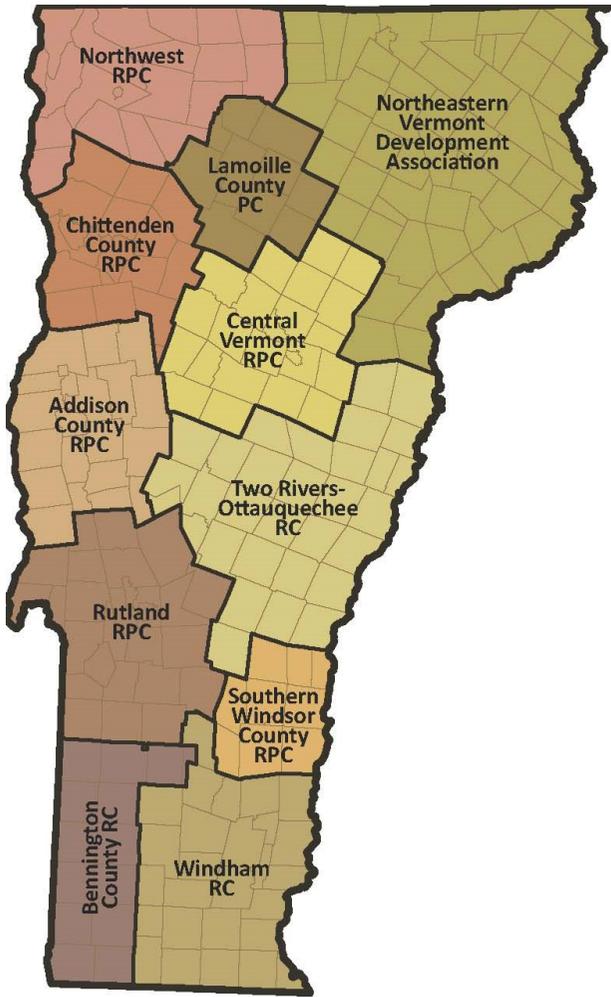




FISCAL YEAR 2019

Annual Report



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Addison County Regional Planning Commission

FY 2019 Annual Report

The Addison County Regional Planning Commission (ACRPC) serves 21 municipalities within Addison County. ACRPC assists towns in the Addison Region (the “Region”) to help provide effective local government and works cooperatively with them to address statewide, regional and local issues.

Municipalities choose to be members of ACRPC. Each municipality’s legislative body appoints 1, 2 or 3 Commissioners, depending upon the size of the municipality, to represent the municipality’s interest on ACRPC’s Board. Additionally, ACRPC’s Board accommodates up to six citizen-interest commissioners who represent other regional interests such as business and industry, natural resources, agriculture and social services. ACRPC delegates a significant portion of its work to six (6) sub-committees, which review various aspects of the Commission’s business. Commissioners serve on these committees and make recommendations for action to the full Commission. All of ACRPC’s committees are advisory. Only the full Commission has the authority to make decisions to bind ACRPC. Six highly-qualified staff with more than 100 years of combined professional experience provide support to the Commission and its committees and execute the Commission’s work program.

MUNICIPAL PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION

RPCs act as cost-effective professional planning staff for many of Vermont’s municipalities. Of the 21 towns served by ACRPC, only Middlebury employs a full-time planner. All other communities rely on volunteer planning commissions aided and supplemented by ACRPC’s staff or outside consultants. ACRPC’s work in recent years has focused on improving town plans and local permitting through education and enhanced consultations (on-site training), modernizing bylaws, facilitating transition to Development Review Boards and implementing new requirements for economic development and flood resiliency planning. Current and clear plans and bylaws are essential to ensure a smooth state and local permitting process. This work is supported through a combination of Federal, State and Local funding sources. All technical assistance provided this year is shown on the “At Work” map; highlights include:

- ACRPC worked with the Towns of Bristol and Monkton to re-write their municipal plans.
- ACRPC helped the Towns of Shoreham, Cornwall, Waltham and Ripton draft new zoning regulations to implement their plan.
- ACRPC provided technical support to all Zoning Administrators within the Region and held two Zoning Administrator Roundtables.
- ACRPC conducted municipal consultations in Vergennes, Salisbury, Orwell and Bristol.
- ACRPC helped the Towns of Addison and Orwell work on Village Center Designations.

REGIONAL PLANNING

RPCs coordinate planning at the regional level through the adoption and implementation of a comprehensive regional plan, and related studies. These plans guide local planning and the investment decisions of the public and private sectors.

This year ACRPC spent significant amounts of time working to revise the Energy, Population and Housing and Economic Development Sections of its Regional Plan. It passed its enhanced Energy Plan on July 18th, 2018 just at the beginning of the fiscal year. ACRPC implements its Plan by focusing a significant portion of its work on downtowns and village centers. In Middlebury, ACRPC continued to serve as the Municipal Project Manager on several community infrastructure projects creating sidewalks or shared use paths to tie neighborhoods and industrial areas to downtown Middlebury. ACRPC also wrote and is helping to implement a Lake Champlain Basin Program Grant to create a plan to improve wastewater and stormwater infrastructure in the Town of Bristol. In Addison, Orwell, Shoreham and Whiting, ACRPC helped the local volunteer planning commissions focus on improving village centers. Please see Economic and Community Development and Special Projects for more details on each of these undertakings.

BROWNFIELDS

Vermont RPCs have sought and been awarded over 10 million dollars for this economic development initiative. RPCs have performed environmental site assessments on brownfield locations throughout the state. Environmental site assessments allow properties, and formerly degraded properties, to be sold, remediated (if needed), developed or re-developed in ways that benefit the local and state economy, create or protect jobs and increase housing opportunities.

- ACRPC does not have any Brownfields funding of its own at this time. However, ACRPC can work with its member municipalities and ANR to address brownfield issues on an ad hoc basis. This year ACRPC addressed issues with the Towns of Middlebury and Ferrisburgh.

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Economic growth is supported best when development efforts are partnered with solid planning functions. RPCs work with towns and in strong partnership with Regional Development Corporations (RDCs) to this end in a number of ways, including development of comprehensive strategies that will help to position Vermont to achieve long term economic gain.

- ACRPC continued to work with the Town of Bristol to support increased development within its Village Planning Area by supporting implementation of the Stoney Hill Master Plan. Bristol has traditionally had problems retaining its commercial businesses because they outgrow its infrastructure. This business park is being designed within the Village Planning Area to create new spaces for growing businesses within Bristol's village, supporting the economic growth of this area.
- ACRPC worked with VTrans and the City of Vergennes to study and find solutions for the issues created by heavy truck traffic within the City Center. The study proposed some interim traffic calming measures on Main Street which will be implemented this year (2020) and proposed a new economic development corridor within the City to help get the trucks out of the downtown. ACRPC and the City of Vergennes continue to work with VTrans to pursue that long-term solution.
- ACRPC is working jointly with the Addison County Economic Development Corporation to create a Regional Economic Development plan that will serve as a portion of the Regional Plan and also serve as the Plan for the Economic Development Corporation. ACRPC also worked with ACEDC to support several grant applications for local businesses.

- ACRPC worked with the Town of Shoreham to plan for the redevelopment of the Farnham Parcel, a 300-acre town owned property bordering its village to the north.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Through contracts with the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans), RPCs coordinate the federally funded Transportation Planning Initiative (TPI). This effort provides a statewide framework for public involvement in planning the improvements to Vermont’s transportation system, with local communities represented through regional Transportation Advisory Committees (TAC). Each regional TAC prioritizes projects, identifies local and regional transportation needs, and provides the platform for public involvement in the planning and development of the State’s transportation system. RPCs serve as the point of delivery for the statewide transportation planning process to support local, regional, state and federal transportation network advancement. RPCs help fulfill five transportation planning objectives. The Objectives and ACRPC’s work under each are listed below.

Objective #1: Enhance Cooperation and Coordination between VTrans, RPC Regions and Municipalities

- a. Toward this end, ACRPC held 10 TAC meetings, which included participation from 20 different people representing 17 of the Region’s communities.
- b. ACRPC also coordinated project meetings on 11 separate projects or planning topics. These included:
 - 22A Truck Mitigation Study
 - Walk Bike Council and 2020 Walk Bike Summit, Triangle Bike Loop
 - Safety/Redesign at on Route 7 Ferrisburgh - Old Hollow Rd, Route 125, New Haven - Sawyer Rd.
 - Road Foremen Meetings
 - Middlebury Tunnel replacement, Middlebury Better Connections
 - Tri-Valley Transit, E&D Committee
 - Middlebury Airport Planning

Objective #2: Better Connect Federal, Regional and Statewide Transportation Planning

ACRPC hosts the current regional transportation plan, adopted in July 2018. It uses this plan to inform its participation in both Act 250 and Title 30, Section 248. Last year ACRPC filed transportation-specific comments in Tractor Supply’s Act 250 hearing and in GMP Ferrisburgh’s 248 hearing. ACRPC also participated extensively in Tri Valley Transits planning committees and activities. ACRPC staff served on the Executive, Finance, Development, Nominating and E&D Committees. ACRPC staff also contributed regional and local information to three VTrans planning committees, including the committees creating the Bike/Ped Policy Plan, the Aviation Policy Plan and its Transit Policy Plan. Lastly, ACRPC’s TAC worked to Prioritize VTrans projects within the Region.

Objective #3: Provide Technical Assistance to Municipalities

ACRPC spent approximately seventy-eight percent (78%) of its transportation budget helping its member municipalities. Activities included road foremen meetings for 17 of its member towns, assisting municipalities with seven transportation related grants, conducting municipal transportation inventories in five communities, conducting three municipal transportation related feasibility/project definition studies; helping two communities write the transportation sections of their town plans and conducting 10 road erosion inventories in support of the MRGP.

Objective #4: Advance VTrans Strategic and Long-Range Transportation Plans

ACRPC conducted 14 separate data collection activities for VTrans. Work included collecting “Complete Streets” data, two Park and Ride Counts and MIRE work.

Objective #5: Provide a Mechanism for Improved Public Outreach and Education

ACRPC participated in outreach to communities following extreme weather events three times under direction from DEMS, assisted in continuing communication involving an ice-jam in Starksboro that threatened a road, participated in outreach and planning for the Middlebury bridge project, coordinated community meetings for the 22A study, and conducted outreach on behalf of the community following a fatal accident on VT 125 highlighting community safety concerns about that roadway.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & DISASTER RESILIENCY

RPCs play key roles in the mitigation and preparedness phases of emergency management in partnership with Vermont’s Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, VTrans, and the Agency of Natural Resources. RPCs provide direct staff to the State Emergency Operations Center, administrative support to the Local Emergency Planning Committees, and coordination among responders and planners throughout the State’s four Public Safety Districts. RPC’s also assist with updating floodplain bylaws, creating FEMA-qualified hazard mitigation plans, coordinating updates to municipal emergency plans and providing as needed assistance in special circumstances and declared disasters.

- Fifteen of the twenty-one municipalities in the Region (71%) currently have a hazard mitigation plan (LHMP) either adopted or under review.
- Eighteen of twenty-one of municipalities in the Region (86%) currently have an annually updated local emergency management plan (LEMP).
- ACRPC participated in one emergency management exercise this fiscal year, including the town of Vergennes, first responders, and the Collins Aerospace-UTC corporation, that helped improve the community’s preparation for disaster management.
- Staff attended the Vermont Emergency Preparedness Conference and the Resilient Vermont workshops to learn and bring local perspective to the discussions.
- ACRPC hosted trainings for local officials in hazardous materials reporting, local emergency management, and incident command systems. Each workshop improved local communities and agencies ability to respond to disasters.
- Staff assisted in the coordination of the Addison County Emergency Planning Committee. At monthly meetings, ACRPC helped coordinate a regional response to disasters and identification of hazardous materials stored throughout the county.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM SERVICES

RPCs provide municipalities, state agencies and regional groups with mapping and data analysis services in support of their projects.

- ACRPC’s mapping supports nearly every planning function it performs. Every town plan or zoning bylaw created contains maps produced by ACRPC.
- ACRPC received the VPA Planning Project of the Year award for the App it created to support the data gathering efforts that its transportation planner is undertaking to map hydrologically

connected roadways within the Region and improved a similar app previously developed that collects and provides culvert data. The apps, built on an existing software platform, allow for the quick and efficient collection, storage and transmittal of road and culvert data collected to improve water quality.

- ACRPC maintained all regional databases.

ENERGY CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT

A renewed focus on clean, renewable, sustainable and affordable energy presents Vermont with great opportunity and significant challenges. RPCs integrate energy planning with land use, transportation and natural resources efforts, and work with municipalities to assist with project implementation. RPCs participate in Section 248 proceedings and support comprehensive planning at the local and regional level to inform the permitting process.

- ACRPC completed work on the Energy Section of its Regional Plan, including creating maps and land use projects regarding the region's ability to host local energy generation resources sufficient to meet its share of generation necessary to support the State of Vermont's goal of producing 90% of its energy from renewable sources by 2050. ACRPC adopted its Regional Energy plan at the beginning of the fiscal year on July 17, 2018.
- ACRPC worked with five new municipalities within its region to help them revise their local energy plans (Whiting, Bristol, Vergennes, New Haven and Shoreham) and control their own energy future. Each new plan includes all data necessary to satisfy state requirements for enhanced energy plans. Plans meeting these goals will receive a higher level of deference from the Public Utilities Commission. ACRPC continues to support previous town energy plans (Leicester, Salisbury, Ripton, Weybridge, Monkton and Panton) and work with them through the local designation process towards adoption.
- ACRPC supported many solar arrays in the Region that met the criteria it created for siting solar facilities.

WATERSHED PLANNING & PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

RPCs work with the Agency of Natural Resources to assist with completion of the EPA required watershed plans. RPCs also work with municipalities to implement river corridor assessments in local planning efforts and regulations, which result in better and safer growth management decisions.

- ACRPC continued its support of and participation as part of the Addison County River Watch Collaborative (ACRWC). ACRWC provides water quality sampling in 6 watersheds and submits samples to a state lab. ACRPC hosts the ACRWC meetings and sampling events, maintains the website with current sampling data for the public, and supports presentations to targeted community boards and "kitchen water chats."
- ACRPC staff participates in the Lake Champlain Basin Program's Technical Advisory Committee.
- ACRPC works regularly with its municipal members to improve water quality data for their local road systems. See Transportation Planning.
- ACRPC worked as project administrator for a project to create a master stormwater plan for Bristol Village.
- ACRPC worked with ANR's Basin Planner to help re-write the Otter Creek Basin Plan to incorporate the municipal data and projects it had collected.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

RPCs Work on a number of unique projects each year. Examples at ACRPC include:

- ACRPC serves as the municipal project manager on two sidewalk/shared use path improvement projects within the Towns of Middlebury and Weybridge. These projects enhance a popular walking route that connects Middlebury's downtown with other portions of town, including its industrial area, and neighborhoods in Middlebury and Weybridge. The Exchange Street Sidewalk project is in the process of procuring rights of way. Construction began on the Pulp Mill Bridge/Seymour Street sidewalk in May to be completed in July 2019.
- ACRPC served as the host for monthly meetings of Conservation Commission representatives pursuing reclassification of all or part of the Otter Creek wetland complex as a Class I wetland. ACRPC provided maps and mailing information for communicating with area landowners.

ADMINISTRATION & FUNDING

ACRPC receives most of its funding through grants, and through a performance-based contract with the state. Town assessments constitute a small but very important percentage of our funding. For the 2019 fiscal year, ACRPC's total revenue of approximately \$699,000 dollars was derived from 91 percent state and federal grants supporting regional projects, 3 percent municipal project grant funding, and 6 percent from town assessments. While percentages may vary slightly from year to year, the year was typical of ACRPC received revenue.

Virtually all of the ACRPC's revenue sources are tied to contracts with scopes of work, guidelines and/or performance measures. This means that the ACRPC has limited control over how it chooses to use the vast majority of its funding. Funding received through town assessments and the Agency of Commerce and Community Development ("ACCD") are the exception, which makes these funding streams particularly important. Such funding provides the Region with the greatest latitude to respond to the Region's needs. Town assessments, and the funding received through the ACRPC's performance contract with ACCD, are also necessary to provide matching funds required by grantors. The grants ACRPC receives enables the commission to work with represented towns on improvements in sectors such as transportation, emergency planning, community development, energy, and natural resources. Revenue from virtually all federal and state grantors requires matching funds, and typically non-federal matching funds. Required match ranges from 10 percent (Transportation Planning Initiative) to 50 percent (Emergency Management Planning Grant).

ACRPC has an audit on an annual basis. For FY 2018, its most recent audit, there were no significant findings, which is the same result found in audits conducted in past years. ACRPC's audit for FY 2019 will be completed by December 2019.

'AT WORK' MAP

The map depicting the range of services provided by the ACRPC to member municipalities is included on the next page.

ACRPC at Work: FY 2019

Type of Projects

Projects

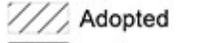
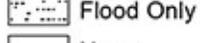
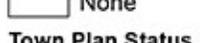
Assistance

-  Bridge and Culvert Inventory
-  Brownfield Assistance
-  Clean Water Activities
-  Enhanced Energy Planning
-  Emergency Planning
-  Grant Writing
-  Economic Development
-  Mapping
-  Planning and Zoning Assistance
-  Road Erosion Inventory
-  Traffic Count

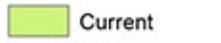
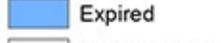
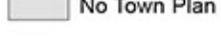
Designated Downtown or Village

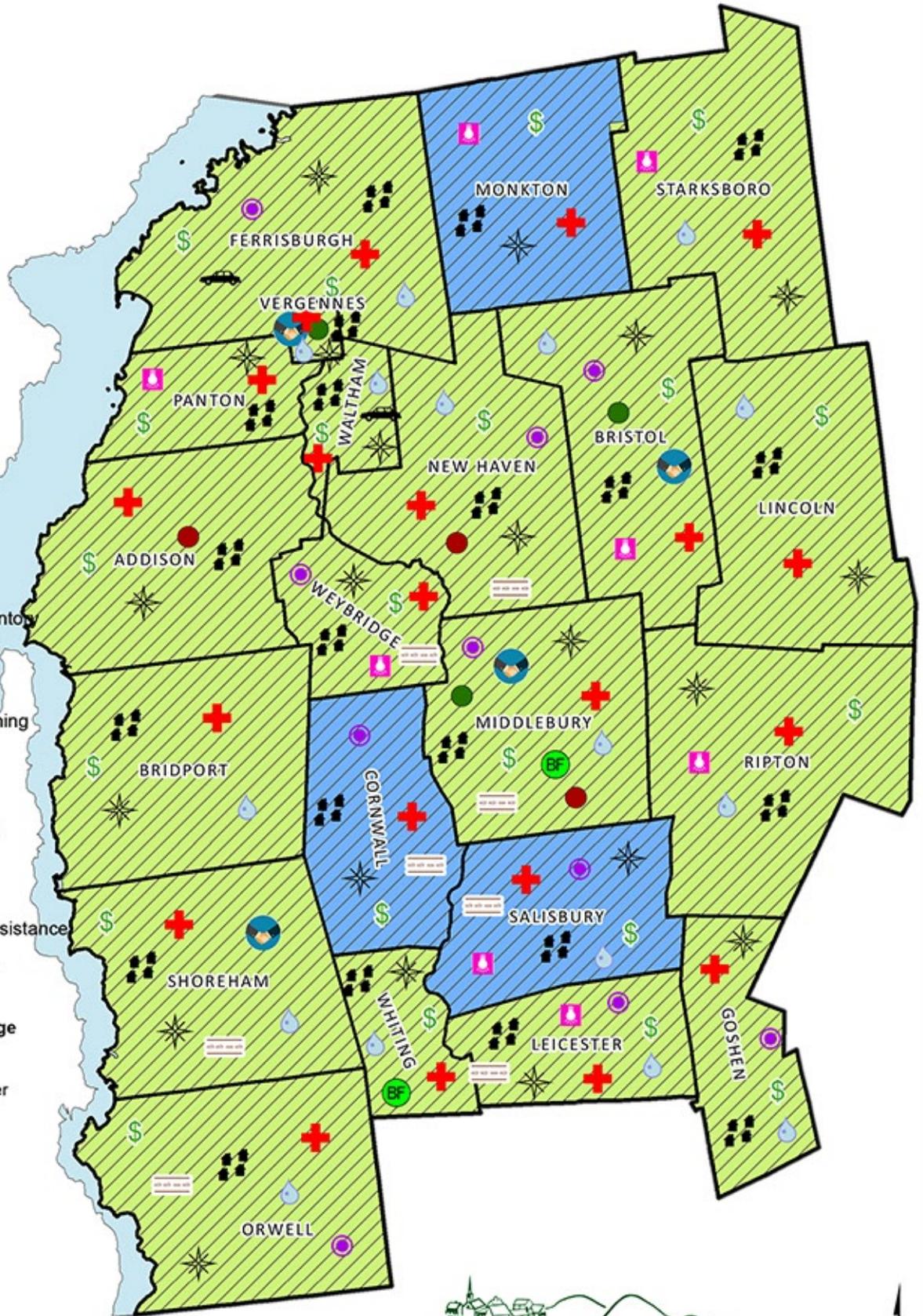
-  Designated Downtown
-  Designated Growth Center
-  Designated Village

Zoning Bylaw Status

-  Adopted
-  Flood Only
-  None

Town Plan Status

-  Current
-  Expired
-  No Town Plan



Addison County
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Bennington County Regional Commission

FY 2019 Annual Report

The Bennington County Regional Commission (BCRC) was created by the seventeen towns and villages it serves, and works with an on behalf of those municipalities to build strong, resilient, and sustainable communities, to foster economic prosperity, and to promote a high quality of life for residents of the region. This mission is accomplished through direct planning and community development assistance to town and village governments, through preparation and implementation of regional plans and studies, and through synergistic working relationships with local and regional organizations. The BCRC works cooperatively with local governments to establish and advance regional cohesiveness, actively advocates for adherence to adopted regional policies, and facilitates effective communication between local, state, and federal levels of government.

