

LS10147



# Main Street

Main Streets Then and Now

By Aly Fox for GEOL196

- Main streets, simply, are the principle streets in a town. They are often called “Main Street”, though every town’s main streets are different.



Main Street, St. Albans 2004



*Orleans, Vermont—Main Street*

LS02580 Main Street, Barton 1903

This is a journey through the eyes of Vermont’s Main Streets. It will show the changes Vermont has gone through, as a result of both humans and nature.

# Hardwick, then and now

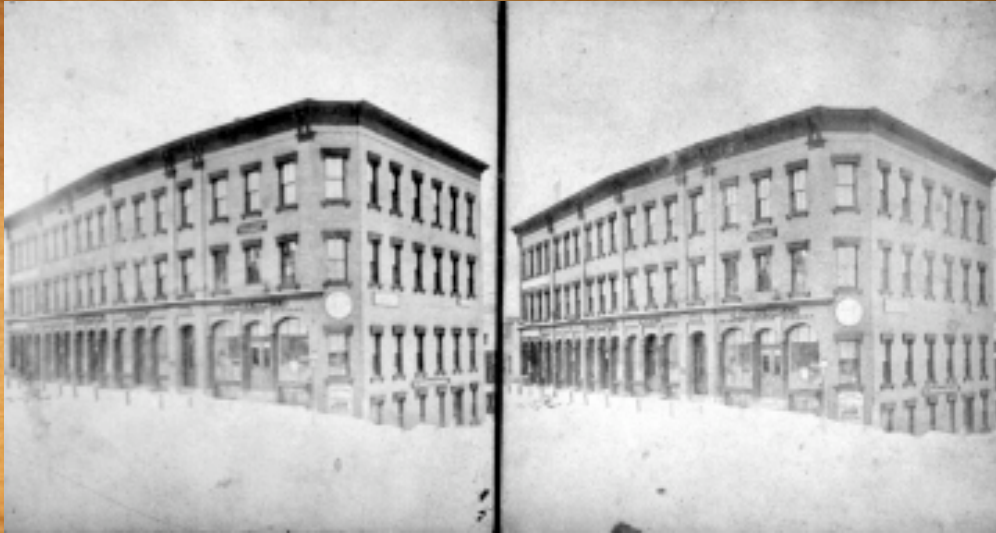


A postcard from 1905



A photograph 100  
years later

If there was not a town sign, a Main Street  
was an indicator of settlement.



St. Johnsbury- corner of Main and  
East, 1880

Same corner, 2005



What makes a “principle” street? Classically, Main Streets were the commercial centers. That is still the case today- on any of the “main drags” in Vermont you can find some combination of stores and eateries.



Main Street, St. Johnsbury, 2006

As populations grew, towns grew and changed, some Main Streets have been taken over by other main streets- such as Church St. in Burlington, the pedestrian commercial zenith.

Church Street, 1863-1875



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Church Street, 2004



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Disasters have been known to strike Vermont. Both natural and man made forces have caused some towns to rebuild their main streets. Take Bristol, for example- in 1924 a fire struck Main Street. Notice the gutted buildings post-fire.



The 1927 flood also caused damage to many towns

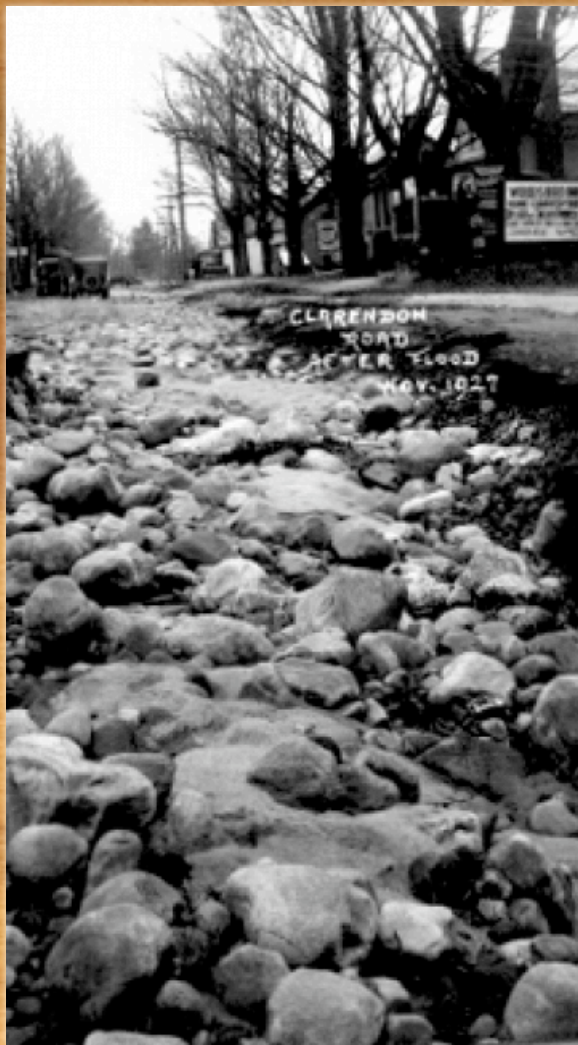


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Main Street, Montpelier, 1927



