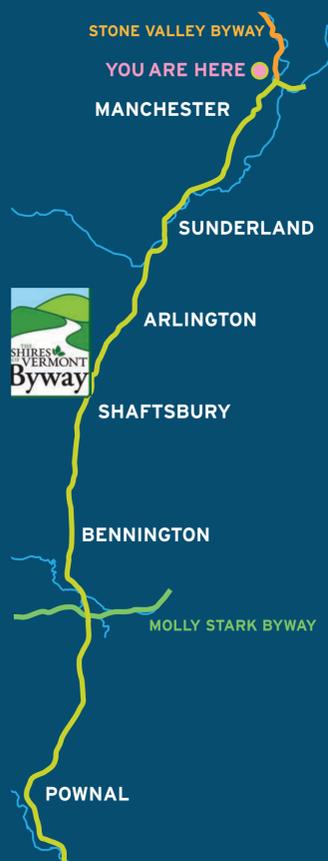


Manchester

Heart of the Northshire

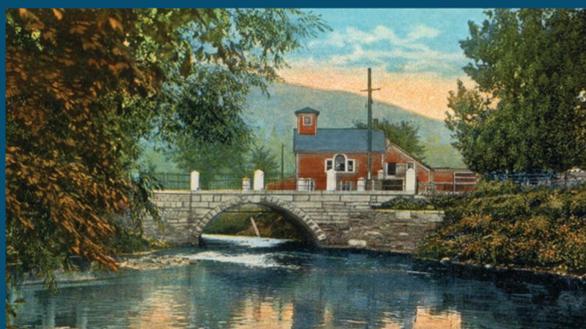


Bennington County is comprised of 17 towns and is the only Vermont county with two shire towns (county seats): Manchester in the Northshire (nine towns) and Bennington in the Southshire (eight towns.) The two shire towns are linked by the scenic Shires of Vermont Byway, which intersects with the Stone Valley Byway in Manchester and the Molly Stark Byway in Bennington. To the south, the Byway travels through the scenic Pownal Valley to the Berkshires.



The Batten Kill

Vermont designated the Batten Kill in 1991 as the first “Outstanding Resource Waters” in Vermont. In the 1800s and early 1900s the Batten Kill, which flows under the roundabout, powered mills producing world famous architectural marble for statues and buildings. Today it is recognized as a world class fly fishing trout stream.

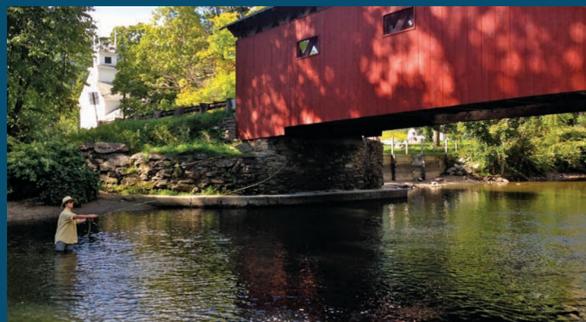


Historic marble bridge remains under roundabout. Used by permission of the Manchester Historical Society

Manchester Riverwalk follows the river through downtown. The Batten Kill then winds its way southwest through Sunderland to Arlington and has multiple access points to the river for swimming, kayaking, fishing and tubing.

Recreation

Nestled between the Green Mountains to the East and the Taconic Range to the West, Manchester and the Northshire are blessed with majestic beauty. These mountains, the Batten Kill, and the four-season climate offer year round activities such as hiking on the Appalachian/Long Trail, driving or



Fishing on the Batten Kill. Courtesy of Jim Henderson

hiking to the top of Mt Equinox, the tallest mountain in the Taconic Range, golfing on nationally ranked golf courses, enjoying town recreation parks in Manchester and Arlington or taking a quiet walk around a quaint historic Northshire village. Access to snow shoeing and cross country skiing in the nearby ski areas of Stratton and Bromley add to the enjoyment of staying in Manchester, which had been selected as a #1 Fall Foliage Town in Vermont.

Agriculture

The quality soils and climate of the Northshire have given rise to wholesome locally grown products. While Vermont is recognized as the nation’s top producer of maple syrup, the Northshire is widely



known for its locally grown organic produce, artisan breads and awarded winning cheeses made from goat, cow, or sheep milk. The working landscape and its bounty can be enjoyed at frequent year round farmers’ markets, at area nurseries or on a scenic drive on the Shires Byway.

Entrepreneurial Spirit

The entrepreneurial spirit is alive in the Northshire, the place where in 1853 Franklin Orvis founded the Equinox Hotel and in 1856 his brother Charles founded Orvis Fly Fishing Company, the first mail order company in the US. Founded in Manchester in 1976, the Northshire Bookstore has been honored as the best independent bookstore



Family fun provided by local entrepreneurs. Courtesy of Karl Pfister

in New England. While it is known for its accomplished chocolatiers and bakers, retail stores with products from bird houses to beads, designer outlets, and award winning innkeepers and restaurateurs, successful high tech companies, like Arlington’s Mack Molding, have also put down roots in the Northshire.

Arts and Cultural Heritage

In 1775, Ethan Allen marched north on what is the Shires Byway today on his way to capturing Fort Ticonderoga. In 1777, revolutionary war troops camped in Manchester and then traveled south along the Shires Byway to the Battle of Bennington. In the years before the Civil War, with its stately homes and marble sidewalks, Manchester became a tourist



Hildene gardens and main house. Courtesy Hildene, The Lincoln Family Home

destination when the railroads came to southern Vermont. With the Southern Vermont Arts Center, the American Museum of Fly Fishing and Hildene, the Lincoln Family Home, as anchors, Manchester is also home to countless galleries, artisans, and music and arts festivals. Whether working on canvas or paper, artists and writers like Norman Rockwell, Rockwell Kent and Dorothy Canfield Fisher chose to call the Northshire home.

Locally grown products abound in the Northshire. Courtesy of Elizabeth Berger

This panel was funded by the Federal Highway Administration in partnership with the Shires Byway Committee, Bennington County Regional Commission and The Northshire Bookstore.