The BCRC maintains an office in an historic building in the center of Bennington's downtown. The Commission is overseen by municipally appointed commissioners representing each of the member towns and villages as well as eight commissioners representing specific interests such as economic development, housing, transportation, and public health. The BCRC employs eight full-time and one part-time staff and supervises a full-time Americorps VISTA. Principal program areas with assigned staff responsibilities include: municipal and regional planning, transportation, environmental/water quality planning, community and economic development, emergency management planning, energy planning, public health, and solid waste planning and management.

MUNICIPAL PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION

Regional Planning Commissions act as a cost-effective professional planning staff for many of Vermont's municipalities. Work in recent years been focused on improving town plans and local permitting through education and regular consultations (on-site training), bylaw modernization, assisting with implementation of local development review boards, support for development in downtowns and village centers, and meeting new requirements for economic development and flood resiliency planning. Municipal plans and regulations that are clear and up-to-date are essential in smooth state and local permitting. The BCRC's work in municipal planning is supported through municipal and regional planning funds, payments from member towns and villages, and other grants. All technical assistance provided this year is shown on the At Work map (attached); highlights include:

- The BCRC worked with the Village of North Bennington and the towns of Dorset, Arlington, and Shaftsbury to develop updates to their municipal plans. The plans for Stamford, Sunderland, Manchester, Pownal, and Peru were amended to be consistent with "Act 174" energy planning standards. All plans are reviewed for conformance with statutory requirements, and implementation projects are clearly delineated.
- BCRC staff worked closely with Woodford and Arlington to develop comprehensive updates to local land use regulations and supported the Stamford Planning Commission as it reviewed and revised specific sections of its zoning bylaw. The BCRC worked with the Town of Pownal on a comprehensive rewrite of its land use regulations, including provisions to encourage mixed uses in designated areas and to promote economic development (work continues). The BCRC was hired by the Town of Bennington to revise its land use regulations (districts within the designated growth center) to rely more heavily on form-based standards and to encourage a

development patterns more in keeping with Town Plan goals. The Bennington project also is intended to provide all of the information needed for a Neighborhood Development Area designation.

- The BCRC assisted with applications for successful village center designations in Pownal, North Pownal, Pownal Center, and Manchester Village. Staff also supported the Town of Bennington in generating necessary documents for review/continuation of their Growth Center designation. The BCRC participated in meetings focusing on Vermont’s designation programs attended by local officials and residents of participating and interested communities.
- The BCRC is actively participating in the community-led “Arlington Area Renewal Project,” involving the towns of Arlington, Sandgate, and Sunderland. The BCRC has participated in a housing forum, planning for redevelopment of the East Arlington Village area, reuse of the former Catholic Church land and buildings, and discussions about village wastewater options.
- Following completion of a planning study that examined a key block of underutilized and vacant properties in the center of downtown Bennington, the BCRC has continued to work with the town and with a private redevelopment group to complete plans for redevelopment. Construction of the first phase of that project, involving site work and renovations of historic buildings, began during the year and is continuing. The BCRC has supported planning for several new commercial and residential buildings on the site.
- BCRC staff responded to requests for assistance with various planning and zoning issues in all 17 of its member municipalities and conducted training for municipal officials on a variety of topics including: procedures for land use administrators, boards, and commissions, planning for housing and introduction to housing programs and organizations, emergency management programs and funding, Green Mountain National Forest initiatives and opportunities for municipal involvement, planning for healthy communities, form-based standards for municipal land use planning and regulation, emerald ash borer preparedness and management, planning for connected and autonomous vehicles, setting regional plan implementation priorities, energy planning and implementation at the local level, wildlife impacts of renewable energy projects, stormwater management, residential energy efficiency programs, and economic implications of land use patterns and urban design. Representatives from each municipality attended at least one of the training sessions.
- BCRC has updated its website format and content to better serve its municipalities. An interactive events calendar, up-to-date meeting agendas and minutes, and centralized source for municipal and regional documents has helped keep commissioners engaged in the BCRC’s work.

REGIONAL PLANNING

RPC’s coordinate planning at the regional level through the adoption and implementation of a comprehensive regional plan and related studies. These plans guide local planning and the investment decisions of the public and private sectors.

The Bennington County Regional Plan, most recently updated in 2017, is a significant resource document for local officials, organizations, and residents of the region. The Regional Plan includes extensive information about the region and its communities, specific policies to guide growth and development, and direct links to numerous sources of information on a wide variety of topics.

An important aspect of this plan update was inclusion of closer ties between the plan and various topic-specific plans developed by the BCRC. The plan also includes implementation guidance supported by specific recommendations for projects and improvements that will benefit the region. Implementation tasks are identified in each of several key areas: comprehensive municipal planning (specific schedules for assistance with plan and bylaw updates and training), regulatory review (guidelines for participation in Act 250 and Section 248 reviews – BCRC participated actively in two Act 250 and twelve Section 248 hearings during the year), transportation (a list of priority projects and initiatives and links to action-oriented plans), environmental planning (identification of water quality improvement projects, partner organizations and key areas of focus), community and economic development (including links to strategy-based economic development plans for the northern and southern parts of the region), emergency management (grant funding obtained to support specific municipal hazard mitigation planning work), energy planning (a comprehensive regional energy plan with policies and targeted actions for conservation and efficiency as well as renewable energy resource maps and data for each town in the region), and solid waste (a variety of education, outreach, and regulatory actions designed to help meet waste reduction and recycling targets).

Improved regional planning for community and economic development has been a key component of the BCRC's work over the past several years. Implementation of these plans has been greatly facilitated through a contract with the Bennington County Industrial Corporation (the regional development corporation) that establishes a direct link between planning and business development activities, and facilitates engagement with other economic development interests across Southern Vermont. The BCRC worked with municipalities and economic development organizations in the Northshire and Southshire, as well as with the RPC and RDC in Windham County, to move toward a consistent regional approach to planning for economic development.

BROWNFIELDS

Vermont RPCs have sought and have been awarded over 10 million dollars for this economic development initiative. Environmental site assessments allow properties to be sold, developed or re-developed in ways that benefit the local and state economy, create or protect jobs, and increase housing opportunities.

The BCRC applied for and was awarded a new US EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant for the 2018 through 2020 fiscal years. The Commission has identified sites that would benefit from assessments, provided information on brownfield redevelopment, and monitored redevelopment of sites that have been assessed in the past. BCRC staff advises owners of several potential brownfield sites in anticipation of future Phase I and Phase II environmental assessments. The BCRC coordinates a Brownfields committee that prioritizes sites for assessment and clean-up planning.

Brownfield sites participating in Phase I or II assessments, corrective action plans, or other follow-up work include during the past year:

- Tuttle and adjacent Bennington Brush properties in Downtown Bennington: completed Phase I and II – properties sold; Corrective Action Plan developed and approved. Redevelopment potential for retail, residential uses.

- Putnam Block (Bennington Downtown) – Corrective Action Plan being implemented to pursue mixed use redevelopment of historic downtown block. A project-specific \$500,000 Brownfield redevelopment grant was awarded for Phase II of this project.
- Pownal Transfer Station/Landfill: Phase 1 E.S.A. was performed on behalf of a potential solar developer. The BCRC also paid for the development of the proposal to perform a Phase 2 E.S.A., and assisted the town in applying for a grant to pay for the Phase 2 E.S.A.
- Barlow Gravel Pit - This site contains an old landfill associated with a former tannery. Phase 1 and Phase 2 E.S.A. and CAPs were completed earlier; after the CAP was implemented the property was sold and the gravel operation was started up again. Last year, the BCRC was asked by Vermont DEC to perform a supplemental Phase 2 E.S.A. to specifically look for PFOAs. Currently the property is being mined and a 500 KW solar array was built in the reclaimed gravel pit area.
- Ideal Fuels, the Benmont Mill lot, Bradford Commons, and the Johnson Controls lot - all in Bennington’s Growth Center - have been identified as potential future assessment sites.

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Economic growth is supported best when development efforts are partnered with effective planning functions. RPCs work with towns and Regional Development Corporations (RDCs) to this end in a number of ways, including development of comprehensive strategies that will help to position Vermont for long term economic gain.

The BCRC has maintained a staffed program in community and economic development for several years. Successful economic development planning in both the Southshire (Bennington area) and Northshire (Manchester area) led to increasing levels of collaboration with the Bennington County Industrial Corporation (BCIC, the RDC for the area), and the BCIC now contracts with the BCRC to implement its annual work plan. This partnership, together with BCRC’s active role in redevelopment projects, has allowed for the hiring of additional staff, supporting economic development initiatives throughout the region and in cooperation with the Windham Region through the Southern Vermont Economic Development Zone initiative. Highlights from the past year include:

- Southern Vermont Economic Development Zone: The BCRC built capacity for regional economic development work by establishing relationships with key businesses, institutions, and individuals. The BCRC facilitates a Regional Economic Development (RED) group that integrates regional needs and opportunities into the Southern Vermont Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), recently completed in cooperation with the Windham Region. As part of this effort, the BCRC helped organize the third annual Southern Vermont Economic Development Summit attended by over 300 people. The Summit has been recognized by the International Economic Development Council for Excellence in Economic Development.
- The BCRC has continued to work with the Bennington Redevelopment Group, the Town of Bennington, and BCIC to undertake a major development project involving historic buildings and vacant land in the center of Bennington’s downtown. An innovative funding strategy has leveraged private investment, Tax Credits, a Community Development Block Grant, and a Tax Increment Financing District to underpin the project. Construction of Phase I (restoration and redevelopment of the historic buildings) began in the past year as planning continued for new mixed use and residential structures (Phases II and III).

- The BCRC is continuing its efforts to support workforce development through regular consultation with businesses and educational institutions, conducting regular outreach and educational programs in cooperation with the BCIC's Workforce & Education Committee. Many of these programs are being operated from Bennington's downtown co-working space, the Lightning Jar, including a business-based internship program coordinated with partners in the Windham Region.
- The strong emphasis on state designation programs described above has been used to support economic development planning and initiatives in several communities, including Arlington where a key focus has been the need for additional housing for the community's growing workforce. The need for new/improved infrastructure, especially wastewater, has been the focus of attention in Arlington and several other village centers.
- BCRC staff have met with existing businesses to understand and support job retention and growth, and have facilitated communication between prospective new businesses (relocation and new start-ups) and local and state officials.
- BCRC staff provided direct assistance to businesses resulting in \$50,000 in grants supporting over \$300,000 in private business investment. The BCRC also obtained over \$140,000 in grants and donations to support the SoVermont Sustainable Marketing and Recruitment Project. Additional economic development grant support included significant funding to local communities for development of affordable housing and downtown redevelopment work.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Through a contract with the VTrans, RPCs coordinate the Transportation Planning Initiative (TPI). This effort has provided a statewide framework for public involvement in planning the improvements to Vermont's transportation system, with local communities represented through regional Transportation Advisory Committees (TACs). Each regional TAC prioritizes projects, identifies local and regional transportation needs, and provides the platform for public involvement in the planning and development of the state's transportation system. RPCs serve as the point of delivery for the statewide transportation planning process to support local, regional, state, and federal transportation network advancement.

The past year's accomplishments as they relate to the BCRC's TPI work program include:

Objective #1: Enhance Cooperation and Coordination between VTrans, RPC Regions and Municipalities

- The BCRC's Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) met regularly during the past year. TAC meeting attendance has consistently been at about seven members; the full TAC consists of 12 members. Over the course of the year, all TAC members have attended at least one meeting. Principal functions of the TAC are to provide input on specific projects and to prioritize projects in several program areas. A new Bike-Ped TAC was created this year to focus specifically on bicycle and pedestrian issues and to oversee projects.
- Provided direct outreach to each town and village regarding codes and standards, hazard mitigation planning, erosion control and stormwater management, and related funding and financial considerations.

- Organized and participated in road foreman/commissioner meetings, focusing on the municipal roads general permit and culvert sizing/installation, options for use of compost and surfacing materials, emerald ash borer response and roadside vegetation management.
- Participated in projects involving bicycle and pedestrian system connectivity and streetscape improvements in Bennington, Arlington, Pownal, Manchester, and Dorset. Led an effort to identify impediments to timely development of bike-ped projects and to identify solutions (ongoing).
- BCRC staff has participated in planning for intersection safety improvements, with a special focus on VT 67A corridor in the area of Silk Road and Bennington College Road.
- The BCRC conducted outreach to encourage participation in the annual Way to Go commuter challenge.
- The BCRC is participating in implementation of the Transportation Resilience Planning Tool by applying those techniques to the Batten Kill watershed.

Objective #2: Better Connect Federal, Regional and Statewide Transportation Planning

- The BCRC worked with VTrans, local officials, regional economic development organizations, and local businesses to support the new “Shires Connector” bus link to Amtrak from Manchester and Bennington.
- The BCRC participated in the review of two major Act 250 projects. Transportation issues included pedestrian connections to North Bennington Village and roadway improvements (Shires Housing project in Shaftsbury) and coordinating shopping center redevelopment with Route 11/30 redesign and a Riverwalk connection.
- The BCRC has worked to integrate energy plans with TPI program objectives and is coordinating a statewide effort to support implementation of local and regional energy plans. In addition, the BCRC has organized events focusing on electric vehicles (cars and bikes) and automated vehicle technology.
- The BCRC has participated in discussions of the Transportation Climate Initiative and is coordinating outreach efforts with the other RPCs and VTrans.

Objective #3: Provide Technical Assistance to Municipalities

- Provided support for Municipal Road stormwater management and flood resilience planning and implementation in 15 municipalities.
- North Bennington: Project management for a new village center sidewalk and repairs to the historic rail depot building.
- Bennington: Ongoing planning and project management for the Willowbrook-Applegate Path in Bennington, the Ninja Trail scoping and design-build project, the Benmont Streetscape improvements project in Bennington and the Kocher Drive-US 7 crossing and multi-use pathway project.
- Manchester: Participation as a steering team member and technical resource for the Manchester bikepath project.
- Dorset: Participated in completion of a scoping study to develop proposals for pedestrian improvements in Dorset and East Dorset villages. Worked with the Town to extend the Manchester bikepath to the Dorset School and then to identify appropriate improvements to extend the link further along Route 30 to Dorset Village.

- Arlington: Working with a consultant to design a safe walking route to link the Arlington Recreation Park to the Arlington Public Schools.
- Conducted site visits and coordinated planning work related to roads, bridge, and parking area improvements in the town of Glastenbury.
- BCRC staff has been conducting a study of a potential a multi-use path along historic trolley line from Bennington, VT to Williamstown, MA. Historic alignments, ownership, and environmental issues have been documented.

| Performance Measure | | BCRC | |
|---------------------|--|--|-----|
| | Objective 1 | | |
| | Enhance Cooperation and Coordination between VTrans, RPC Regions and Municipalities | | |
| A | # of TAC meetings held | | 13 |
| B | # of non-municipal TAC members actively engaged in transportation planning | | 14 |
| C | # of municipalities actively engaged in transportation planning | | 16 |
| D | # of RPC coordination activities with municipalities and VTrans | | 36 |
| | Objective 2 | | |
| | Better Connect Federal, Regional and Statewide Transportation Planning | | |
| E | # of regional transportation plans that are current (within 8 years) | | 1 |
| F | # of Act 250 applications with RPC comments relating to transportation | | 2 |
| G | # of Section 248 applications with RPC comments relating to transportation | | 2 |
| H | # of coordination activities in support of regional public transit providers | | 3 |
| I | # of VTrans committees that involves RPC staff participation | | 1 |
| J | # of regions participating in Project Prioritization | | 1 |
| | Objective 3 | | |
| | Provide Technical Assistance to Municipalities | | |
| K | # of municipalities participating in road foreman meetings annually | | 14 |
| L | # of municipalities assisted with transportation related grants | | 6 |
| M | % of budget spent on municipal technical assistance | | 65% |
| N | # of municipal transportation inventories conducted | | 1 |
| O | # of municipal transportation related feasibility/project definition studies completed/undertaken | | 3 |
| P | # of municipalities assisted with transportation element of municipal/town plan | | 4 |
| Q | # of road erosion inventories in support of the MRGP completed using TPI dollars and using other funding sources | | 1 |
| | Objective 4 | | |
| | Deliver Results that Advance VTrans Strategic and Long Range Transportation Plans | | |
| R | # of data collection activities conducted specifically for VTrans | | 3 |
| | Objective 5 | | |
| | Provide a Mechanism for Improved Public Outreach and Education | | |
| | See Performance Measure/Objective descriptions | Established a TAC sub-committee for bike-ped | |

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & DISASTER RESILIENCY

RPCs play key roles in the mitigation and preparedness phases of emergency management in partnership with Vermont Emergency Management, the Vermont Homeland Security Unit, VTrans and the Agency of Natural Resources. RPCs provide direct staff support to the State Emergency Operations Center, administrative support to the Local Emergency Planning Committees, and coordination among responders and planners throughout the State's four Public Safety Districts. RPCs also help update floodplain bylaws and FEMA-required hazard mitigation plans, coordinate updates to municipal emergency plans, and assist as needed in special circumstances like Tropical Storm Irene and other declared disasters.

- The BCRC continued to support municipalities in developing and updating Local Emergency Management Plans (LEMPs). All municipalities in the region are aware of the change from LEOP to LEMP and have been offered assistance. BCRC staff have worked one-on-one with municipalities that have requested extra assistance and held two LEMP training sessions. Approximately half of the municipalities have completed the transition to the new LEMP model.
- The BCRC provides support for development and updates to municipal hazard mitigation plans. The BCRC assisted with the completion of a new HMP for Pownal and assistance has been provided to several other towns that have started the HMP update process. As part of the planning process, flood resiliency and stormwater actions, assessments of threats from forest insect pests, and economic development planning relevant to hazard mitigation were considered.
- The BCRC provided assistance with revisions and updates to flood hazard area planning documents and regulations through plan and bylaw updates; municipalities supported included Shaftsbury, North Bennington, Pownal, Woodford, Stamford, and Arlington.
- Ongoing support for the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) is provided by BCRC staff; focus areas during the past year included: coordinating regular meetings, facilitating presentations on emergency planning and response, scheduling emergency management trainings, preparing one-page evacuation plans for assisted living facilities, collecting damage reports following hazardous weather events, and hosting an ICS 402 course. Meeting topics included: VTHSU – strategies and funding opportunities, emergencies involving several response agencies, long-term planning for emergency services, local emergency management plan preparation, and the CARE program.
- BCRC staff is on the local MRC Committee and participated in their medication distribution exercise.
- The BCRC was activated to serve its local liaison function several times during the year and helped four towns with severe damage with the process of applying for FEMA funding.
- The BCRC worked on a vulnerability study and GIS layer of critical facilities. Information from local emergency plans was consolidated into a single document that will be available to use in all future town plans and emergency management documents.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM SERVICES

The BCRC uses its geographic information systems capability to produce maps and conduct analyses in support of virtually all of its programs. RPCs also provide municipalities, state agencies, and regional groups with mapping and data analysis in support of their projects.

Particularly valuable GIS projects completed during the past year have included:

- Renewable energy resource maps showing locations with high potential for renewable energy development as well as areas with significant constraints to development for the towns of Dorset, Sunderland, Stamford, Pownal, Manchester, Arlington, and Peru.
- River corridor mapping to support resiliency planning including depiction of new flood hazard areas, and maps to support watershed planning and development of river corridor regulations.

- New maps to support municipal plan updates in Pownal, North Bennington, and Shaftsbury; mapping of proposed adjustments to zoning bylaw revisions were completed for Arlington and initiated as part of the revision of the Bennington land use regulations.
- Various maps and geographic analyses completed in support of the Bennington downtown redevelopment project.
- Maps to support recreation park improvements in Bennington, and development and improvement of bike-ped facilities/systems in Bennington, Dorset, Arlington, and Manchester.
- Mapping of municipal bridges, culverts, and road segments related to stormwater management and municipal road general permits.
- Village center, downtown, and growth center maps to support designations and renewals.
- Assessments of demographic and business trends to support Southern Vermont Economic Development Zone programs.