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Flooded Main Street,  
Clarendon 1927



Main Street, Richford, 1927

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These two photos, and the previous two photos, show serious damage to the main thoroughfares in various Vermont towns. A drive through any of these towns today show how the towns have been rebuilt.

# The introduction of cars made Main Streets wider

Photos from 1914 and 2000 in  
Morgan, Vermont.



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Notice the changes!

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A car on a dirt road at a toll gate, Winhall 1916.

In 1916, there were 10,000 cars driving in America- on unpaved roads. The technology of pavement existed, and just needed some time to make its way up to Vermont.

Today, our Main Streets are changing and losing prominence due to sprawl



Aerial view  
of  
Colchester,  
2004

Mega-shopping centers, such as the one in Williston, take away business from local efforts. This is a major cause of change in our small towns.

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Williston, today



Williston, 1925

[http://www.elpais.com/elpaismedia/diario/media/200504/04/economia/20050404elpepiec0\\_2\\_I\\_SCO.jpg](http://www.elpais.com/elpaismedia/diario/media/200504/04/economia/20050404elpepiec0_2_I_SCO.jpg)

Preservation efforts are being made  
to keep our Main Streets in tact

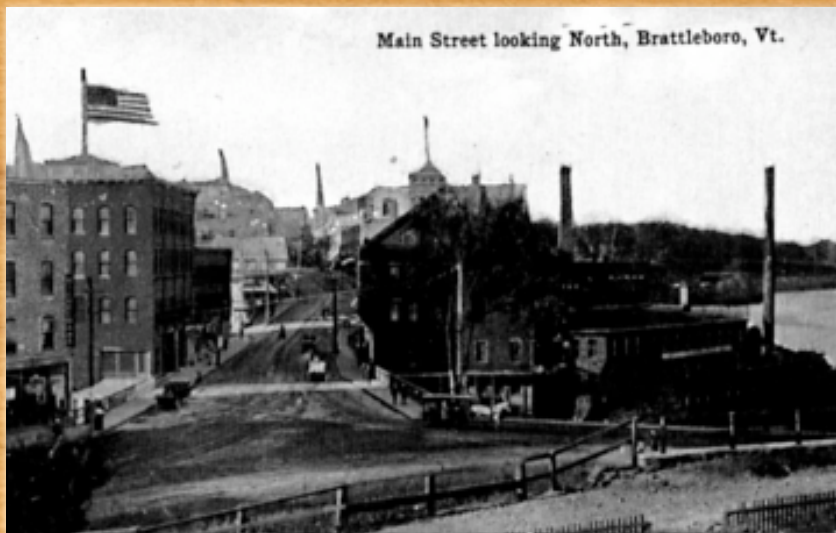


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Springfield, today

Institutions like Vermont Division for Historic Preservation  
and the Main Street Center (national) are working towards  
preserving the historic Main Streets in Vermont.

The landscape of Vermont has changed drastically since the land was settled. The biggest impact has been the expansion of towns and cities.



Main Street, Brattleboro 1913

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Main Street, Brattleboro 2000



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Vermont's main streets are the hallmarks of the many small towns found within. The towns will continue to evolve as the landscape does as well.



## Main Street, Wallingford 1914

### References

- 1) “History of Concrete Pavements”. <http://www.ce.ksu.edu/facultystaff/stefan/ce777/docs/LO2.pdf>

Image on Slide 14 courtesy of: [http://www.elpais.com/elpaismedia/diario/media/200504/04/economia/20050404elpepieco\\_2\\_I\\_SCO.jpg](http://www.elpais.com/elpaismedia/diario/media/200504/04/economia/20050404elpepieco_2_I_SCO.jpg)

Duany, A. et al. Suburban Nation. New York. North Point Press. 2000

“Main Streets” and “Vermont”. Articles courtesy of Wikipedia.com

National Trust Main Street Center. <http://www.mainstreet.org>

Vermont Division for Historic Preservation. <http://www.historicvermont.org>