams.
- Lanesborough and Cheshire have an additional fiber internet option from Westfield Gas & Electric (Whip City Fiber).
- The Town of Florida does not have any available high-speed cable internet providers. Only fixed wireless coverage is available from T Mobile and CRC Communications, LLC (GoNetspeed/WiValley).
- T-Mobile is the only provider available in all 5 communities, offering two different speed options for fixed wireless internet.

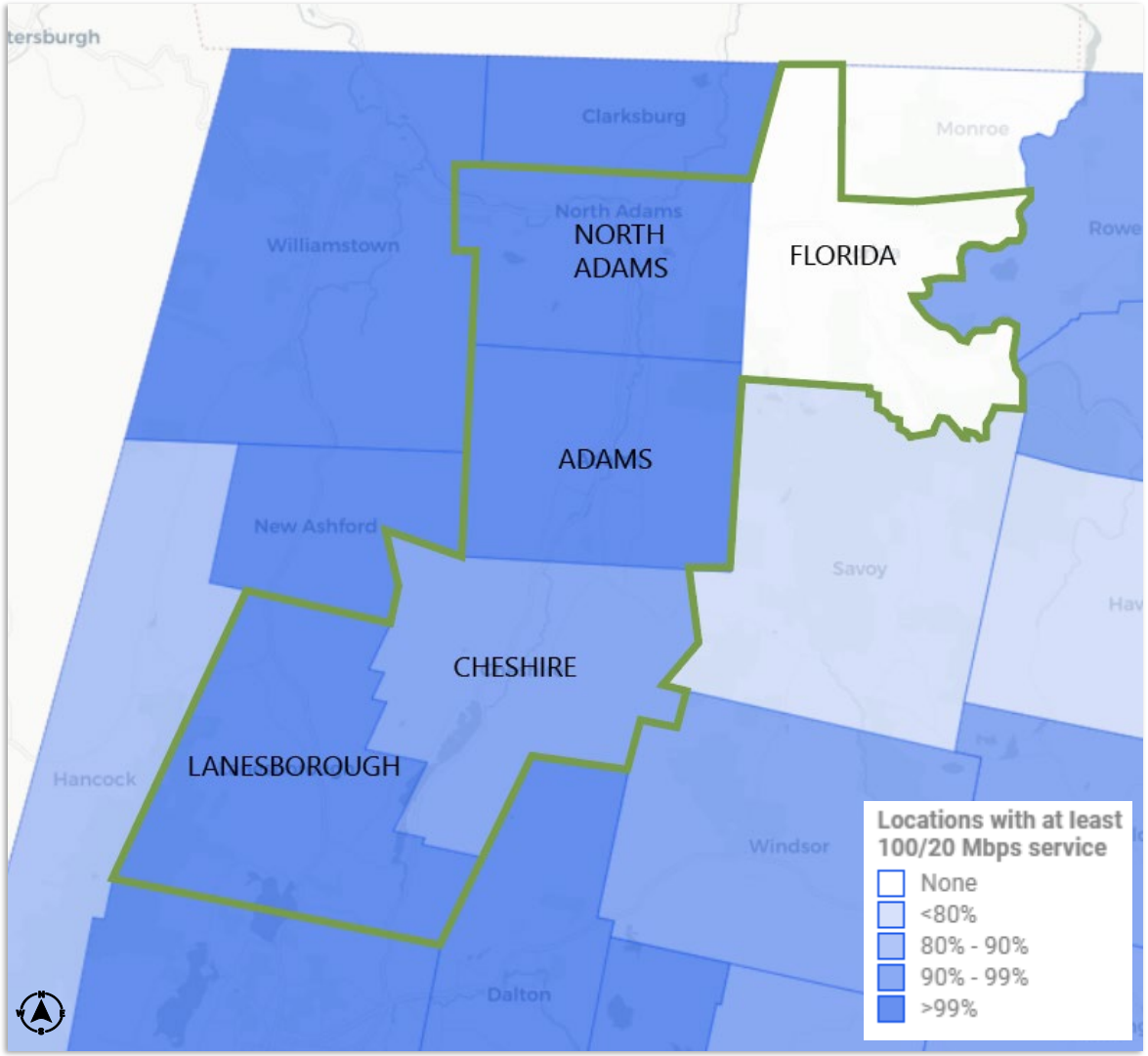


Data Source: Number of Providers: MBI Massachusetts Broadband Map.

MBI MASSACHUSETTS BROADBAND INSTITUTE at the MassTech Collaborative

AVAILABLE INTERNET SPEED

- Charter Communications, Inc. (Spectrum) provides cable at a speed of up to 1000/35 Mbps to the communities of Lanesborough, Cheshire, Adams and North Adams.
- Cheshire is shown to have less coverage than the other towns at only 98.4% coverage.
- The Town of Florida does not have any available cable or high-speed internet access. Florida only has fixed wireless coverage available at a speed range from 25/3 to 100/20.



Data Source: 100/20 Mbps of Service: MBI Massachusetts Broadband Map.

WIREDWEST – *BECKET, HEATH, NEW SALEM, ROWE, WASHINGTON, WINDSOR*

- No longer directly involved with construction of wireless networks
- Signed a contract with Westfield Gas & Electric (Whip City Fiber) to provide network operations, customer service, and other operational costs on a regional basis.

WHIP CITY FIBER - WESTFIELD

- Whip City Fiber is a community owned high-speed internet service delivered to homes and businesses in Westfield, MA that is powered by Westfield Gas + Electric.
- Provides upload and download speeds of up to 1 gigabit per second (1,000 Mbps), ten times faster than the best residential service currently available.
- At the end of 2018 Whip City Fiber completed a 2-year build for the city of Westfield which provides service to over 70% of the community with a goal is to serve all of Westfield by the end of 2025.
- Whip City Fiber advertises availability to multiple communities in Western MA, including:
    - Alford, Ashfield, Becket, Blandford, Charlemont, Chesterfield, Colrain, Cummington, Goshen, Heath, Leyden, New Ashford, New Salem, Otis, Plainfield, Rowe, Washington, Wendell, West Springfield, and Windsor

GCET – GREENFIELD, MA

- Greenfield Community Energy and Technology (GCET), formed in 2015.
- GCET is a public organization called a Municipal Light Plant that provides Internet, Streaming TV and Phone services to the citizens of Greenfield, MA. It is owned by the citizens of Greenfield and governed by a Board of Commissioners that provide oversight for GCET as mandated by the Governor and Massachusetts State Law.
- GCET operates as a semi-independent department of the City of Greenfield. They build, maintain and operate a network of over 100 miles of fiber optic cable to bring Internet, Streaming TV and Phone service to residents and businesses in Greenfield. We also provide service for The City of Greenfield and Greenfield Public Schools.

CROSSROADS FIBER - CHICOPEE

- Crossroads Fiber is a local high-speed Internet Service Provider powered by Chicopee Electric Light. Crossroads Fiber will be an all-fiber network that plans to deliver Internet speeds of up to 1Gbps (1000 Mbps).
- Crossroads Fiber is building out and offering Internet service in phases, driven by customer demand starting by servicing business customers first before offering service to residences.

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1. Project Overview
2. What is Digital Equity?
3. Baseline Conditions
4. Next Steps

4. Next Steps

1. Form a Steering Committee
2. Identify Key Stakeholders for Interviews
3. Discuss Timing/Location for First Public Meeting