ENERGY CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT

A renewed focus on clean, renewable, sustainable and affordable energy presents Vermont with great opportunity and significant challenges. RPCs integrate energy planning with land use, transportation and natural resources efforts, and work with municipalities to assist with project implementation. RPCs participate in Section 248 proceedings and support comprehensive planning at the local and regional level to inform the permitting process.

- In the past year, the BCRC has worked with several towns to develop new enhanced municipal energy plans that are consistent with Act 174 standards. This work has involved providing energy use and future energy demand projections to towns, identifying local strategies to reduce total energy use and improve energy efficiency, and mapping possible sites for renewable energy development in each municipality. Adopted and approved plans will be used to represent municipalities' positions on applications for new generation projects before the Public Service Board. Plans for Bennington, Dorset, Sunderland, Stamford, Arlington, and Pownal have been completed, with five others in the local hearing/approval process or being drafted. The BCRC issues affirmative Determinations of Energy Compliance to a municipality when it is determined that the plan is consistent with Act 174 planning standards.
- The BCRC presented on the progress of Act 174 regional and municipal energy planning at various meetings and conferences throughout the state and region.
- The BCRC worked with Efficiency Vermont and the other RPCs to develop a program to support implementation of energy plans at the local and regional level. The BCRC actively participated in the development of regional work plans and reporting systems and will be undertaking its own projects in addition to coordinating work around the state over the coming 18 months.
- The BCRC worked with the Vermont Energy and Climate Action Network (VECAN) to support creation of five new local energy committees in the region.
- The BCRC organized and hosted a well-attended meeting focusing on climate change and the importance of local action. That meeting was supplemented by BCRC-organized workshops on home weatherization programs and alternative fuels/heating systems.
- The BCRC worked with a hydroelectric developer to try to resolve issues with a new generating facility located on the Walloomsac River.
- The BCRC reviews and comments on proposals for new renewable energy development in the region and participates in most Section 248 proceedings. The regional energy committee

reviewed eleven solar and one wind project with a combined capacity of nearly 7 MW. The BCRC's energy and development review committees meet with developers and invites local officials to participate in discussions of possible new projects.

WATERSHED PLANNING & PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

RPCs work with the Agency of Natural Resources to assist with completion of the EPA required watershed plans. RPCs also work with municipalities to implement river corridor assessments in local planning and regulations which result in better and safer growth management decisions.

- Assisted VT ANR with outreach on the Basin 1 Tactical Plan and integrated recommendations into local hazard mitigation plans and projects.
- Identified actions related to river protection outlined in adopted Hazard Mitigation Plans and integrated that information into ANR's projects database for future funding allocation.
- Prepared tables characterizing flood and fluvial erosion hazard mitigation projects and draft language for use of the tables in resiliency elements of municipal plans.
- Created town river corridor maps by incorporating updates and administrative revisions to the Statewide River Corridor Base Map consistent with the VT DEC Procedure for Flood Hazard Area and River Corridor Protection Procedure.
- BCRC staff attended monthly meetings of the Batten Kill Watershed Alliance and assisted with their education and water quality improvement projects.
- The BCRC worked with the Batten Kill Watershed Cooperative Invasive Species Management Association (CISMA) to identify and treat invasive species in selected areas of the watershed and to identify areas in need of revegetation. Plantings of native trees were completed along a key river segment in Manchester and additional sites identified and approved for plantings in Arlington.
- The BCRC worked directly with most towns and villages in the region to identify, implement, and verify completion of "Grants-in-Aid" water quality improvements to hydrologically connected segments of local highways.
- The BCRC coordinated stormwater master planning projects in Arlington and Shaftsbury.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

The BCRC has developed programs in solid waste management and planning and healthy community design that have led to numerous special projects and ongoing actions.

The BCRC has helped organize, developed a plan for, and provides staff support for a thirteen-town solid waste alliance. Some of the Bennington County Solid Waste Alliance's ongoing activities include:

- Two household hazardous waste collection events in the Alliance service area.
- Education and outreach to schools, municipalities, solid waste service providers, and the general public to increase recycling and organics management/composting and reduce levels of trash sent to landfills. BCRC organized residential composting workshops and sold over eighty-five compost bins and receptacles.
- Outreach to forty businesses, housing management companies, and two schools to assess current solid waste management and provide recommendations for improving recycling and organics management.

- Study and document current sludge disposal operations and future options.
- Expand available information and services related to construction and demolition debris, focusing especially on clean wood and asphalt shingles.
- Production and distribution of a regular newsletter on solid waste issues and maintenance of a web page and Facebook page dedicated to solid waste information.

Other special projects pursued in cooperation with local community coalitions, nonprofit organizations, state agencies, and local governments in the past year have included:

- Provided VISTA/staff support to the regional nonprofit housing agency in the development of a new neighborhood of affordable homes adjacent to Bennington’s downtown and in the planning for a new affordable housing development adjacent to North Bennington Village. Worked on a variety of tenant assistance and support programs.
- Cooperated with a local developer and the Town of Bennington to procure grant funds to rehabilitate a large multifamily housing building in a distressed neighborhood and continued to support the regional medical center’s Healthy Homes initiative, where vacant/abandoned homes are renovated and returned to support the community’s need for in-town affordable single family homes.
- Worked to improve regional food systems. Specific activities have included work with a regional nonprofit organization to complete a USDA-funded project assessing the regional food system, meeting with local partners and actively participating in the start-up of Bennington College’s food security initiative, and support for a Harvest for Kids campaign and other events in partnership with local food pantries.
- Worked with municipal and nonprofit leaders to implement projects under a Promise Community grant. Specific projects included planning and development of a new downtown park, improvements to a neighborhood park, and assistance with development of new community center facilities.
- Supported the towns of Bennington and Manchester as well as regional business groups and arts organizations in Bennington in development of a “Cultural Plan” for the entire region.
- BCRC staff provided assistance to Pownal in developing a community pathway along the Hoosic River and making necessary improvements to provide access to a trail system on municipally owned land in the Taconic Mountains.

ADMINISTRATION & FUNDING

Each program manager at the BCRC is responsible for work plan and budget development. The executive director/planning coordinator, financial director, and assistant director/economic development coordinator cooperate to ensure that all required tasks and reporting are completed and advance the Commission’s mission. The BCRC reported total revenues of approximately \$1.607 million in FY 2018 and total expenditures of approximately \$1.612 million (the operating deficit covered by a surplus from the previous year(s)). The majority of revenues are derived from grants that support specific work programs. Municipal appropriations and a portion of funds allocated to the BCRC from the municipal and regional planning fund provide critical support and matching funds to all of the diverse program areas operated through the Commission.

An annual financial audit is completed during August of each year. The FY 2019 audit has confirmed the accuracy of the BCRC's financial records and reports no significant findings.

Regular meetings of the BCRC are held bimonthly with special meetings held during the intervening months. Most meetings include presentations and information on specific topics that support commissioners' understanding and involvement in regional planning projects. The BCRC also is responsible for organizing regular meetings of the Bennington County Industrial Corporation, the Regional Economic Development Committee, the Bennington County Solid Waste Alliance, the Local Emergency Planning Committee, and a consortium of local energy committees. Several board members attend special trainings each year (e.g., financial management, regional economic development, housing, land use practices, energy planning, natural resource planning and environmental protection) to assist in the carrying out of their responsibilities to the organization. Staff regularly attend trainings and participate in online webinars on a variety of topics specific to their program areas.

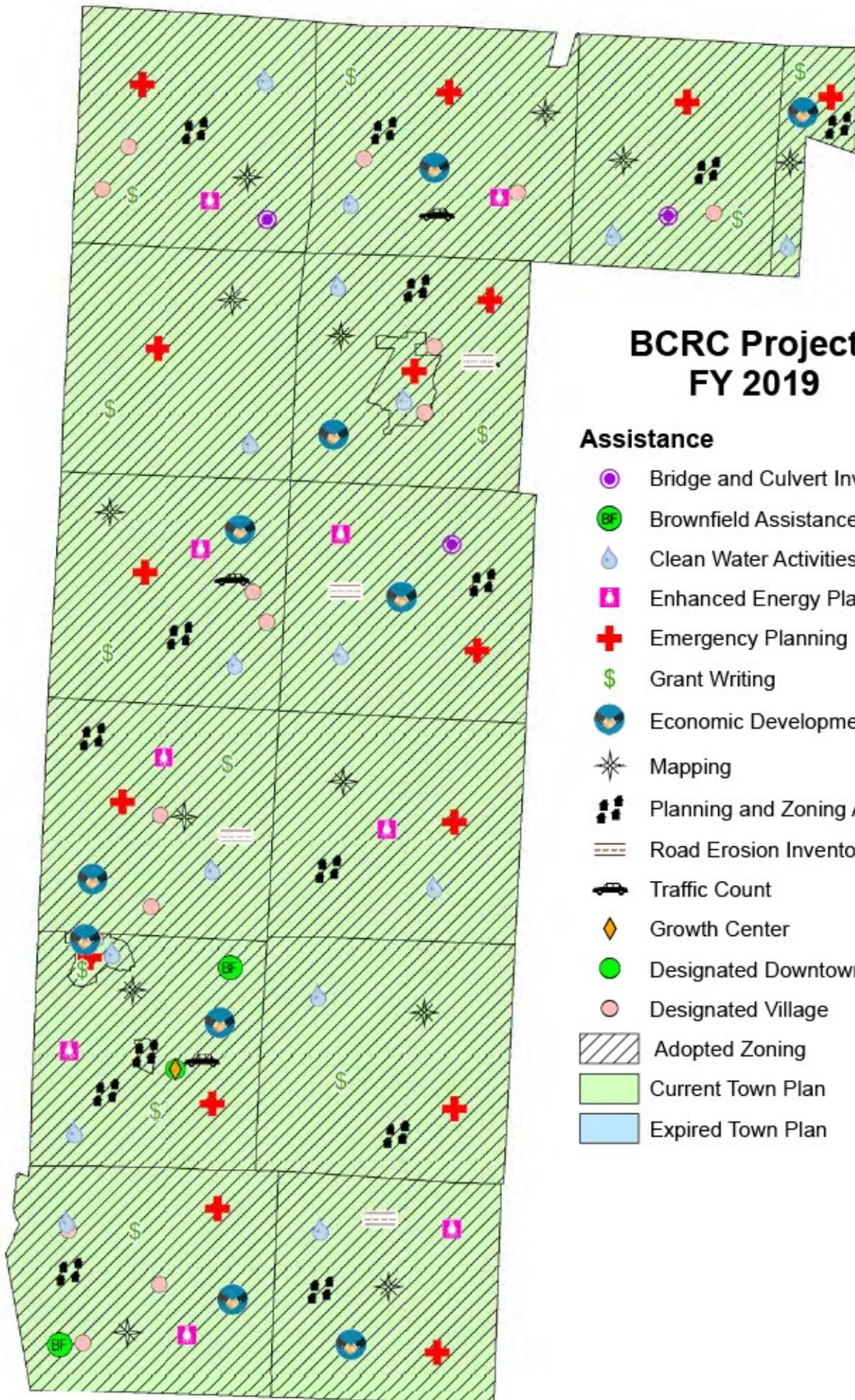
'AT WORK' MAP

The map depicting the range of services provided by the BCRC to member municipalities is included on the next page.

BCRC Projects FY 2019

Assistance

- Bridge and Culvert Inventory
- Brownfield Assistance
- Clean Water Activities
- Enhanced Energy Planning
- ✚ Emergency Planning
- ⌘ Grant Writing
- Economic Development
- ✳ Mapping
- Planning and Zoning Assistance
- ≡ Road Erosion Inventory
- 🚗 Traffic Count
- ◆ Growth Center
- Designated Downtown
- Designated Village
- ▨ Adopted Zoning
- Current Town Plan
- Expired Town Plan



Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission

FY 2019 Annual Report

Founded in 1967, the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC) leverages the power of people working together to assist its 23 member municipalities in providing effective local government and to work cooperatively to address regional issues. CVRPC is governed by representatives from the 20 municipalities of Washington County and Orange, Washington, and Williamstown in Orange County. Each legislative body selects a representative to the Commission.

MUNICIPAL PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

RPCs act as a cost effective professional planning staff for many of Vermont's municipalities. Work in recent years has been focused on improving town plans and local permitting through education, enhanced consultations (on-site training), bylaw modernization, facilitating transition to Development Review Boards and implementing new requirements for economic development and flood resiliency planning. Current and clear plans and bylaws are essential in smooth state and local permitting. This work is supported through local and regional planning funds, local contributions and other grants. All technical assistance provided this year is shown on the At Work map; highlights include:

- Assisted Berlin to secure Village Center Designations for Berlin Corners and Riverton, providing property owners with access to resources and incentives for building investments.
- Assisted Fayston and Roxbury with Town Plan surveys that characterize the perspectives of town residents on municipal growth and resource conservation.
- Supported Town Plan updates for Berlin, East Montpelier, Marshfield, Middlesex, Orange, Plainfield, and Waterbury through feedback on draft documents, information on flood resiliency, energy planning, forest integrity, and/or mapping to support forest integrity.
- Approved municipal plans and confirmed the local planning process for Berlin, East Montpelier, Marshfield, Middlesex, Orange and Waterbury and issued a Certification of Energy Determination for the Waterbury Town Plan.
- Hosted municipal trainings on community engagement, Essentials of Land Use Planning, housing ready bylaws, State highway access and work permits (Section 1111), prohibited effects of zoning regulations, new on-site agricultural accessory uses zoning provision, and wastewater solutions for rural communities.
- Created a floodplain management meeting-in-a-box for Waterbury, Montpelier, and Berlin. The "box" includes materials and presentations local officials can use to discuss floodplain concepts and requirements with stakeholders, which helps the municipalities maintain their National Flood Insurance Program Community Rating System (CRS) status.

REGIONAL PLANNING

RPC's coordinate planning at the regional level through the adoption and implementation of a comprehensive regional plan and related studies. These plans guide local planning and the investment decisions of the public and private sectors.

In FY19, CVRPC focused on plan implementation. A sampling of activities is included here:

Addressing the Social Determinates of Health:

- Participated in THRIVE, Central Vermont’s accountable care organization, which is working to align resources at more than 15 agencies and organizations to improve social outcomes in Washington County. Social determinates of health include economic stability, physical environment, education, food, social context, and the health care system.
- Contributed to the Central Vermont Medical Center’s Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) via its community workgroup.
- Discussed transportation gaps not met by public transit with multiple organizations, resulting in creation of a Community Action Network focused on transportation in FY20.
- Created a food access map to assist the Washington County Hunger Council with next step decision making for filling gaps in low-income Vermonter’s access to food in retail settings. The map allows the Council to analyze relationships between demographics, socio-economic factors, structural and infrastructure challenges, and food retailers accepting benefits.

Fostering Regional and Intermunicipal Activities:

- Invested \$115,535 to support joint stormwater planning for eight towns in the Mad River and Kingsbury Branch watersheds. The stormwater plans identified five priority projects in each municipality. CVRPC and Woodbury secured design funding for improvements at three sites.
- Completed *Water Wise Woodlands*, a joint effort among Cabot, Marshfield, and Plainfield linking forest integrity, private forest stewardship, and watershed resilience. Building flood resilience through a forested upper watershed requires incentives, supportive programs, and helping woodland owners learn informally from neighbors and respected experts. CVRPC and the towns partnered with Friends of the Winooski and Vermont Woodlands Association.
- Assisted the Wrightsville Beach Recreation District with financial management and acted as payroll administrator for the Cross Vermont Trail Association.

Reviewing Projects, Plans, and Policies:

- Reviewed state permit applications to ensure proposed projects conform with the Regional Plan. Three major Act 250 applications were reviewed; two were determined to be in conformance with the Regional Plan. CVRPC participated in the Act 250 site walk and public hearing for the Montpelier Hotel and Parking Garage application to monitor issues of potential regional significance. CVRPC designed three sites as “preferred sites” for net-metering energy generation systems under the Section 248 Certificate of Public Good process.
- Provided feedback on the draft State Emergency Management Plan Base Plan. VEM incorporated more information on potential human-caused threats/hazards to meet emergency management standards.
- Reviewed The Commission on Act 250 report, facilitated Commissioner understanding of proposed changes, and framed CVRPC’s input on the report’s recommendations.

BROWNFIELDS

Vermont RPCs have sought and have been awarded over 10 million dollars for this economic development initiative. Environmental site assessments allow properties to be sold, developed or re-developed in ways that benefit the local and state economy, create or protect jobs and increase housing opportunities.

In FY19, CVRPC had an active brownfields assessment grant. It worked with owners and prospective developers at five (5) properties to sample sites or plan for contaminant remediation. It also worked collaboratively with three other RPC's for underutilized sites.

- **Bonacorsi-Capital Candy, Barre City:** CVRPC, the property owner, and two other Regional Planning Commissions invested in a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment and indoor air sampling to assist Capital Candy understand its environmental obligations prior to acquiring the Bonacorsi property, which it leases. The project facilitates business expansion.
- **Woodbury Country Store, Woodbury:** CVRPC assisted Woodbury to guide a multiagency effort to buy out a former general store and gas station in the village center. When completed, the project will reduce flooding and flood damages to other properties. CVRPC invested \$16,869 to complete a Phase II assessment and a remediation plan and invested staff time to help ensure multiple funding sources are coordinated and used efficiently. The Vermont Petroleum Clean Up Fund remove petroleum-contaminated soils.
- **Union Elementary School, Montpelier:** Modernization of the playground at the school was challenged by urban soils. A Corrective Action Plan was finalized and approved in FY19. Construction of the new playground was initiated in FY19.
- **Former Granite Works, Montpelier:** CVRPC facilitated meetings between a new prospective purchaser, the property owner, DEC, consultant, and Montpelier Planning Director to discuss sampling results and next steps clean up planning. It subsequently shepherded successful applications to fund an Evaluation of Corrective Action Alternatives to help insure redevelopment could occur.
- **Yellow Barn, Hardwick:** CVRPC assisted a property owner and development partners with a Phase I ESA to facilitate redevelopment of the former Greensboro Garage property. The large, 2-story barn formerly was used as a commercial car dealership and automotive repair facility. Redevelopment will create new production and storage space for new and existing businesses associated with the Center for an Agricultural Economy.

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Economic growth is supported best when development efforts are partnered with solid planning functions. RPCs work with towns and in strong partnership with Regional Development Corporations (RDCs) to this end in a number of ways, including development of comprehensive strategies that will help to position Vermont for long term economic gain.

- Organized a training about floodplain requirements for area Zoning Administrators and Realtors. The Realtors Association requested the training be replicated throughout Vermont.
- Facilitated a Brownfields redevelopment training to educate realtors, lenders and developers in how to approach commercial and industrial property redevelopment as it relates to the Brownfields Reuse and Environmental Liability Limitation Program.
- Presented the Essential of Land Use Planning to landscape design students at UVM as part of CVRPC's workforce development efforts.
- Hosted a *Capitol for a Day* event with the Public Service Department to highlight the region's broadband and cell service needs and local and regional energy plan implementation.
- Provided feedback to the Barre Area Development Corporation on its dynamic new on marketing plan.

- Assisted the East Montpelier Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Advisory Committee by providing guidance and coaching on the CDBG Closeout Agreement terms and conditions which created the fund. The fund supports housing rehabilitation.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Through contract with the VTrans, RPCs coordinate the Transportation Planning Initiative (TPI). This effort has provided a statewide framework for public involvement in planning the improvements to Vermont's transportation system, with local communities represented through regional Transportation Advisory Committees (TACs). Each regional TAC prioritizes projects, identifies local and regional transportation needs, and provides the platform for public involvement in the planning and development of the state's transportation system. RPCs serve as the point of delivery for the statewide transportation planning process to support local, regional, state and federal transportation network advancement.

Objective #1: Enhance Cooperation and Coordination between VTrans, RPC Regions and Municipalities

- Held 9 TAC meetings
- Actively engaged 19 non-municipal TAC members in transportation planning
- Actively engaged 23 municipalities in transportation planning
- Coordinated 4 activities with municipalities and VTrans

Objective #2: Better Connect Federal, Regional and Statewide Transportation Planning

- Maintained a current regional transportation plans (within 8 years)
- Reviewed Act 250 applications; no comments required relating to transportation
- Reviewed Section 248 applications; no comments required relating to transportation
- Coordinated 8 activities in support of regional public transit providers
- Participated in 3 VTrans committees
- Participated in Project Prioritization

Objective #3: Provide Technical Assistance to Municipalities

- Hosted road foreman meetings; 13 municipalities participated
- Assisted 8 municipalities with transportation related grants
- Spent 57% of transportation budget on municipal technical assistance
- Conducted 6 municipal transportation inventories
- Completed/undertook 1 municipal transportation related feasibility/project definition study
- Assisted 1 municipality with the transportation element of its municipal plan
- Completed 6 road erosion inventories in support of the MRGP using TPI dollars and using other funding sources

Objective #4: Deliver Results that Advance VTrans Strategic and Long-Range Transportation Plans

- Conducted 36 data collection activities specifically for VTrans

Objective #5: Provide a Mechanism for Improved Public Outreach and Education

- Assisted Green Mountain Transit with public engagement during its NextGen Plan scenario development.

- Facilitated a meeting with Plainfield, Marshfield, and a legislator to identify needed improvements along US 2.
- Fostered a new Paratransit Planning Committee to help gather input into the proposed Green Mountain Transit paratransit service in Central VT.
- Fostered discussions between Green Mountain Transit and Mad River Valley stakeholders regarding continuation of seasonal service.

Outcomes

- Completed an Existing Condition Report of the Stowe Street Bridge in Waterbury. A collaboration between CVRPC, VTrans, and Waterbury, the report will be used when VTrans moves this bridge into scoping and design.
- Worked with Barre Town to inventory over 2,000 road side ash trees and develop an Emerald Ash Borer Response Plan to guide the community's ash tree management actions.
- Assisted eight towns with grant writing and project development to expand and replace bicycle and pedestrian facilities across Central Vermont.
- Supported RPCs and municipalities statewide for VTCulvert access and management. VTCulvert is an integrated software product that handles data entry, access, and status reporting of municipal bridge and culvert inventories. Participated development of a story board, script, and audio recordings for VTCulvert training videos.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND DISASTER RESILIENCY

RPCs play key roles in the preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery phases of emergency management in partnership with Vermont Emergency Management (VEM), the Vermont Homeland Security Unit, Department of Public Safety, VTrans, the Agency of Natural Resources, and Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs). RPCs provide direct staff to the State Emergency Operations Center, administrative support to the LEPCs and coordination among responders, municipal officials, and planners throughout the State's four Public Safety Districts. RPCs also help update floodplain bylaws, river corridor regulations, and FEMA-required hazard mitigation plans. RPCs coordinate updates to municipal emergency plans and assist as needed in special circumstances like Tropical Storm Irene and other federally and non-federally declared disasters. The RPCs are a source of technical support and information and provide coordination and collaboration for trainings, workshops and seminars, often in conjunction with partners.

- Hosted 5 trainings with Vermont Emergency Management to increase local planning.
- Hosted a joint Emergency Management Director (EMD)/Road Foreman roundtable to foster understanding of roles, responsibilities, and opportunities for collaboration and coordination.
- Assisted 23 municipalities with development of Local Emergency Management Plans.
- Assisted 10 towns with Local Hazard Mitigation Plan development or approval, providing substantial assistance to 5 towns. 18 of the region's 23 municipalities (78%) have a FEMA-approved plan.
- Provided administrative assistance and fiscal agent services to LEPC 5.
- Assisted with planning and/or participated in 1 Table Top Exercise and 1 Full Scale exercise to test emergency plans.
- Participated in Waterbury's Floodplain Working Group. Assisted to develop Community Rating System trainings and to update Waterbury's river corridor map.

- Provided support to EMDs in Plainfield, Waitsfield, and Moretown.
- Connected school and Town staff so that Orange could be fully reimbursed by VEM for purchasing and installing a generator at the school.
- Discussed shelter agreements with Warren to facilitate school-town discussions.
- Facilitated communications and logistics on the transfer of the CERT 5 trailer and contents to Central Vermont Disaster Animal Response Team.
- Provided State Emergency Operation Center (SEOC) support by contacting towns to ascertain damages and by acting as supplemental staff to the SEOC Situational Awareness Unit.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM SERVICES

In addition to enhancing the RPC's work, RPCs provide municipalities, state agencies and regional groups with mapping and data analysis in support of its projects.

- Produced custom maps in response to requests from Berlin, Fayston, Montpelier, Northfield, Orange, Plainfield, and Waterbury (flood hazard areas, dam release flood areas, road maps, town-owned parcels, river corridor, grant applications, trail mapping, designation renewal)
- Updated maps for municipal plan in Barre City, East Montpelier, Waterbury, Worcester and for zoning in Marshfield and Cabot. Provided Marshfield with acreage calculations for zoning district changes and data for comparison of draft zoning and forest integrity resources.
- Updated web maps for Calais, East Montpelier, Middlesex, and the Wilson Industrial Park.
- Assisted Duxbury, Middlesex, and Woodbury with parcel maps.
- Created a region-wide trails map.
- Assisted 3 non-profit partners with custom maps or GIS services (identifying parcels lacking riparian buffers, bringing CAD data into GIS, and creating a service area map).
- Assisted Northfield with GIS data collection equipment acquisition.

ENERGY CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

A renewed focus on clean, renewable, sustainable and affordable energy presents Vermont with great opportunity and significant challenges. RPCs integrate energy planning with land use, transportation, and natural resources efforts. RPCs also work with municipalities to assist with project implementation. RPCs participate in Section 248 proceedings and support comprehensive planning at the local and regional level to inform the permitting process.

- Assisted Middlesex, Moretown, Plainfield, Waitsfield, and Washington with enhanced energy plan development. Assistance included multiple trainings and drafting plans.
- Continued to support East Montpelier, Marshfield, and Barre Town for enhanced planning.
- Hosted a joint meeting of CVRPC's Regional Plan and Project Review Committees with Green Mountain Power, Northfield Electric, and Washington Electric about renewable energy.
- Co-sponsored a regional Button Up Vermont workshop to municipalities in their work to encourage individuals to take action to reduce their heating and cooling energy costs.
- Planned a regional energy roundtable focused on rural transportation with the VT Natural Resources Council and VT Council on Rural Development.
- Facilitated a transportation work group for the Marshfield-Plainfield Climate Economy Model Communities project sponsored by the VT Council on Rural Development.

WATERSHED PLANNING AND PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

RPCs work with the Agency of Natural Resources to assist with completion of the EPA required watershed plans. RPCs also work with municipalities to design and implement stormwater mitigation projects and implement river corridor assessments in local planning and regulations which result in better and safer growth management decisions.

- Provided substantial assistance with municipal engagement and project development for the Winooski River Tactical Basin Plan.
- Facilitated monthly Clean Water Advisory Committee (CWAC) meetings to provide an educational forum and a working group for basin planning and other water quality initiatives.
- Began or completed stormwater mitigation final designs for four sites in Berlin, Barre City's Pouliot Avenue, the Plainfield Health Center
- Completed final designs and began construction of Northfield's Water Street stormwater mitigation project. The project will treat runoff from 48 acres of residential development.
- Conducted outreach to interested communities on surface water reclassification under the new 2016 water quality standards.
- Engaged municipalities in public-private partnership work for complying with the new 3-acre stormwater regulation.
- Supported 20 municipalities with implementation of Best Management Practices for the Municipal Grant in Aid program.
- Assisted 4 municipalities with road erosion inventories and capital plans.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Paratransit Planning: CVRPC facilitated a Paratransit Planning Committee to gather input regarding changes being proposed to existing transit service, including the addition of complementary ADA paratransit service. The effort, funded by a grant from the Community Transportation Association of America, engaged 600+ public transit users and potential users about ridership needs using presentations, a survey of older adults, persons with disabilities, and care givers, user-story videos, and sharing information on Facebook, in newsprint, and via email.

Users of the existing system identified many barriers and potential solutions. Nine barriers centered around the need to improve public transit infrastructure and build knowledge on how to appropriately help older adults and persons with disabilities. Solutions to these barriers identify specific locations for public transit infrastructure improvements and a need to increase transit operator and the transit rider training so to create a more predictable ridership experience.

The Committee is working to address the needs. Green Mountain Transit (GMT) is identifying bus stop locations that need improvements and adding rural members to its ADA Committee. The Planning Committee, through CVRPC, is developing educational and outreach materials to build a more knowledgeable and informed transit ridership. The full report can be viewed on CVRPC's website at <http://centralvtplanning.org/programs/transportation/paratransit-planning/>.

CVRPC supported Barre Town, Calais, and East Montpelier with **Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) preparedness and response** in conjunction with the UVM Extension Service and the VT Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation. Dead or dying infested ash trees can pose a significant hazard when located in public

rights of way. The trees become brittle and splinter easily, which significantly increases the cost of removal and creates more hazardous conditions during tree removal. Towns can mitigate the cost impact to budgets through planning and management activities. CVRPC:

- hosted a workshop on current information, best practices, and management plan contents,
- trained volunteers to conduct ash tree inventories and supported them during that work,
- inventoried over 2,000 ash trees in Barre Town's right of way, and
- organized a statewide training for RPC Emergency Planners in partnership with the Vermont Urban & Community Forest Program and Vermont Emergency Management to build knowledge about EAB management and a statewide support network for municipalities.

EAB Response Plan development is underway in the three communities. It includes discussions on how best to collaborate and incorporate the plan into other municipal initiatives, such as Municipal Plans, capital budgets, Local Hazard Mitigation Plans, and Local Emergency Response Plans.

ADMINISTRATION AND FUNDING

The FY19 CVRPC budget was approximately \$1.2 million. Revenue sources included state and federal performance contracts, grants, and local assessments. Virtually all of the CVRPC's revenue sources are tied to contracts with scopes of work, guidelines, and/or performance measures. This means CVRPC has limited flexibility in how it chooses to use the vast majority of its funding. Funding received through town assessments is the exception, which makes this funding stream particularly important. It gives us the greatest latitude to respond to the region's needs. The grants we receive enable us to work with our towns on areas such as transportation, emergency planning, community development, energy, and natural resources. Revenue from virtually all federal and state grantors requires non-federal matching funds ranging from 10 percent (Transportation Planning Initiative) to 50 percent (Emergency Management Planning Grant). Town assessments and regional planning funds passed through to CVRPC under a performance contract with the Department of Housing and Community Development provide matching funds.

CVRPC maintained its line of credit in 2019 due to a prevalence of product-based and construction contracts. CVRPC maintains Board designated reserve funds to cover operating shortfalls, accrued leave time, and equipment replacement. The Commission maintains a four-year plan for equipment and software upgrades and replacement.

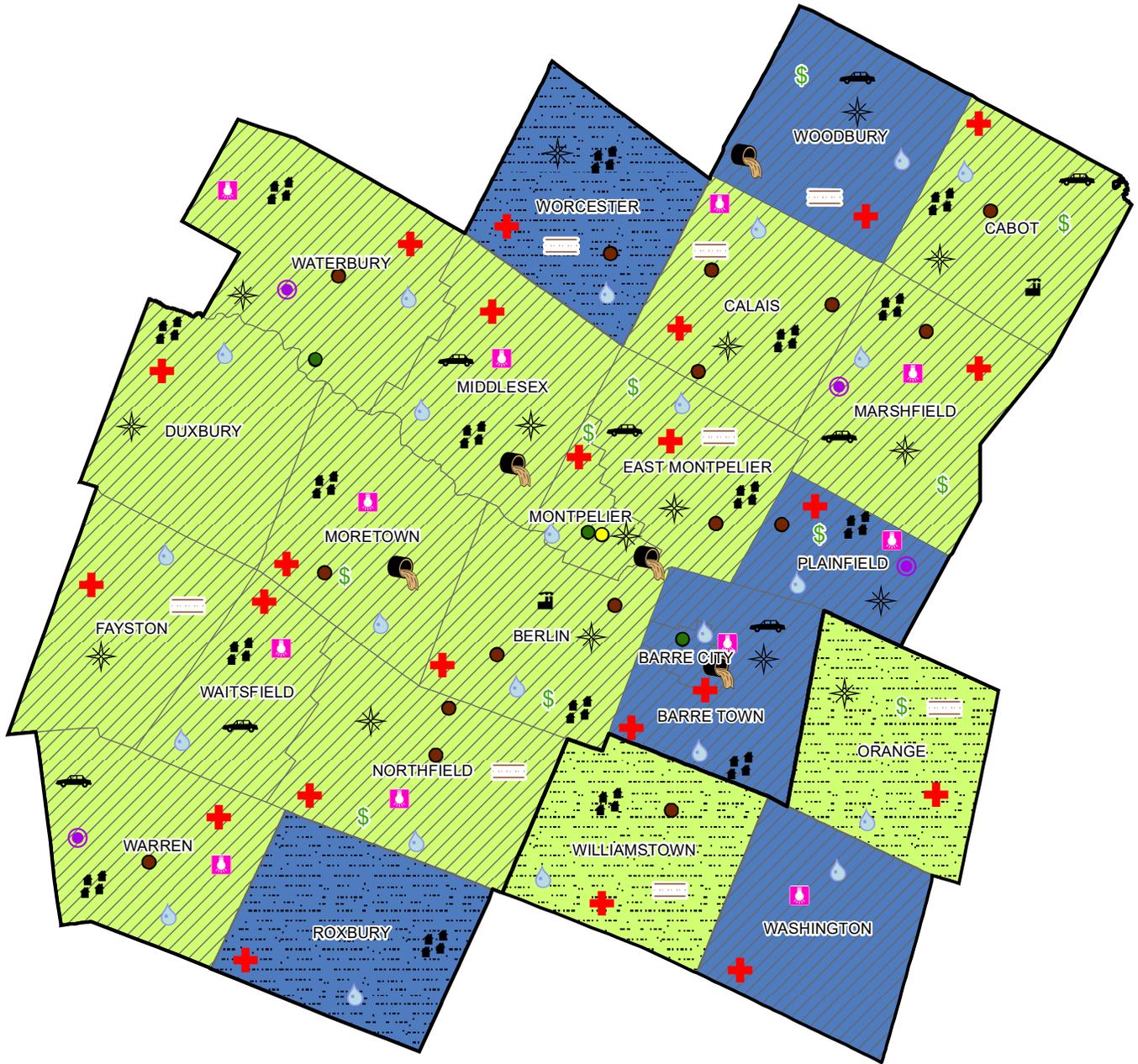
CVRPC's annual audit will be completed in October 2019. CVRPC has had no audit findings in recent years. It is considered a 'low risk' grantee by federal agencies. Staffing in 2019 included 8 employees: Executive Director, Program Manager, Senior Planners (2), Planner, Assistant Planners (2), and an Office Manager. CVRPC supported workforce development through use of a planning technician for transportation and planning services. CVRPC contracts for accounting services.

In 2019 CVRPC continued to finalize Rules of Procedure for its committees, initiated an update to its Bylaws, and put into place the following policies: Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest, Grants Management, and GIS Cost of Services. CVRPC continues to update its Commissioner Handbook to orient Board members to the Commission and its work.

'AT WORK' MAP

The map depicting the range of services provided by the CVRPC to member municipalities is included on the next page.

CVRPC At Work FY 2019



Types of Projects

Designation

- Designated Downtown
- Growth Center
- Designated Village

Zoning

- ▨ Adopted
- ▨ Flood Only

Town Plan

- Current
- Expired
- No Town Plan

Projects

Assistance

- Bridge and Culvert Inventory
- Brownfield Assistance
- Clean Water Activities
- Enhanced Energy Planning
- Emergency Planning

Grant Writing

- Economic Development
- Mapping
- Planning and Zoning Assistance
- Road Erosion Inventory
- Traffic Count

Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission

FY 2019 Annual Report

The Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) is a political subdivision of the State created by the municipalities of Chittenden County in 1966 for the development of policies, plans and programs that address regional issues and opportunities in Chittenden County. Its vision is to be a pre-eminent, integrated regional organization that plans for healthy, vibrant communities, economic development, and efficient transportation of people and goods while improving the region's livability. The CCRPC serves as the region's federally designated metropolitan planning organization (MPO) and is responsible for comprehensive and collaborative transportation planning involving municipalities, state and federal agencies and other key stakeholders in Chittenden County. The CCRPC works to ensure implementation of the regional transportation plan and provides technical and planning assistance to its member municipalities, and the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans).

The CCRPC is governed by a 29-member board consisting of one representative from each of the County's 19 municipalities; transportation representatives from VTrans, Green Mountain Transit (GMT), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Burlington International Airport (BIA), and a rail industry representative; and, at-large members representing the interests of agriculture, environmental conservation, business, and housing/socio-economic. The legislative body of each Chittenden County municipality selects its own representative and alternate. The full CCRPC selects the at-large representatives.

The CCRPC appreciates the continued opportunity to work with its municipal members to plan appropriately for the region's future to protect and improve the special quality of life that is shared throughout Chittenden County. In FY19, the CCRPC invested more than \$5.7 million in regional land use, transportation, emergency management, energy, natural resources, public engagement, training, and technical assistance. The program leverages more than \$5.2 million in Federal and State investment with \$245,000 in municipal dues and another \$227,000 in local match for specific projects—an 11:1 return on local investment.

MUNICIPAL PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION

RPCs act as a cost-effective professional planning staff for many of Vermont's municipalities. Work in recent years has been focused on improving town plans and local permitting through education and enhanced consultations (on-site training), bylaw modernization, facilitating transition to Development Review Boards and implementing new requirements for economic development and flood resiliency planning. Current and clear plans and bylaws are essential in smooth state and local permitting. This work is supported through local and regional planning funds, municipal dues, and other grants. All technical assistance provided this year is shown on the At Work map; highlights include:

- **Town Plan Assistance:** Provided direct assistance to Essex Junction and Huntington on drafting their Town Plan updates. CCRPC provided and maintained public participation webpages for these projects using CiviComment. CCRPC also began to investigate the possibility of Buel's Gore adopting the regional plan as their own local plan. See below for a list of energy related Town Plan assistance projects. Created Town Plan maps for Colchester, Essex Junction, Huntington, Shelburne and Winooski.

- **Town Plan Approvals:** Approved the Comprehensive Plans and confirmed the planning process for Burlington, Colchester, Richmond, Shelburne, St. George and Winooski.
- **Zoning:** Assisted South Burlington on a variety of interim zoning-related tasks including natural resource bylaws, inclusionary zoning, and natural resource and open space mapping.
- **Development Review Services:** CCRPC staff began providing interim assistance to the Town of Charlotte by handling resident inquiries, researching questions, managing zoning and water/wastewater permitting, and conducting site visits as needed.
- **Training:** The CCRPC held two housing convenings – one on Housing Trust Funds (28 attendees from 8 municipalities) and one on Inclusionary Housing (29 attendees from 8 municipalities). The CCRPC also continued to host the 12-month webinar series from the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycling Professionals for municipalities and regional partners.

REGIONAL PLANNING

RPCs coordinate planning at the regional level through the adoption and implementation of a comprehensive regional plan, and related studies. These plans guide local planning and the investment decisions of the public and private sectors.

- **ECOS Plan Implementation:** CCRPC continues to implement its [2018 Chittenden County ECOS Plan](#) which combines the regional plan, comprehensive economic development strategy, and metropolitan transportation plan, as reflected here in this report. CCRPC implements the Plan through collective impact relationships and projects with the GBIC, Department of Health, United Way, UVM Medical Center, UVM, our member municipalities and many other partners. As an example, we've implemented Strategy #2 (Strive for 80% of new development in areas planned for growth, which amounts to 15% of our land area) through the zoning projects mentioned above, permit reviews, and planned transportation investments in those places resulting in 86% of residential growth in these areas (2017 5-year average). CCRPC used the ECOS Plan to evaluate applications and participate in Act 250 and Section 248 hearings.
- **ECOS Plan Annual Report and Indicators:** The [2018 Annual Report](#) is a summary that highlights a number of regional accomplishments, trends, and high priority actions. (<http://www.ecosproject.com/annual-report/2018-annual-report>) The ECOS Scorecard hosts the ECOS Partners' shared measurement and indicator system that monitors how well Chittenden County is doing relative to achieving our shared ECOS goals. (<https://app.resultsscorecard.com/Scorecard/Embed/8502>)
- **Legislative Forum:** CCRPC hosted our annual Legislative Breakfast in December to discuss priority issues of housing, water quality, employment and Act 250. (<http://www.ccrpcvt.org/about-us/commission/policies-positions/>).

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Economic growth is supported best when development efforts are partnered with solid planning functions. RPCs work with towns and in strong partnership with Regional Development Corporations (RDCs) to this end in several ways, including development of comprehensive strategies that will help to position Vermont for long-term economic gain.

- **Lake Champlain Byway:** As a partner with other RPCs and regional Chambers in the Byway's Management Council <https://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-work/economic-development/lake->

champlain-byway/, the CCRPC continued to maintain the Byway website (lakechamplainbyway.com) as well as a helpful Interactive Map (map.ccrpcvt.org/lcbyway/) and mobile Story App (lcbyway.oncell.com/en/index.html).

- Continued our strong partnership with GBIC/LCRCC working together to advance plans, policies, and projects that improve our economy such as the Brownfields program below.
- **Opportunity Zones:** CCRPC attended several workshops on Opportunity Zones to ensure that we can support Winooski, Burlington and South Burlington if they utilize funds from this tax credit program for economic development.
- **Community Development Block Grant:** CCRPC began assisting with grant administration on behalf of the Town of Bolton, on the CDBG grant for hotel and water/wastewater improvements at Bolton Valley.

BROWNFIELDS

Vermont RPCs have sought and have been awarded over 10 million dollars for this economic development initiative. Environmental site assessments allow properties to be sold, developed or re-developed in ways that benefit the local and state economy, create or protect jobs and increase housing opportunities.

- CCRPC obtained a \$400,000 EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant in FY16; and a \$300,000 EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant in FY18. Since the fall of 2016, using these two grants the program has provided \$474,498 to assess perceived or real contamination issues in various municipalities.
 - Burlington: 316 Flynn Avenue (Redstone Apartments); 400 Pine Street/20 Howard Street (Unsworth Properties); 339 Pine Street (Railyard Enterprise Project); 56 and 58 North Avenue (Sarah Holbrook Center); Lake Street (Waterfront Park); 314 North Winooski (Champlain Transmission); 75 Briggs Street (Petra Cliffs); 207 Flynn Avenue (City Market); 453 Pine Street (near Barge Canal); 405 Pine Street (Burlington City Arts); 44 Lakeside Avenue (Blodgett Ovens / HULA); 241 N. Winooski Avenue (McClure Center).
 - Winooski: 4 & 12 Winooski Falls Way (Winooski Hotel); City Lot 7D on Winooski Falls Way (behind CCV); 42 Pine Street (Myers Pool).
 - Colchester: 2031 Roosevelt Highway (Champlain Chiropractic); 110 Heineberg Road (New York Cleaners).
 - Milton: 7 River Street (Milton Grange) and 204-210 & 214-218 U.S. Route 7 (Town-VAOT "Hourglass" Road reconfiguration project).
 - Williston at the Jacob parcel (Stirrup Circle) and the Catamount Outdoor Family Center.
 - Essex Junction: 3 Maple Street (Chittenden Crossing) and 1 Main Street (Road Res-Q).
 - Shelburne: 5531 Spear Street (Kwiniaska/Fairway at Spear).
 - Westford: 1705 VT Route 128.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Through contracts with VTrans, RPCs coordinate the Transportation Planning Initiative (TPI). This effort has provided a statewide framework for public and municipal involvement in planning for improvements to Vermont's transportation system, with local communities represented through regional Transportation Advisory Committees (TACs). Each regional TAC prioritizes projects, identifies local and regional transportation needs, and provides the platform for public involvement in the planning and development of the state's transportation system. RPCs serve as the point of delivery for

the statewide transportation planning process to support local, regional, state and federal transportation network advancement.

The CCRPC serves as the only metropolitan planning organization (MPO) operating within Vermont. MPOs are federally mandated and funded transportation planning organizations governed by representatives from local municipalities and state transportation agencies /departments. Federal funding for transportation projects and programs is channeled through this planning process. Congress created MPOs in order to ensure that transportation projects and programs in urbanized areas (population greater than 50,000) are based on a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive (“3-C”) planning process that serve the needs of the municipalities in the area.

Objective #1: Enhance Cooperation and Coordination between VTrans, RPC Regions and Municipalities

TAC Activity: The TAC met 10 times in FY19. Attendance varied from 12 to 21 members, from 39% to 68% of total membership. Eight (8) non-municipal TAC members were actively engaged in transportation planning in the county.

TAC Outcomes: The TAC approved consultant selection for the following projects:

- Chittenden County I-89 2050 Study

The TAC approved discussed, heard presentations on and/or made recommendations on the following projects/tasks:

- Green Mountain Transit’s NextGEN Transit Plan
- Transportation Performance Measures and Targets
- Project prioritization & Town Highway Bridge Pre-Candidate List Priorities
- The FY20 Transportation Improvement Program
- The FY20 Unified Planning Work Program
- Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP)
- VTrans Long Range Transportation Plan
- VT Culverts
- Winooski River Bridge Scoping
- Bike Sharing Bylaws
- 2018 Transportation Survey results
- Legislative Priorities
- Colchester Stormwater Facilities inspection
- Champlain Parkway
- Road and Bridge Standard synchronization
- CENTRACS traffic management software
- VTrans Automated Vehicle testing

Transportation Coordination Activities with Municipalities and VTrans Provided by CCRPC:

- Partnered with VTrans and the TAC to initiate the Chittenden County I-89 2050 Study.
- Collaborated with VTrans, provided funding and promoted participation in the 2018/2019 Way to Go! School Challenge; and conducted TDM outreach to municipalities, businesses and partners countywide through CATMA.
- VTrans Prioritization Methodology (VPSP2) effort: participation in the Core Group and TPI discussions.

- Completed the Amtrak Storage and Servicing Evaluation in collaboration with Burlington and VTrans.
- Coordinated with VTrans and South Burlington on the Exit 14 area signal upgrades.
- Completed the installation of Bluetooth sensors in five major corridors in the county; conducted workshops and monitored the real time travel data on the corridors; and presented results at the annual VTrans Research and Innovation Symposium.
- Ongoing coordination with VTrans, FHWA and FTA on highway and transit performance measures and targets.
- Bike & Ped Program – work with the Cities of Burlington, South Burlington and Winooski to plan for Greenride Bikeshare fleet expansion and conversion to E-Bikes; provide walk/bike recommendations on local and state paving plans; develop model bike parking ordinances for municipalities; partner with VTrans to host two walk/bike events as the Vermont Chapter of the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals; promote TDM strategies to municipalities and businesses; compile Complete Streets data for Chittenden County municipalities; and, with Local Motion, conduct bike/ped counts on paths, bike lanes and roadways.
- Facilitated municipal participation in numerous MRGP meetings and updates.
- Provided Annual Traffic Alert communications outreach program.

Objective #2: Better Connect Federal, Regional and Statewide Transportation Planning

Regional Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP): The 2018 MTP was adopted by the CCRPC Board in June of 2018 (<https://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-work/our-plans/ecos-metropolitan-transportation-plan/>).

Municipal Transportation Plans: 18 municipalities have current municipal plans that include an updated transportation component.

Act-250 and Section 248 Reviews: CCRPC staff reviewed all applications in Chittenden County but participated only in major applications and a small number of minor ones with potentially significant impacts. In FY19, the CCRPC provided transportation related comments for 7 Act-250 applications. The CCRPC also commented on 19 Section 248 applications but none had transportation issues that required staff review.

Coordination with Public Transit Providers: Staff participated in regional public transit planning activities including:

- The Elderly & Disabled program advisory committee
- GMT's ADA Advisory Committee
- United Way's Neighbor Rides (volunteer driver program) Advisory Committee
- GMT's NextGEN Transit Plan Advisory Committee
- Rural Transit Roundtable
- Route 116 Bus Ridership Outreach Program

RPC participation in VTrans committees: A list of committees that the CCRPC staff participated in is provided below:

- Public Transit Advisory Council
- Rail Council
- VTrans Project Prioritization (VPSP2) Core Group and workshop participation
- Freight Working Group

- Vermont Highway Safety Alliance
- Way to Go! Challenge

Project Prioritization: The CCRPC prioritizes Capital Projects on the state's Transportation Program once a year. In addition, the CCRPC has a representative on the Core Team for the VPSP2/Prioritization effort.

Objective #3: Provide Technical Assistance to Municipalities

During FY19, the CCRPC hosted regional transportation meetings; initiated, managed and was involved in major regional and local transportation plans, studies and initiatives; provided technical assistance and support to municipalities and partners on transportation issues. Please see below for more information on these activities.

Road Foreman Meetings: The CCRPC hosted a meeting on April 24, 2019 with participation by seven Chittenden County municipalities. Also shared events and funding opportunities as appropriate.

Assistance with Transportation Grants: Staff assisted municipalities and provided letters of support for 22 grant applications including Bike & Ped, Better Roads, and EV Supply Equipment Grants.

Budget Spent on Municipal Assistance: The CCRPC invests approximately 59% of MPO funding for municipal assistance.

CCRPC Data Collection in FY 18:

- Five (5) Pavement Inventories for Burlington, Charlotte, Huntington, Milton, and Jericho.
- Three (3) Culvert Inventories for Underhill, Bolton and South Burlington.
- 89 Traffic (ATR), 8 Turning Movement and 4 Bike/Ped Counts.

Participation in Transportation Planning and Project Development Activities: Below is the list of Planning Assistance, Project Definition (Scoping) and Municipal Construction Projects (Local Project Management: LPM) that the CCRPC managed in FY 19:

- Winooski River Bridge Scoping (Burlington/Winooski)
- Amtrak Overnight Storing and Servicing Study (Burlington)
- Colchester Ave/Riverside Ave/Barrett St/Mill St Intersection Scoping (Burlington)
- Railyard Enterprise Supplemental Scoping Project (Burlington)
- I-89 Exit 14 Bike & Pedestrian Scoping (South Burlington)
- South Burlington Sidewalk/Path Connecting-the-Gaps Scoping
- South Burlington Multi-Site Pedestrian Crossing & Bike Access (Williston Road)
- Huntington Lower Village Supplemental Scoping Study
- Allen Brook Large Culvert Assessment
- Williston Shared Use & Multi-Modal Parking Study
- South Burlington City Center Parking & Movement Plan
- Update of South Burlington Traffic Impact Fee Ordinance
- Update of Williston's Transportation Impact Fee
- Winooski Impact Fee Feasibility Study
- Intervale Road Pedestrian and Bicycle Access Feasibility Study (Burlington)
- Sidewalk/Path Scoping for VT 15 from Athens Dr. to VT 289 (Essex)
- VT 15 Scoping Study from Ethan Allen Ave to West St. Extension (Essex/Essex Junction)
- Skunk Hollow Rd/VT 117 Intersection Scoping (Jericho)

- VT116/Charlotte Rd. Intersection Improvements in Hinesburg
- Colchester Inspection & Inventory of the Existing Stormwater System
- LPM services for Underhill sidewalk construction on VT 15
- LPM services for Hinesburg Village South VT 116 sidewalk design and construction

The CCRPC initiated and managed the following multimodal Corridor and Area-wide Studies:

- Chittenden County I-89 2050 Study
- East Allen Street Corridor Study/Scoping (Winooski)
- Kimball Ave/Kennedy Dr/Old Farm Rd/Tilley Drive/VT 116 Transportation Needs Analysis (South Burlington)
- Essex Junction Village Transportation Plan Update
- Winooski Avenue Corridor Study (Burlington)
- Regional Bike Share Analysis
- Essex Junction Village Parking Plan

The CCRPC was also involved in the following Transportation Demand Management (TDM) initiatives and studies:

- Annual Way to Go! Challenge to encourage non-single occupant vehicle travel and demonstrate the environmental and financial benefits, with a focus on schools in FY19. www.WayToGoVT.org
- Provided funding to CATMA, CarShare Vermont, and Local Motion for TDM projects and technical assistance.
- Since 2013, the CCRPC has been investing in United Way's Neighbor Rides program to integrate volunteer drivers into human services transportation in order to increase access to transportation for seniors and persons with disabilities by offering a lower-cost option.

Road Erosion Inventories in Support of Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP): Completed road erosion inventories (REI) for all municipalities in Chittenden County. Staff is now updating REI data based on information from municipalities and site visits.

Objective #4: Advance VTrans Strategic and Long-Range Transportation Plans

CCRPC Data Collection Activities Conducted Specifically for VTrans: CCRPC staff conducted the following activities in support of VTrans' Plans:

- Sixteen Park & Ride inventories at facilities in Richmond, Colchester, Huntington, Essex Landfill Rd., Essex Green, Westford Green, and Hinesburg.
- 89 Traffic (ATR) and 8 Turning Movement counts.
- Three (3) Culvert Inventories for Underhill, Bolton and South Burlington.
- Four (4) Bike/Ped Counts: 2 Continuous Traffic Counters at Riverside bike path & Waterfront bike path & 2 video bike/ped counts in the greater Burlington area.
- Requested complete streets info from all towns and received information from 13.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & DISASTER RESILIENCY

RPCs play key roles in the mitigation and preparedness phases of emergency management in partnership with Vermont Emergency Management, the Vermont Homeland Security Unit, VTrans and

the Agency of Natural Resources. RPCs provide direct staff to the State Emergency Operations Center when needed, administrative support to the Local Emergency Planning Committees, and coordination among responders and planners throughout the State's four Public Safety Districts. RPCs also help update floodplain bylaws and FEMA-required hazard mitigation plans, coordinate updates to municipal emergency operations plans and assisted as needed in special circumstances like Tropical Storm Irene and other disasters.

- **FEMA Pre-Disaster Mitigation:** CCRPC staff worked in early 2019 with municipal staff to prepare a 2018 Progress Report on the implementation of the actions recommended in the County and Municipal All-Hazard Mitigation Plans. Implementation included roadway and stormwater projects to mitigate the impacts of future severe rainstorms.
- **Local Emergency Management Plans:** 19 out of 19 (100%) municipalities in the CCRPC region currently have an updated local emergency management plan.
- **Local Emergency Planning Committee:** CCRPC, in collaboration with the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC 1, <http://www.ccrpcvt.org/about-us/committees/local-emergency-planning-committee/>), hosted and participated in a variety of emergency management-related workshops and exercises to enhance resilience to disasters in our region.
- **Local Liaison:** CCRPC served as a key coordinator between municipalities and the state to collect damage assessment information after significant storm events. In addition, CCRPC attended/hosted an Incident Command System training.
- **Hazardous Materials:** Helped with emergency preparedness for hazardous materials incidents by working on listing and mapping "Tier II" hazardous materials information to make this information more easily accessible and usable by first responders.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM SERVICES

In addition to enhancing the RPC work, RPCs provide municipalities, state agencies and regional groups with mapping and data analysis in support of their projects.

- **Town-Specific Web Maps:** Updated/created interactive town-specific web maps for Bolton, South Burlington, Charlotte, Huntington, Jericho, Milton, Richmond, Shelburne, Westford, and Winooski.
- **Town Plan Maps:** Created for Colchester, Essex Junction, Huntington, Shelburne and Winooski.
- **GIS Data:** Developed or updated numerous GIS datasets (zoning, bridges, culverts, housing points, cemeteries, neighborhoods, scenic resources, state designations, groundwater source protection areas, trails, conserved land, utilities, etc.) for Bolton, Burlington, Charlotte, Colchester, Essex, Essex Junction, Huntington, Jericho, Richmond, Shelburne, South Burlington, Underhill, Westford, and Winooski.
- **Colchester Map Service:** Continued to provide updates to their map service which links to the Town's VueWorks Asset Management system. Also, Collector App maps for Colchester Public Works to use in tracking street sweeping and work conducted on catch basins and outfalls.
- **Winooski Map Service:** Providing an interactive digital map service for Winooski's NexGen Asset Management system.
- **Data available via Vermont Open Data Portal:** Uploaded housing points, regional future land use, municipal zoning and overlay data to the portal to allow public access to the GIS data.

- **VOBCIT:** CCRPC continues to work with partners to improve, enhance and support the VOBCIT website (<https://vtculverts.org>).

ENERGY CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT

A renewed focus on clean, renewable, sustainable and affordable energy presents Vermont with great opportunity and significant challenges. RPCs integrate energy planning with land use, transportation and natural resources efforts, and work with municipalities to assist with project implementation. RPCs participate in Section 248 proceedings and support comprehensive planning at the local and regional level to inform the permitting process.

- **Regional Energy Plan:** The *2018 Chittenden County ECOS Plan* was granted an Affirmative Determination of Energy Compliance by the Department of Public Service on August 9, 2018. CCRPC has increased participation in PUC proceedings (applications for Certificates of Public Good and various investigations) to ensure that local and regional policies are recognized. CCRPC participated in 16 PUC proceedings in FY19.
- **Municipal Energy Plans:** CCRPC provided specific technical assistance on data/mapping, plan narrative and policy language to Bolton, Burlington, Charlotte, Colchester, Essex Junction, Essex Town, Hinesburg, Huntington, Jericho, Richmond, Underhill, Williston and Winooski to help them develop their local energy plans. The CCRPC board granted affirmative determinations of energy compliance to enhanced energy plans in Burlington, Colchester, Richmond, Shelburne and Winooski.

WATERSHED PLANNING & PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

RPCs work with the Agency of Natural Resources to assist with completion of the EPA-required watershed tactical basin plans. RPCs also work with municipalities to implement river corridor assessments in local planning and regulations for better and safer growth management decisions.

- **Clean Water:** The CCRPC is committed to supporting water quality initiatives throughout our region to ensure that all residents have access to clean drinking water; to strengthen our region's recreation and tourism industry; and to become more resilient to flood events. To assist our member municipalities and the state in working together to achieve these goals, the CCRPC has facilitated the Clean Water Advisory Committee and the MS-4 Sub-Committee (<https://www.ccrpcvt.org/about-us/committees/clean-water-advisory-committee/>), provided guidance for the Vermont Clean Water Fund, assisted municipalities with Better Roads grants and stormwater master plans, and managed water quality-focused advocacy and education programs such as Rethink Runoff (www.rethinkrunoff.org).
- **Block Grants:** Through funding provided by the DEC and administered by the Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission, the CCRPC managed Clean Water Block Grants to implement the following stormwater projects: in Burlington, Route 127 Culvert Outfall Upgrade; in South Burlington, upgrades to two large stormwater ponds in the Pinnacle at Spear neighborhood; and in Williston, repair and upgrades to two stormwater ponds in the Old Stage Estates neighborhood. All four projects were substantially completed by the close of FY19. Additionally, CCRPC secured funding for and started three new projects in FY19 as follows: in Underhill, construction of a large rain garden at the Town office; in Williston, design of road drainage improvements on Beebe Lane in the Lake Iroquois Recreation District; and, in

Winooski, upgrades to a stormwater pond in the Pine Grove Terrace neighborhood. These three latest projects will be completed by December 31, 2019.

- **Water Quality Outreach:** CCRPC is managing, with all RPCs as sub-grantees, a grant provided from the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to conduct a multi-pronged outreach effort focused on improving water quality in compliance with the Vermont Clean Water Act (VCWA). CCRPC continues work with municipal staff and boards to provide information about the requirements for municipalities triggered by the VCWA and also work with them on options such as stronger municipal protections against flood hazards and river corridor erosion, stormwater master planning, and other town plan or zoning changes to improve water quality. CCRPC completed assistance on development of the Winooski Tactical Basin Plan and began assistance on an update to the Northern Lake Champlain Direct Drainages Tactical Basin Plan. Drafted River Corridor Overlay District bylaws for consideration by South Burlington.
- **Stormwater Master Plans:** Completed the Stormwater Master Plans for Underhill and Richmond. The Winooski NRC and Friends of the Winooski assisted with outreach on the Richmond stormwater master plan. Development of a Stormwater Master Plan for Milton to be completed in the fall of 2019.
- **Municipal Road General Permit:** CCRPC staff continued to provide assistance to all member municipalities to address policy, data, and reporting issues to meet the MRGP requirements. See the Transportation section for road erosion inventories.
- **Grant Writing:** In support of this work CCRPC participated in securing Better Roads Grants for Bolton and Underhill; and Clean Water Block Grants for Williston, Winooski and Underhill.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

- The CCRPC continues to use the **2014 Public Participation Plan (PPP)** to guide our focus on diversity and equity in all projects. (<http://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-work/our-plans/public-participation-plan/>)
- **Chittenden County Opioid Alliance:** The CCRPC supports and serves on the Chittenden County Opioid Alliance (CCOA, <http://www.ccoavt.org>) together with other dedicated stakeholders including local non-profit agencies, state and local government, United Way of Northwest Vermont, UVM Medical Center, Vermont Department of Health, business leaders and community members in Chittenden County.
- **Building Homes Together:** The CCRPC, Champlain Housing Trust and Housing Vermont continue to lead a coordinated campaign to strengthen Chittenden County communities and our economy by building 3,500 homes by 2021 for people of all incomes, including 700 affordable homes. CCRPC staff developed a series of housing indicators with the two-year data for a press conference that was held in October 2018. CCRPC also began to host a meeting of municipal Housing Committees to facilitate peer learning. (<http://www.ecosproject.com/building-homes-together>)
- **Prevention Network:** CCRPC served as the lead agency for the Regional Prevention Partnership (<http://www.healthvermont.gov/alcohol-drug-abuse/programs-services/prevention-programs>). Accomplishments included expansion of drug take back locations, promoting drug take-back days, fake ID enforcement, and community education about substance use prevention.

- **Regional Dispatch Implementation Study:** The CCRPC continues to support the Chittenden County Public Safety Authority (CCPSA) formed by the following municipalities in 2018 (Burlington, Colchester, Milton, South Burlington, Williston, Winooski) to implement a plan for a consolidated regional dispatch center for police, fire and rescue agencies. (<http://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-work/emergency-management/regional-dispatch/>)

ADMINISTRATION & FUNDING

The CCRPC receives most of its funding through performance-based grants and contracts with the state. Town assessments constitute a small but very important percentage of our funding. For the 2019 fiscal year, the CCRPC's total revenue of nearly \$5.1 million dollars was derived from about 74% federally funded grants, 20% state funding, 6% from municipalities. Just under \$2.9 million, or 58% of the total funding, was passed through to consultants or sub-grantees.

All of the CCRPC's revenue sources are tied to federal, state or municipal agreements with scopes of work, guidelines and/or performance measures. CCRPC works with our members and VTrans to decide the best way to invest our MPO funding annually in developing our unified planning work program. Municipal dues, and the funding received through the CCRPC's performance agreement with ACCD, are also necessary to provide matching funds required by grantors. The grants we receive enable us to work with our municipalities on areas such as transportation, emergency planning, community development, brownfields redevelopment, energy, public health, and natural resources. Revenue from federal and state grantors typically requires non-federal matching funds. Required match ranges from 10 percent (transportation planning) to 50 percent (Emergency Management Planning Grant).

The CCRPC conducts a single audit on an annual basis. The federal single audit field work will be conducted in September 2019, with the full report to be completed before December 2019.

'AT WORK' MAP

The map depicting the range of services provided by the CCRPC to member municipalities is included on the next page.

CCRPC at Work: Fiscal Year 2019



Type of Project

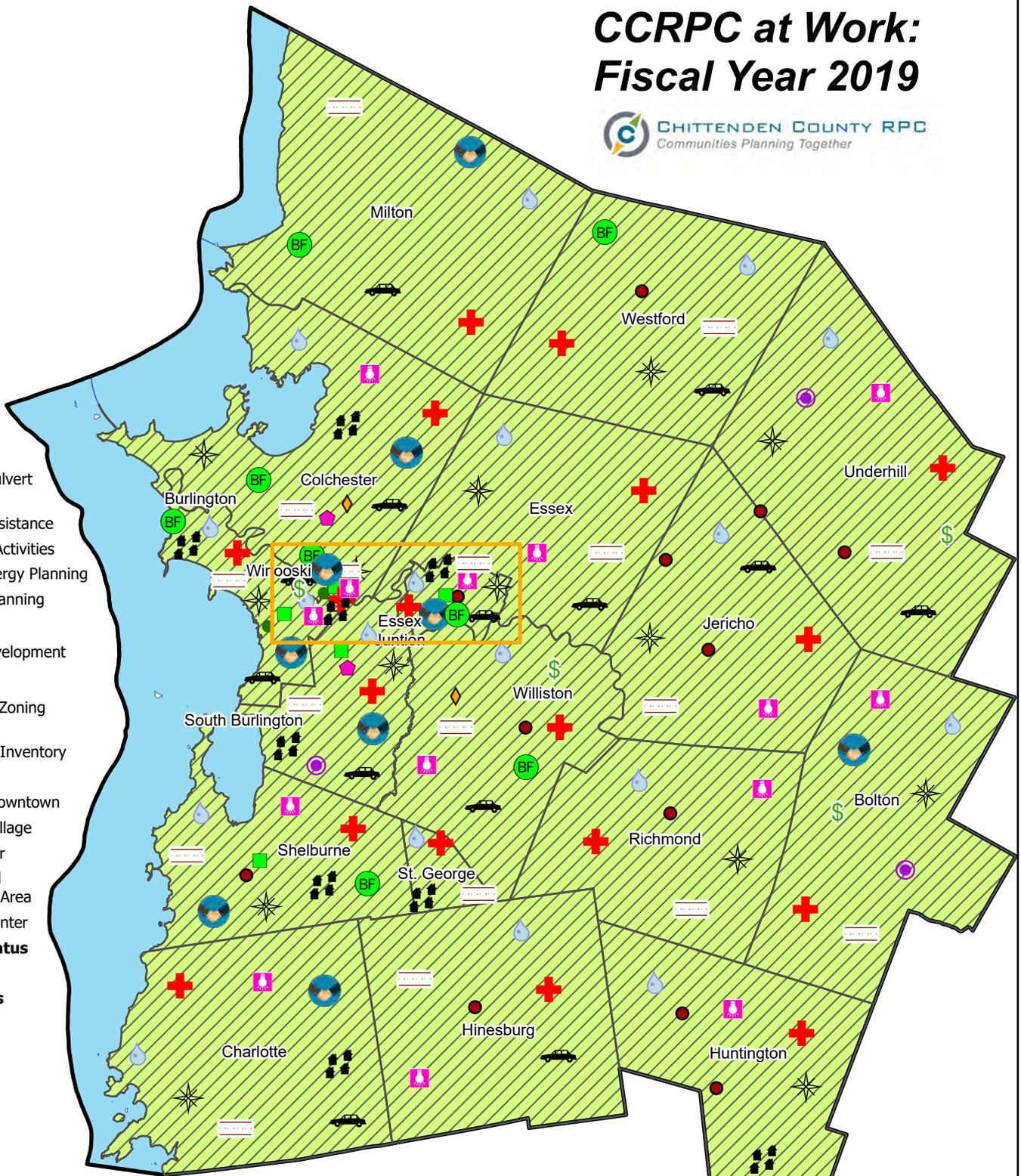
- Bridge and Culvert Inventory
- Brownfield Assistance
- Clean Water Activities
- Enhanced Energy Planning
- Emergency Planning
- Grant Writing
- Economic Development
- Mapping
- Planning and Zoning Assistance
- Road Erosion Inventory
- Traffic Count
- Designated Downtown
- Designated Village
- Growth Center
- Neighborhood Development Area
- New Town Center

Zoning Bylaw Status

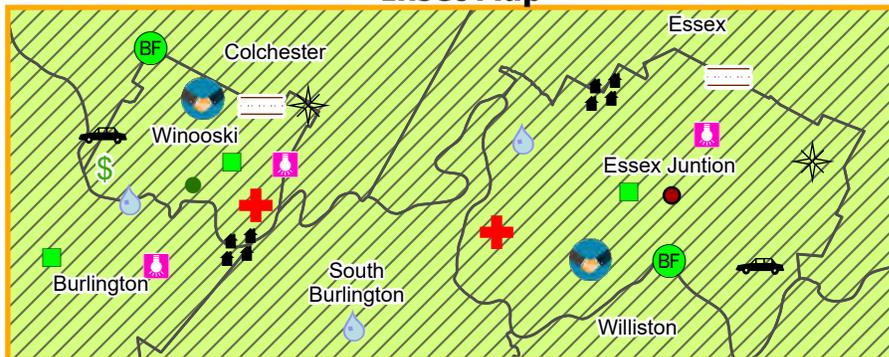
- Adopted

Town Plan Status

- Current
- Expired



Inset Map



Buels Gore

Lamoille County Planning Commission

FY 2019 Annual Report

Founded in 1966 as the Lamoille County Planning and Development Corporation, the Lamoille County Planning Commission (LCPC) continues to be an important resource to the 15 municipalities of Lamoille County – ten towns and five incorporated villages. The county’s economy is primarily tourism-based - including two major ski resorts – with a growing number of home-grown, nationally-renowned businesses, such as Concept 2, MSI, and Butternut Mountain Farm. LCPC’s mission is to ensure the protection of the region’s environment and conservation of natural resources, and to facilitate sustainable economic development for the benefit of all residents and visitors through a coordinated and cooperative planning process at the local level.

Each municipality’s legislative body (Selectboard or Trustees) determines who will represent them on the LCPC Board of Directors. Member municipalities of 2,500 residents or greater appoint two directors and municipalities under 2,500 appoint one director to represent that municipality’s interest in regional affairs. Additionally, the LCPC has five at-large, elected directors to represent regional interests. Directors serve on committees that make recommendations to the full 23-member Board of Directors. The LCPC has seven highly-qualified full-time and part-time staff that provide support to the Board and its committees and execute the Commission’s multifaceted work program.

MUNICIPAL PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION

RPCs act as a cost-effective professional planning staff for many of Vermont’s municipalities. Work in recent years has been focused on improving municipal plans and local permitting through education and consultations, bylaw modernization, facilitating transition to Development Review Boards and implementing statutory requirements for flood resiliency planning. Current and clear plans and bylaws are essential for smooth state and local permitting. This work is supported through local and regional planning funds, local contributions and other grants. All technical assistance provided this year is shown on the At Work map on the final page of the report. Highlights include:

- With assistance from LCPC, Cambridge and Jeffersonville continue to implement major aspects of the “Jeffersonville Flood Mitigation Master Plan” developed with support from State and Federal grants. The mitigation measures are funded through a mix of Federal (HMGP, CDBG,) and State (ERP) funds, and, once implemented, will reduce flood levels in the Village core by up to 1.5 feet. Had such measures been in place during the flood of 2011, evacuation of the Village’s Senior Housing would not have been needed.
- LCPC oversaw installation of a large flood bypass culvert under Route 15 that will enable floodwaters to flow more efficiently out of the Village of Jeffersonville.
- With assistance from LCPC, the Village of Jeffersonville updated the Village’s Flood Hazard Bylaws to reflect recommendations from the Lamoille Flood Modeling Study. LCPC is also working with the Village to develop a long-term Management Plan for the former Bell Gates Lumber Mill, which was purchased as part of the Village’s flood mitigation efforts.
- LCPC obtained a USDA Rural Business Development Grant to develop strategies to advance redevelopment at two former industrial sites in Johnson. The sites are the former Manchester Lumber Mill and the former talc mill processing plant. The sites are located close to the Village center, have access to municipal infrastructure and are adjacent to the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail.

- With LCPC’s assistance, the Town of Waterville and the Village of Jeffersonville revised and adopted their municipal plans.
- In response to concerns raised several years ago at Waterville’s Town Meeting, LCPC also completed pedestrian counts in front of the Town Hall during town meeting. These counts will be used to inform future decisions about improving pedestrian safety for pedestrians accessing the Town Hall.
- The LCPC provided ongoing assistance to Belvidere for transportation project planning and management including project management services for replacement of the culvert on Bog Road as well as project management services for Better Roads and Grant in Aid projects.
- The Commission was active in water quality issues including, implementing water quality projects and programs to protect water resources, ensuring safe water supplies, enhancing recreational opportunities, and addressing known sources of pollution. Staff provided Vermont Clean Water Fund Outreach and assisted in the development of the Winooski River Tactical Basin Plan.
- LCPC provided help identifying appropriate funding sources, defining project scope, and writing applications for numerous municipalities which, among other grants, resulted in municipal planning grants for Jeffersonville, Cambridge, and Waterville.
- The Commission provided application development and mapping services to assist Elmore and Wolcott in establishing Village Center Designation.

REGIONAL PLANNING

RPCs coordinate planning at the regional level through the adoption and implementation of a comprehensive regional plan, and related studies. These plans guide local planning and the investment decisions of the public and private sectors. The Lamoille County Regional Plan was adopted in 2015. LCPC has updated their Act 250 review process, making the process more transparent, understandable and accessible to both developers and municipalities. The Commission has engaged in extensive outreach to increase regional understanding of the Commission’s role in the Act 250 process. In 2019, LCPC reviewed one major Act 250 application and five Section 248 applications.

BROWNFIELDS

Vermont RPCs have sought and have been awarded over 10 million dollars for this economic development initiative. Environmental site assessments allow properties to be sold, developed or re-developed in ways that benefit the local and state economy, create or protect jobs and increase housing opportunities.

The LCPC previously received a total of \$400,000 in Assessment Grant Funds from the US EPA (\$200,000 for hazardous sites and \$200,000 for petroleum sites). In fiscal year 2019, the LCPC’s brownfields Grant Funds advanced environmental assessments at four sites in Jeffersonville, Johnson and Cambridge. Two that were previously assessed through LCPC’s program were successfully remediated and returned to productive use. This includes the new Trailhead for the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail located on Depot Street in the Village of Hyde Park and the Bell Gates Parcel in Jeffersonville. Another site, a former Auto Repair Garage in Cambridge, was found to have no contamination exceeding regulatory limits, increasing the salability for the owners. In addition to the assessments in Lamoille County, LCPC worked with the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission and the Northeast Vermont Development Corporation to provide funding for property assessments in Montpelier, St. Johnsbury and Albany.

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Economic growth is supported best when development efforts are partnered with solid planning functions. RPCs work with towns and in strong partnership with Regional Development Corporations (RDCs) to this end in a number of ways, including development of comprehensive strategies that will help to position Vermont for long term economic gain.

In Fiscal Year 2019, LCPC hired Purpose Energy, Inc. to study the feasibility of locating a regional anaerobic digester in Lamoille County. The study developed three solutions: 1) build a smaller digester to serve breweries and sugar makers in Morristown, 2) build a larger regional digester to serve businesses in the broader Lamoille region, or 3) truck all by-product waste to a large nearby digester currently being built in St. Albans. The regional digester would generate up to 264 kW of renewable energy. USDA Rural Development's Rural Business Development Grant program and Lamoille Economic Development Corporation provided funding for the study.

Lack of critical infrastructure such as water, wastewater, and broadband, impedes economic development in much of rural Vermont. LCPC continues to work with municipalities to identify new funding sources for this infrastructure, and to seek creative means to maximize use of existing but limited capacity, such as encouraging mixed use development, relaxed setbacks and frontage standards so that more users can be accommodated within existing service areas, and flexible parking standards. In early 2019, LCPC began assisting Wolcott in a DEC sponsored program funded by the Northern Borders Regional Commission to explore and evaluate small scale wastewater solutions for Wolcott Village. LCPC is also providing planning and grant writing assistance to the Village of Jeffersonville in its efforts to secure an additional water source for the Village Water System.

LCPC reached an agreement with the Lamoille Economic Development Corporation so that the Executive Directors of each organization serve *ex officio* on the other's board. This level of coordination allows for improved communication, development and community outreach.

In 2019, the Executive Director of LCPC, Tasha Wallis, served as Co-Chair of the Northern Vermont Economic Development District (NVEDD). The NVEDD completed work on a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and is poised to further contribute to economic development throughout the Lamoille County region.

The Commission, along with members of the Smugglers Notch Partnership, completed another successful summer of operations at the Barnes Camp Visitor Center. The renovated Barnes Camp at the base of the Notch on the Stowe side, has become a popular spot for tourists exploring the area.

In the fall of 2017, LCPC celebrated with partners the grand opening of the Boardwalk behind Barnes Camp. The completion of this project marks the first universally accessible segment of the Long Trail. Finally, LCPC facilitated a series of beautifully designed interpretive panels and timber framed kiosks in Smugglers Notch State Park. These improved visitor facilities and amenities will strengthen Lamoille County's tourism and recreation economy.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Through a contract with Vermont Agency of Transportation, RPCs coordinate the Transportation Planning Initiative (TPI). This effort has provided a statewide framework for public involvement in planning the improvements to Vermont's transportation system, with local communities represented through regional Transportation Advisory Committees (TACs). Each regional TAC prioritizes projects, identifies local and regional transportation needs, and provides the platform for public involvement in the planning and development of the state's transportation system. RPCs serve as the point of delivery for the statewide transportation planning process to support local, regional, state and federal transportation network advancement.

In this reporting period, the Lamoille County Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) met nine times, with an average member participation rate of 37.5%. Four outcomes of this year's TAC activities include:

1. With the help of a guest lawyer, TAC provided a forum for municipalities to discuss legal and right-of-way issues in relation to the Municipal Roads General Permit.
2. TAC meetings acted as forums for public input on three planning efforts: Vermont Long Range Transportation Plan; Morrisville-Stowe State Airport Master Plan; and Green Mountain Transit "Next Gen" comprehensive service and planning study.
3. In addition to engaging in the annual State Project Prioritization Process, TAC was twice provided with a preview of upcoming changes to that process.
4. TAC meetings twice served as a forum of delivering information from State agencies to municipal partners, specifically the VTrans Town Road & Bridge Standards Template and the ANR 3-acre Rule.

The Lamoille County Road Foremen Network has met twice during this reporting period (July 28 and March 29). This group has been very important in communicating across towns throughout the region and heightening awareness of regional planning, road networks and water quality issues.

Other Outreach and Municipal assistance included the two road foremen network meetings, thirty-nine meetings and coordination activities with public transit providers (Green Mountain Transit and Rural Community Transportation), nine public coordination and information meetings, forty-six planning and coordination meetings with various State Agencies and other Partners, and forty-seven meetings and discussions with municipalities to provide coordination and technical assistance on specific transportation issues. LCPC's Transportation Planner attended a Federal Highway Administration conference in Albany, New York, as part of a small contingency of VTrans and Chittenden County RPC staff representing Vermont.

LCPC Transportation Planner facilitated the Green Mountain Byway Committee in partnership with Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC). This grassroots committee recently completed an update to the current Byway Plan and added seven new municipalities (three towns with 4 villages) to the Byway; the expanded Byway is now a 71-mile loop from Waterbury to Stowe, Morristown, Hyde Park, Johnson, and Cambridge, including the Smugglers' Notch Scenic Highway which takes you back to Stowe.

LCPC staff continues to work with the Smugglers' Notch Partnership. The Boardwalk at Barnes Camp continues to be a major attraction for locals and visitors to the Notch. LCPC successfully obtained a Northern Borders Regional Commission grant for parking and stormwater improvements for VT108 within Smugglers' Notch State Park. LCPC also worked with the Vermont Agency of Transportation and Vermont Department of Forests Parks and Recreation to identify the most effective ways to mitigate flood and erosion threats to Route 108 and Park infrastructure, and worked with the VTrans Operations District to submit a FEMA Hazard Mitigation Application to enlarge several culverts under Route 108.

The LCPC conducted or completed road erosion inventories in Elmore, Cambridge, and Johnson, and began preparing for three additional inventories.

LCPC's Transportation Planner facilitated three elderly & disabled public transit meetings in partnership with Northeast Vermont Development Association, and regularly participates as a voting member to Rural Community Transportation and Green Mountain Transit Boards and sub-committees.

Data collection activities by the LCPC for Vermont Agency of Transportation included at least 40 activities in all towns across the region, including but not limited to bridge/culvert inventories, traffic counts, bike/ped counts, and park-n-ride counts.

The TPI workplan provides several task categories which support municipal planning and technical assistance, and approximately 54% of LCPC's total TPI budget supports municipal technical assistance. Example projects that fall under municipal technical assistance are:

- **Water Quality:** provided coordination with ANR and facilitated group and individual discussions with municipal staff, boards, and other partners in all 10 towns.
- **Road Erosion Inventories (REI):** continued providing this service for towns to comply with the Municipal Roads General Permit; continued coordination and software development input with other RPC staff and ANR; combined other funds with TPI budget to optimize resources and outcomes.
- **Planning Studies:** participated in coordination and planning between the Town of Eden, US Fish & Wildlife Service, and VT Agency of Natural Resources regarding the use of court settlement funds from the local asbestos mine for projects with both transportation infrastructure and environmental benefits; facilitated and funded a stream-wetland-floodplain analysis via the Clean Water Block Grant program for a VT Fish & Wildlife Department property located in Wolcott, and prepared for implementation of recommendations from that plan; prepared for implementation of parking and stormwater improvements for Smugglers' Notch State Park area in partnership with Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation, and Vermont Agency of Transportation; participated in the "Better Connections" Hyde Park planning study which combines transportation planning and economic development planning; participated in the Green Mountain Transit Comprehensive Planning Study (a.k.a. "Next-Gen" study) and facilitated public input about proposed service changes; participated in the Technical Advisory Committee for the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail Floodplain Access Study with Vermont Agency of Transportation, University of Vermont and Vermont Agency of Natural Resources;

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & DISASTER RESILIENCY

RPCs play key roles in the mitigation and preparedness phases of emergency management in partnership with Vermont Emergency Management, the Vermont Homeland Security Unit, Vermont Agency of Transportation and the Agency of Natural Resources. RPCs provide direct staff to the State Emergency Operations Center, administrative support to the Local Emergency Planning Committees and coordination among responders and planners throughout the State's four Public Safety Districts. RPCs also help update floodplain bylaws and FEMA-required hazard mitigation plans, coordinate updates to municipal emergency plans and assist as needed in special circumstances like Tropical Storm Irene and other declared disasters.

- The Town of Cambridge utilized the Lamoille River Main Stem Model to evaluate potential solutions for flooding of Pumpkin Harbor Road, located near the so-called Wrong Way Bridge. This flooding isolates residents on Bartlett Hill on a nearly annual basis. After several years of discussion, the Town of Cambridge voted to elevate the road at Town Meeting.
- LCPC worked with the Johnson Planning Commission and the Agency of Natural Resources to update River Corridor maps in Johnson.
- Staff worked with Wolcott to review flood hazard bylaws.
- Prepared a DEC Block Grant Application to alleviate flood and ice jam damage in Wolcott.
- Nine of 10 municipalities in the region currently have a hazard mitigation plan either adopted or under review. Several local hazard mitigation plans in the region expire in 2020 and in FY 19, LCPC began updating the local hazard mitigation plans for Cambridge, Jeffersonville, Wolcott and Hyde Park.
- Ten of 10 (100%) of municipalities in the region currently have an updated local emergency management plan (LEMP).
- The LCPC continued to provide administrative and technical assistance to LEPC#11 (Local Emergency Planning Committee) to host trainings and emergency preparedness discussions. In FY 19, LEPC held presentations on the VEM RACES Radio Program as well as the American Red Cross Supportive Communities Initiative. Additionally, LCPC assisted with administrative work on Tier II reports, worked on the Regional Hazardous Materials Response Plan, and preparation of two Hazchem grant applications.
- LCPC in conjunction with VEM hosted Emergency Management trainings including an Emergency Management Director (EMD) training.
- Aided with Home Elevation assistance and Wolcott Flood Model Planning.
- Assisted the Town of Belvidere with administration and project development of the Bog Road culvert replacement mitigation project.
- Coordinated Smugglers' Notch Drainage Study to identify alternatives to mitigate flood and erosion damage to Route 108. Based on this analysis, the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation completed an immediate mitigation strategy that appears to have successfully reduced flooding and erosion over winter 2018 and spring 2019. LCPC also worked with the VTrans Operations District to submit a HMGP application to FEMA to enlarge several culverts under Route 108. The alternatives analysis demonstrated that these would be cost-effective long-term strategies to protect Route 108.
- Updated E-911 map for the Town of Waterville. Participated in three local liaison activations to assess storm damages in response to State requests.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM SERVICES

In addition to enhancing LCPC's work, our GIS specialists provide municipalities, state agencies and regional groups with mapping and data analysis in support of their projects.

- Developed Road Erosion Inventory (REI) applications to collect REI information and employed the application in data collection for the towns of Belvidere, Eden, Elmore, and Johnson. Hosted a training on the use of the State Municipal Roads General Permit Road Erosion Inventory Application and employed its use in the County.
- Updated E-911 map for the Town of Waterville.
- Updated parcel map for the Town of Belvidere.
- Hosted a workshop on the Vermont Statewide Parcel Mapping Project.
- Updated Regional Energy Plan maps to reflect all significant regional ridgelines.
- Developed maps for the following:
 - Wind, solar, Hydro power and biomass energy potential maps for the Towns of Johnson and Waterville
 - Town plan map updates for the municipalities of Waterville, Cambridge, Jeffersonville, Elmore and Wolcott
 - Flood hazard maps for towns throughout the region
 - Village Center Designation maps for Elmore and North Wolcott
 - Belvidere culvert inventory map updates
 - Updated Johnson River Corridor mapping
 - Zoning/subdivision map updates for the Town of Elmore
 - Cambridge Trails map updates
 - Cambridge Leased Lands

ENERGY CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT

A renewed focus on clean, renewable, sustainable and affordable energy presents Vermont with great opportunities and significant challenges. RPCs integrate energy planning with land use, transportation and natural resources efforts, and work with municipalities to assist with project implementation. RPCs participate in Section 248 proceedings and support comprehensive planning at the local and regional level to inform the permitting process.

In FY 2019, the Department of Public Service certified the Lamoille County Regional Plan for compliance with State energy goals. Additionally, LCPC received two municipal requests for determination of energy compliance and issued the Certificates of Energy Compliance to Stowe and Elmore.

WATERSHED PLANNING & PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

The Lamoille County Planning Commission works with the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) to assist with completion of the EPA required Tactical Basin Plans. The LCPC works closely with ANR and municipalities to assess and implement water quality projects. The LCPC also works with municipalities to implement river corridor assessments in local planning and regulations which result in better and safer growth management decisions.

- As part of the Clean Water Initiative, LCPC conducted outreach on updates to water quality standards, river corridor planning, storm water management, and flood resiliency. The LCPC has

engaged with ANR regarding changes to River Corridor policies and related statewide incentive programs. The LCPC has also conducted outreach and hosted presentations on the new 3 Acre Rule for stormwater management.

- LCPC assisted the Town of Cambridge with grants and project management for the implementation of the Cambridge Elementary School Stormwater Project. A ribbon cutting ceremony was held to celebrate the project on May 13th, 2019. This system, installed in the summer of 2018, will capture 90% of runoff from impervious surfaces on school grounds, which will improve water quality in the Brewster River.
- Assisted the Town of Cambridge in securing an Ecosystem Restoration Grant to develop a Stormwater Master Plan for Jeffersonville and Cambridge Village. The study will focus on preliminary design planning for stormwater runoff hot spots identified by the community.
- Expanded LCPC's hydrological model to further evaluate flood mitigation options in Wolcott and Johnson.
- Assisted Vermont Emergency Management and ANR in an application to the US Army Corps of Engineers to evaluate strategies to reduce ice jamming in Johnson Village.
- Provided outreach and field verification assistance regarding River Corridors in the Towns of Wolcott and Johnson.
- Provided project development and land owner outreach for floodplain restoration projects in the Town of Cambridge and Jeffersonville Village.
- Secured funds from the Clean Water Block Grant program for project development and land owner outreach for a floodplain restoration project in Wolcott. This project is in partnership with Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife and The Nature Conservancy to provide improved water quality, reduced flooding and ice jam damages, and safe passage for wildlife under a state highway bridge.
- Provided assistance to Eden, Johnson, and Waterville in applying for grants from the Better Roads Program to conduct road erosion inventories in accordance with requirements of the Municipal Roads General Permit. LCPC conducted or completed inventories for Cambridge, Belvidere, and Elmore in Fiscal Year 2019, and began preparing to conduct inventories in Wolcott, Johnson, Waterville, and Eden.
- Worked with Village of Jeffersonville on updating flood hazard regulations to mirror recommendations from the Lamoille River Flood Modeling Study.
- Assisted with outreach and mapping updates for the Town of Johnson to explore adopting River Corridor bylaws.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

The Lamoille County Planning Commission specializes in taking the planning process from concept through to implementation and construction. In Cambridge and Jeffersonville, ongoing severe flooding was addressed through analysis and then construction of a new bridge in Jeffersonville and a new culvert under Route 15 in the village of Jeffersonville. Modeling the Lamoille River was a key element from planning to implementation.

In Smugglers' Notch, construction of a new boardwalk was completed after years of collaborative planning with many partners.

Creation of a Model of the Entire Main Stem of the Lamoille River Through Lamoille County

Between 2015 and 2017, LCPC in partnership with the Town and Village of Cambridge, Village of Jeffersonville, Town and Village of Johnson, and Town of Wolcott, received a grant from the High Meadows Fund. A major component of this grant is creation of a model of the entire main stem of the Lamoille River through Lamoille County. The model is designed to show floodwater levels during various-sized storm events. The model can also show the impacts of structures, such as roads and bridges, on upstream and downstream flood levels. A similar model developed several years ago in Jeffersonville identified alternatives with the potential to reduce flood levels by more than a foot-and-a-half in the Village. While this may not sound like a significant decrease, had these mitigation measures been in place, the 30 plus residents of the Jeffersonville Senior Housing would not have needed to evacuate their homes during the spring 2011 floods.

The model continues to be used to test possible alternatives to reduce flooding throughout Lamoille County. The Town of Cambridge used the model to evaluate how high Pumpkin Harbor could be elevated without displacing floodwaters downstream into Cambridge Village. The US Army Corps of Engineers will utilize the model as part of the ice jam analysis they will be completing in the Village of Johnson. Through its Brownfields Program, LCPC will also be further refining the model to be used as a tool for critical redevelop sites in Johnson Village. The model is also being expanded by the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife to evaluate floodplain restoration options on Department owned land in the Town of Wolcott. The model is a public document available to any community. Every time the model is used for a community project, additional data is added, making it more accurate and valuable for the Region.

Jeffersonville Route 15 Flood Bypass Culvert

LCPC worked with the Village of Jeffersonville and Vermont Agency of Transportation to install a large flood bypass culvert under Route 15. Prior to the installation of the culvert, the Route 15 embankment prevented floodwaters from the Brewster from flowing out of the Village. The culvert was installed over a single weekend in November 2018. As with other mitigation projects in Jeffersonville, LCPC served as the project manager for the culvert.

ADMINISTRATION & FUNDING

The Commission continually updates internal financial processes and procedures to ensure compliance with all federal, state and grant requirements. The LCPC recently updated both the Personnel and Procurement Policies to be in conformance with all State and Federal statutory changes. The LCPC is audited on an annual basis. The Organization received a clean audit for 2018, conducted a fraud risk assessment and reviews all policies and practices on an ongoing basis.

The Commission continued to actively engage in Board recruitment resulting in more board seats being filled from a diversity of municipalities and a newly energized and engaged board. The Commission also updated the new Board Member Handbook and assisted in training new Board members.

The LCPC receives most of its funding through grants, and through performance-based contracts with the state. Town assessments constitute a small but very important percentage of our funding.

Revenue from virtually all federal and state grantors requires matching funds, and typically non-federal matching funds. Required match ranges from 10 percent (Transportation Planning Initiative) to 50

percent (Emergency Management Planning Grant & Northern Vermont Economic Development District).

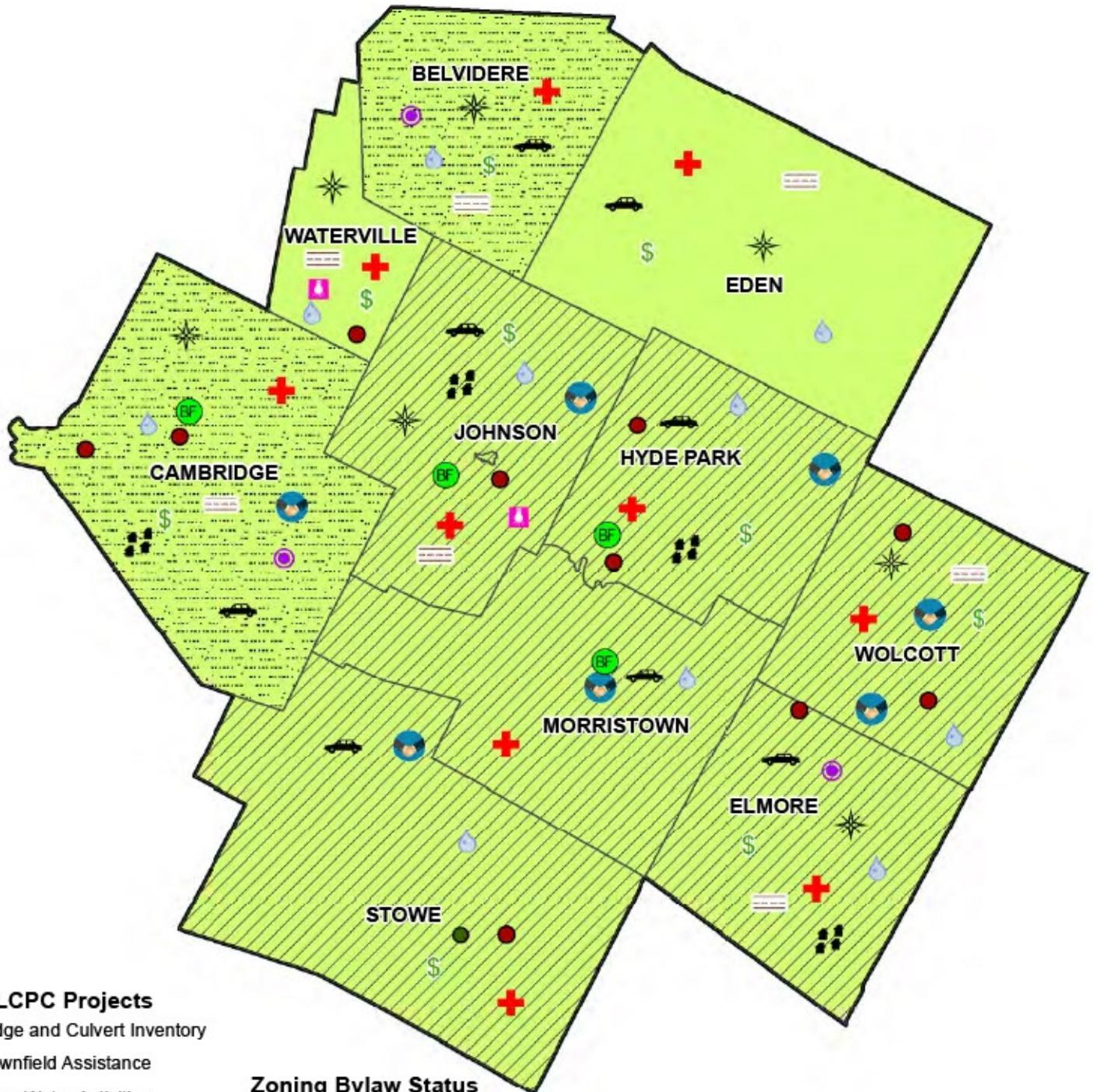
For the 2019 fiscal year, the LCPC's total projected revenue of approximately \$980,000 dollars was derived from a mix of regional project grant funding, municipal project grant funding, EPA brownfields funding, state performance contract funding, non-profit organization grants and a small amount from town assessments.

Virtually all of the LCPC's revenue sources are tied to contracts with scopes of work, guidelines and/or performance measures. The commission's performance contract with the state is also necessary to provide matching funds required by grantors. The grants we receive enable us to work with municipalities on areas such as transportation, emergency planning, community development, brownfields redevelopment, water quality, energy, and natural resources.

'AT WORK' MAP

The map depicting the range of services provided by the LCPC to member municipalities is included on the next page.

LCPC at Work: FY 2019 Projects



FY 19 LCPC Projects

- Bridge and Culvert Inventory
- Brownfield Assistance
- Clean Water Activities
- Enhanced Energy Planning
- Emergency Planning
- Grant Writing
- Economic Development
- Mapping
- Planning and Zoning Assistance
- Road Erosion Inventory
- Traffic Count

Zoning Bylaw Status

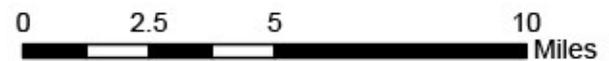
- Flood Only
- None
- Zoning and Flood Bylaws

Town Plan Status

- Current
- Expired
- No Town Plan
- Town Boundary
- County Boundary

Designated Downtown or Village Status

- Designated Downtown
- Designated Village



Northwest Regional Planning Commission

FY 2019 Annual Report

The Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) serves the 23 municipalities (19 towns, 3 incorporated villages, and 1 city) located in Franklin and Grand Isle Counties in northwestern Vermont.

Municipalities in the region appoint two representatives to serve on the Board of Commissioners. This board governs the policies and activities of the Commission and elects an Executive Committee and officers to oversee NRPC programs and staff. The Mission of the Northwest Regional Planning Commission is:

- To assist local municipalities, through education, technical assistance, grants and funding; and to aid municipalities in their planning efforts as authorized by Vermont planning laws.
- To serve as a center for information and as a resource to support the region and its municipalities' interests, growth patterns and common goals.
- To provide a forum for the discussion of issues which are regional in nature and/or unique to our area of the state, and to serve as a mediator to resolve conflicts as appropriate. Common sense and a spirit of compromise must be allowed to enter the discussion so that the impacts of development may be mitigated.
- To conduct regional planning programs.

MUNICIPAL PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION

RPCs act as a cost-effective professional planning staff for many of Vermont's municipalities. Work in recent years has been focused on improving town plans and local permitting through education and on-site training, bylaw modernization, facilitating transition to Development Review Boards and implementing requirements for economic development and flood resiliency planning. Current and clear plans and bylaws are essential in smooth state and local permitting. This work is supported through local and regional planning funds, local contributions, and other grants. All technical assistance provided this year is shown on the At Work map; highlights include:

- Completed workshops attended by municipal staff and volunteers from 19 municipalities on the Essentials of Land Use Planning.
- Reviewed and provided regional approval to 3 municipal plans (Bakersfield, Fairfax, St. Albans Town). Reviewed and provided a positive determination of energy compliance to 3 municipal plans (Fairfax, Franklin, Swanton).
- Completed a substantial update to the development regulations for the Town of Fairfield with Municipal Planning Grant funding. This included a character assessment of the village area and revisions to the Village Zoning District standards. Assisted the Town of Richford complete updates to the municipal development regulations. Assisted the Town of Alburgh in creating development regulations that were voted on by town residents at Town Meeting.
- Assisted North Hero with updates to their municipal plan.
- Helped the Town of Sheldon apply for and receive village designation for its two village centers.
- Finalized a Village Master Plan for the Town and Village of Alburgh. The project was funded through the Municipal Planning Grant program.

- Answered general planning and zoning technical assistance questions for Alburgh, Berkshire, Enosburgh, Enosburg Falls, Fairfax, Fairfield, Fletcher, Franklin, Georgia, Highgate, Montgomery, North Hero, Richford, Sheldon, St. Albans City, St. Albans Town, South Hero, and Swanton.

REGIONAL PLANNING

RPCs coordinate planning at the regional level through the adoption and implementation of a comprehensive regional plan, and related studies. These plans guide local planning and the investment decisions of the public and private sectors.

The Northwest Regional Plan was amended by the Board of Commissioners in June 2017. The amended plan included a new energy element meant to comply with the new statutory requirements for regional “enhanced energy plans.” It also included adoption of the Regional Energy Plan by reference.

NRPC published an online indicator report with [regularly updated online data](#) to show progress on the goals of the regional plan.

NRPC reviews state permit applications to ensure proposed projects conform with the regional plan. The Project Review Committee reviewed seven Section 248 applications and one Act 250 major applications (thirteen Act 250 minor applications) for conformance with the regional plan. The committee made final determinations on eight of the projects and determined they conformed with the plan but in some cases offered comments and suggestions for permit conditions.

BROWNFIELDS

Vermont RPCs have sought and have been awarded over \$10 million for this economic development initiative. Environmental site assessments allow properties to be sold, developed or re-developed in ways that benefit the local and state economy, create or protect jobs and increase housing opportunities.

NRPC currently has 2 active EPA Brownfields grants, including one Revolving Loan Fund and one assessment grant which is split between hazardous materials and petroleum assessment. During FY19, the following projects were either finished, ongoing or started.

Assessment Projects:

- *200 Bridge Street, Sheldon.* The Town of Sheldon in cooperation with the Sheldon Historical Society has entered the Brownfields Program and NRPC has funded a phase 1 assessment, ground penetrating radar assessment, QAPP and a phase 2 assessment. Additional phase 2 assessment is needed. The historical society plans to restore the building for use as a museum and office space.
- *113 Main Street, Richford.* NRPC was hired by the Town of Richford in coordination with the Richford Economic Advancement Corporation to provide project management and coordination of vision and master plan development for 113 Main Street, funded by a Municipal Planning Grant. In coordination with this project the Vermont Brownfields Program funded a Corrective Action Plan. Implementation is dependent on the construction of the Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail Extension that is planned to bisect the property.

Cleanup Projects:

- *10 Church Place, Rockingham, VT.* The Town of Rockingham applied for and received cleanup loan funding from the NRPC Cleanup RLF to remediate, demolish and dispose of hazardous building materials in the vacant and destroyed 10 Church Place apartment building. The Town is planning to restore the property to a compatible and beneficial use to the neighborhood.
- *Former Town Garage property, Highgate Center.* The Town of Highgate has entered the Brownfields Program and NRPC has funded a phase 1 assessment, a QAPP and a phase 2 assessment for the Former Machia Estate and the adjacent former town garage property. The Town applied and received cleanup grant funding from the NRPC Cleanup RLF to remediate, demolish and dispose of hazardous building materials in the former Stinehour Café building on the former town garage property.
The Town of Highgate developed a master plan for these properties using Vermont Municipal Planning Grant funds and is working on implementing the plan.
- *14 Stebbins Street, St. Albans City.* The property owner of 14 Stebbins Street has entered the Brownfields program and NRPC has funded a phase 1, QAPP, phase 2 assessment and corrective action plan. The property is currently undergoing redevelopment and remediation and the brownfields program is funding oversight and completion reporting for the corrective action plan. The property owner is renovating the space into a ballet studio and apartments.

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Economic growth is supported best when development efforts are partnered with solid planning functions. RPCs work with municipalities and Regional Development Corporations (RDCs) to this end in several ways, including development of comprehensive strategies that will help to position Vermont for long term economic gain.

- NRPC coordinates the [Northern Vermont Economic Development District \(NVEDD\)](#) in partnership with the three RDCs and RPCs in the six northern counties. An advisory board helped to create a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy that was approved by EDA and is updated [annually](#). NRPC serves as the administrative coordinator for NVEDD.
- NRPC provides grant administrative support for Northern Borders Regional Commission grantees.
- Key partner and organizer of *In Good Taste*, an annual local food event.
- Hosted the *Healthy Roots* gleaning position to capture unused local crops for distribution to food shelves and other regional groups.
- Assisted the City of St. Albans apply for and receive a Vermont Community Development Program (VCDP) Planning Grant for pre-development and planning for the expansion of a childcare facility. NRPC is also administering the VCDP Planning Grant on behalf of the City of St. Albans.
- Assisted the Town of Alburgh administer a Vermont Community Development Program (VCDP) Planning Grant for pre-development and planning work related to the construction of a new childcare facility. NRPC also assisted Alburgh School District apply for a successful Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC) grant to construct the new childcare facility.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Through contract with the VTrans, RPCs coordinate the Transportation Planning Initiative (TPI). This effort has provided a statewide framework for public involvement in planning the improvements to Vermont’s transportation system, with local communities represented through regional Transportation Advisory Committees (TACs). Each regional TAC prioritizes projects, identifies local and regional transportation needs, and provides the platform for public involvement in the planning and development of the state’s transportation system. RPCs serve as the point of delivery for the statewide transportation planning process to support local, regional, state and federal transportation network advancement.

Objective 1 NRPC

Enhance Cooperation and Coordination between VTrans, RPC Regions and Municipalities

| | |
|---|----|
| # of TAC meetings held | 9 |
| # of non-municipal TAC members actively engaged in transportation planning via the TAC meetings | 3 |
| # of municipalities actively engaged in transportation planning | 22 |
| # of RPC coordination activities with municipalities and VTrans | 9 |

Objective 2

Better Connect Federal, Regional and Statewide Transportation Planning

| | |
|--|----|
| # of regional transportation plans that are current (within 8 years) | 1 |
| # of Act 250 applications with RPC comments relating to transportation | 6 |
| # of Section 248 applications with RPC comments relating to transportation | 0 |
| # of coordination activities in support of regional public transit providers | 23 |
| # of VTrans committees that involves RPC staff participation | 1 |
| # of regions participating in Project Prioritization | 1 |

Objective 3

Provide Technical Assistance to Municipalities

| | |
|--|----|
| # of municipalities participating in road foreman meetings annually | 8 |
| Total # of programs that RPCs municipalities assisted with transportation related grants | 5 |
| % of budget spent on municipal technical assistance | 45 |
| # of municipal transportation inventories conducted | 0 |
| # of municipal transportation related feasibility/project definition studies completed/undertaken | 3 |
| # of municipalities assisted with transportation element of municipal/town plan | 3 |
| # of road erosion inventories in support of the MRGP completed using TPI dollars and using other funding sources | 3 |

Objective 4

Deliver Results that Advance VTrans Strategic and Long-Range Transportation Plans

| | |
|---|---|
| # of data collection activities conducted specifically for VTrans | 6 |
|---|---|

Transportation Planning Highlights

- NRPC staff coordinated with the Village of Enosburg Falls and the VTrans Rail Division to negotiate a master license agreement for village utility crossings.
- NRPC is completing a marketing and wayfinding project for the Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail funded through a successful application for a Northern Border Regional Commission grant.
- NRPC staff provided project management for the Village of Enosburg Falls' Vermont Better Connections Grant, which funded the Vital Village Master Planning effort.
- NRPC presented at the Franklin County Legislative Breakfast to discuss NRPC's transportation planning program, activities of the TAC and regional transportation priorities.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & DISASTER RESILIENCY

RPCs play key roles in the mitigation and preparedness phases of emergency management in partnership with Vermont Emergency Management, Vermont Agency of Transportation and the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources. RPCs provide direct staff to the State Emergency Operations Center, local Emergency Operations Centers, administrative support to the Local Emergency Planning Committees and coordination among Emergency Management Directors, Emergency Management Coordinators, first responders and planners throughout the State. RPC's also help update floodplain bylaws, write flood resiliency sections of municipal plans and FEMA-required hazard mitigation plans, coordinate updates to municipal emergency operations plans and assist as needed in special circumstances like Tropical Storm Irene, the Lake Champlain Flooding of 2011, and other state declared and local disasters. Eighteen municipalities (85%) in the region currently have an updated local emergency management plan. Sixteen municipalities (73%) of municipalities in the region currently have a local hazard mitigation plan either adopted or under review. During the last fiscal year, NRPC:

- Staffed the two Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPC #4 and #13) within the region, as well as the greater St. Albans Area Incident Management team and Grand Isle County Mutual Aid Association. The activities include improving capacity to respond to all-hazards incidents, ensuring that municipalities have hazard mitigation plans in place, and updating Local Emergency Management Plans (LEMPs).
- Served as the Local Liaison to municipalities for the Planning Section of the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) following severe weather events. Duties include reaching out to local EMDs /EMCs to assess damages, compiling damage assessments in coordination with Vermont Agency of Transportation and Department of Environmental Conservation and reporting local damages to the Planning Section of the SEOC. Work is performed under a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Public Safety.
- Served on the State Emergency Response Committee which oversees the states hazard materials program including carrying out the state and federal requirements of the committee.
- Served on the State Individual and Family Assistance Task Force which coordinates immediate and long-term recovery efforts to meet the basic housing and subsistence needs of affected individuals and families following a disaster.
- Provided data and information to municipalities for hazard mitigation grant program applications for transportation infrastructure improvements, emergency generators, home buyouts in hazardous areas and landslide risk analysis study.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM SERVICES

In addition to enhancing the RPC work, RPCs provide municipalities, state agencies and regional groups with mapping and data analysis in support of their projects.

- Completed town plan & zoning maps for municipalities updating their plans and bylaws.
- Prepared and updated Village Designation Maps for communities seeking village designation and renewal.
- Completed [E911 Community Maps](#) for all municipalities for use by town officials, emergency responders and others.

ENERGY CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT

A renewed focus on clean, renewable, sustainable and affordable energy presents Vermont with great opportunity and significant challenges. RPCs integrate energy planning with land use, transportation and natural resources efforts, and work with municipalities to assist with project implementation. RPCs participate in Section 248 proceedings and support comprehensive planning at the local and regional level to inform the permitting process.

- Drafted enhanced energy plans for Alburgh, Berkshire, Fairfield, Georgia, Grand Isle, Sheldon and South Hero. Reviewed and provided a positive determination of energy compliance to 3 municipal plans (Fairfax, Franklin, Swanton). The enhanced energy plans will allow the municipalities to meet the standards in Act 174 and receive a *determination of energy compliance* from NRPC.
- Coordinated statewide RPC efforts to provide custom technical assistance to municipalities seeking to meet the standards in Act 174 and updated the “Municipal Enhanced Energy Planning in Vermont – Best Practices and Resources” guide.
- Developed guidelines to determine if a proposed net-metering solar facility site is a “preferred site,” as defined by the state net-metering rules.
- Actively participated in the review of 5 large solar net-metering facilities (500 kW) seeking a Certificate of Public Good from the Public Utility Commission.

WATERSHED PLANNING & PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

RPCs work with the Agency of Natural Resources to assist with completion of the EPA required watershed plans and implementation of the Lake Champlain and Lake Carmi TMDLs. RPCs also work with municipalities to implement river corridor assessments in local planning and regulations which result in better and safer growth management decisions.

- Continued to work with towns developing water quality related language in town plans and bylaws related to shoreline, stream buffers, floodplain and river corridor regulations.
- Presented two property owner trainings that focused on solutions to treat stormwater on private driveways with funding from EPA’s Healthy Communities Program. The project is providing training to landowners on actions for managing stormwater runoff and reducing erosion potential.
- Continued management of 3 municipal stormwater projects with the Clean Water Block Grant program for the following municipalities: City of St. Albans, Town of St. Albans, Town of Franklin.

- Completing a project to identify priority transportation related stormwater projects for further design in the Missisquoi Basin. Funded through a grant from the Lake Champlain Basin Program to NRPC.
- Completing project development for water quality improvement projects in partnership with six organizations (3 RPCs and 3 watershed organizations). Funded by a VT Department of Environmental Conservation Partnership Block Grant to NRPC.
- Completed 2 stormwater treatment design projects for the elementary schools in Highgate and Swanton. These projects identify on-site stormwater management and compliance with the 3-acre permit. Supported through a grant to NRPC from the VT Ecosystem Restoration Program.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Grants in Aid Program

NRPC coordinates a statewide program sponsored by the VT Department of Environmental Conservation. The Municipal Grants in Aid Program provides funding for municipalities to bring segments of roadway into compliance with the Municipal Roads General Permit, which sets standards for road improvements to help decrease runoff. RPCs statewide provided technical assistance to over 200 municipalities in FY19 to advance \$2.6 million in construction of new best management practices. Approximately 45 miles of roadway were improved in the first year of the program (FY 18), and a similar amount are anticipated to be improved in subsequent years. For FY19, 212 municipalities signed up to participate in the program. In the NRPC region, 16 municipalities completed local road construction projects that will decrease runoff and lessen stormwater impacts to our waterways.

Planning for Prevention

NRPC partnered with Franklin County Caring Communities to complete a new guide for municipalities addressing prevention. The [guide](#) contains concrete actions municipalities can take to support overall community health, including substance abuse prevention, access to healthy foods, and promoting exercise.

Regional Stormwater Education Program

The Town and City of St Albans have partnered with NRPC to manage and implement the public education and outreach components of their MS4 stormwater permit. Outreach materials, a website and landowner and teacher trainings have been developed with the aim of reducing negative impacts of stormwater on water quality.

ADMINISTRATION & FUNDING

NRPC owns its building at 75 Fairfield Street in St. Albans, purchased in 2013. This provides budget certainty and enables NRPC to hold and manage an asset rather than pay rent. Planned renovation costs over the next three years are included in the budget and budget reserves, and the Board has adopted an accelerated mortgage repayment plan. Annual building expenses are projected to decline within ten years of purchase.

A Board adopted reserve fund policy provides guidance for long term financial planning. NRPC maintains Board designated reserve funds to cover operating shortfalls, accrued leave time, building renovations and equipment replacement. The Commission maintains a three-year plan for equipment and software upgrades and replacement.

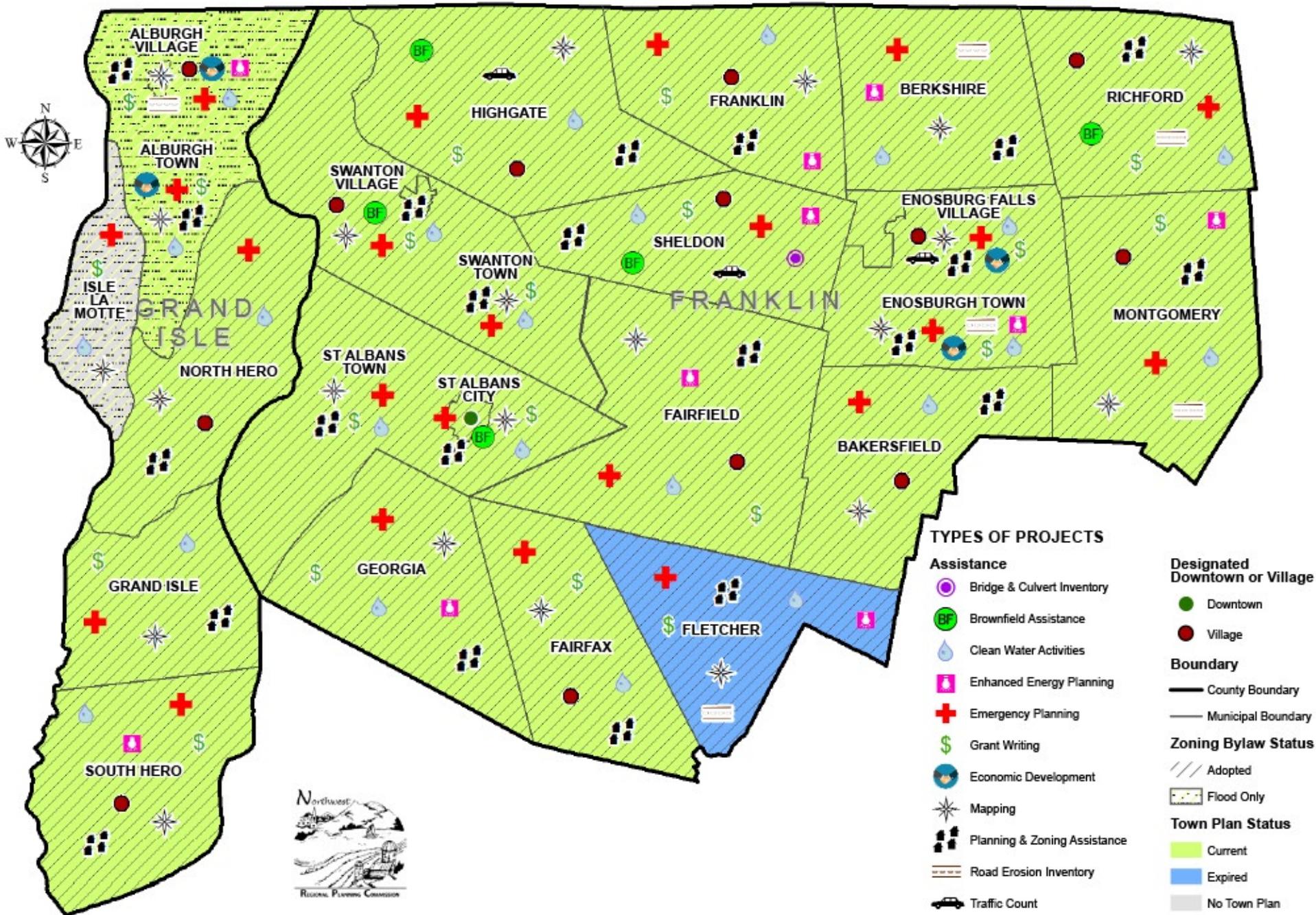
The FY 19 the NRPC budget was \$6.05 million. The Municipal Grants in Aid program accounted for \$4.28 million of the budget, leaving an operating budget for NRPC of \$1.77 million. Revenue sources included state and federal performance contracts, grants and local assessments. Virtually all the NRPC's revenue sources are tied to contracts with scopes of work, guidelines and/or performance measures. This means that the NRPC has limited flexibility in how it chooses to use the vast majority of its funding. Funding received through municipal assessments is the exception, which makes this funding stream particularly important because it gives us the greatest latitude to respond to NRPC-identified needs in the region. The grants we receive enable us to work with our towns on areas such as transportation, emergency planning, community development, brownfields redevelopment, energy, and natural resources. Revenue from virtually all federal and state grantors requires non-federal matching funds ranging from 10 percent (Transportation Planning Initiative) to 50 percent (Emergency Management Planning Grant). Municipal assessments and regional planning funds passed through to NRPC under a performance contract with the Department of Housing and Community Development provide matching funds required by grantors.

An audit is currently underway and will be completed in the fall of 2019. NRPC has had no audit findings in over ten years and as such is considered a 'low risk' grantee by federal agencies. Staffing in FY 19 included 8 employees: Executive Director, Assistant Director, Senior Planners (3), Regional Planner, GIS Technician, and Office Administrator. Six of the eight employees have been with NRPC for fifteen years or more. Two AmeriCorps VISTA employees also joined NRPC in FY 19.

'AT WORK' MAP

The map depicting the range of services provided by the NRPC to member municipalities is included on the next page.

NRPC at Work: FY 2019



TYPES OF PROJECTS

- Assistance**
- Bridge & Culvert Inventory
 - Brownfield Assistance
 - Clean Water Activities
 - Enhanced Energy Planning
 - Emergency Planning
 - Grant Writing
 - Economic Development
 - Mapping
 - Planning & Zoning Assistance
 - Road Erosion Inventory
 - Traffic Count

- Designated Downtown or Village**
- Downtown
 - Village

- Boundary**
- County Boundary
 - Municipal Boundary

- Zoning Bylaw Status**
- Adopted
 - Flood Only

- Town Plan Status**
- Current
 - Expired
 - No Town Plan

Northeastern Vermont Development Corporation

FY 2019 Annual Report

NVDA is unique in that it combines economic development and planning to deliver a broad array of services to more than 50 communities in Caledonia, Essex, and Orleans counties. Collectively, our planning and economic development staff deliver thousands of hours of technical assistance annually in support of our mission of “improving the quality of life in the Northeast Kingdom through planning, promoting economic development, and preserving the region’s natural environment.”

MUNICIPAL PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION

Our region is the most rural in the state, and few of our communities have dedicated planning staff. Nevertheless, the planning needs of our region are varied and complex. Despite our “rural status” the majority of our towns are actively planning. As of September, we have 37 municipalities with current plans, and three more municipalities are in the adoption process. One of those communities – Irasburg – adopted its first-ever plan. The Town of Brunswick – which has been without a plan for more than a decade – is on schedule to adopt a plan as well. Our range of planning services goes well beyond plan writing, zoning assistance, and statutory interpretation. Here is a sampling of our activities in FY2019:

Three Rivers Path Extension and Trailhead Center: NVDA continues to assist the Town of St. Johnsbury with management of this project, which will extend the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail into the heart of St. Johnsbury’s downtown. NVDA has assisted the Town in securing additional funding for cleanup of hazardous materials at the trailhead site, and has funded site assessment activities of a former industrial parcel along the path extension.

This project will serve as a catalyst for the redevelopment of the Bay Street area of downtown St. Johnsbury, with a focus on the river and recreation. Expected outcomes are increased activity in the downtown, improved sales at existing downtown businesses, job growth related to tourism and recreation, and improved quality of life for residents of the densely populated downtown.

Danville “Village to Village” Master Planning: As the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail continues to bring new opportunities for recreation and visitor tourism, the Town of Danville has sought ways to leverage its economic benefits. NVDA is part of a steering committee comprised of representatives from the Town of Danville, VTrans, and the Agency of Commerce and Community Development to guide this Better Connections-funded project to completion. “Village to Village” is a master planning effort to connect the Route 2/LVRT corridor between Danville Village and the activity hub at West Danville. This year, the endeavor was aided by a Quick Build for Health grant, which allowed the community to establish bike-friendly amenities along the trail, including a water station and a bicycle repair station at the Danville Train Depot. The community also obtained Village Center Designation for West Danville, the site of many of the proposed upgrades and amenities.

Concord/Burke Recreation Planning: After assisting the Towns of Burke and Concord in securing a consortium MPG, NVDA continues to provide support to a gravel rides-mapping project in the towns of Burke and Concord.

St. Johnsbury Housing Committee: NVDA has been providing staff support to the St. Johnsbury Housing Committee, a group working to improve the condition and selection of quality housing in the town. In FY2019 NVDA helped formulate an “Accessibility Modification Incentive Program” intended to increase the number of apartments in town that are accessible to those with mobility impairments, including those associated with age.

Newport City Waterfront and Main Street Master Plan: NVDA provided staff support and technical input to the Newport Advisory Committee and VHB Consultant Team to develop Newport’s Waterfront and Main Street Master Plan. With Newport’s location on Lake Memphremagog and its focus on developing the outdoor recreational economy, this plan is intended to serve as a road map to revitalize the downtown and surrounding neighborhoods through better access to the waterfront and better streetscapes for improved pedestrian, cycling and automotive traffic. The plan was awarded a Vermont Public Places Award that recognizes public spaces which have been defined or enriched by planning, design, and regulations that promote positive public uses and benefits.

Other FY2019 highlights include:

- NVDA convened an information session on Opportunity Zones in the Northeast Kingdom, with the intent to increase understanding of this economic development tool, particularly as it might relate to new housing developments. NVDA will continue to provide support to the three OZ towns in the region (Newport City, St. Johnsbury and Lyndon) in formulating a prospectus that can be shared with potential developers and investors.
- Our efforts to revitalize the region’s village centers continued in FY2019, as NVDA helped Coventry, Barnet, and Westfield earn Village Center designation, making tax credits available for important investment projects. To date, we have 28 Village Center Designations. NVDA is currently working with the Towns of Holland, Waterford, and Irasburg on applications and mapping for Village Centers in these communities.
- In FY2019, NVDA staff worked with seven communities to amend municipal plans, some of which included enhanced energy sections that will meet Act 174 standards for receiving substantial deference.: Peacham, Sutton, Norton, Unified Towns & Gores, Holland, Troy, and Burke. Additionally, staff worked with the town of Sutton to develop a community survey that will inform their plan update. Staff also worked with the Town of Westmore to develop screening standards for ground-mounted solar plants.

REGIONAL PLANNING

RPCs coordinate planning at the regional level through the adoption and implementation of a comprehensive regional plan and related studies. These plans guide local planning and the investment decisions of the public and private sectors.

Update - Energy Plan and Regional Plan Amendment: With a determination of energy compliance from the Department of Public Service, NVDA is able to review and certify local plans in our region who wish to receive Substantial Deference in the Section 248 process. During FY2019, NVDA was able to certify the plans of seven municipalities: Brighton, Charleston, Greensboro, Holland, Irasburg, Morgan, and Westfield. We expect about a half dozen towns to seek Substantial Deference in the coming fiscal year.

NEK Food Cycle Coalition: This group of NVDA staff, NEK Waste Management District, state and local officials, and community development organizers continue to meet monthly at NVDA offices to reduce the loss of edible food by redirecting it to those who need it. The group, which follows Vermont’s hierarchy for food wastes – reducing waste at the source, redirecting it to people, then to animals, compost and energy recovery – recently received a USDA Rural Development grant to conduct a feasibility study for a sustainable food rescue distribution network.

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Economic growth is most effective when partnered with solid planning functions. Because we are a fully integrated organization, holistic economic and community development is an NVDA forte.

The Hardwick Yellow Barn Business Accelerator and Corporate Campus (aka “Yellow Barn”) will strengthen Vermont’s farm- and food-based economy by allowing multiple establishments to grow and expand with other entrepreneurs, develop new products, and improve export to external markets. The project will consist of a two-story, 40,000 sq. ft. multi-purpose processing facility and an innovative adaptive reuse of the historic 3,400 sq. ft. yellow barn – already an iconic presence along the Route 15 gateway to downtown Hardwick.

NVDA is an active partner in this unique public-private endeavor to offer best-in-class production and administrative space to new and expanding businesses at highly competitive rates. The CAE operates the Vermont Food Venture Center, a business incubator for farm- and food-based businesses immediately adjacent to the site, making Yellow Barn an ideal next step for incubator graduates. Two long-term anchor tenants are already committed, one of which will establish a local food retail destination. The site is also adjacent to the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail, ensuring high visibility and market penetration to accelerator tenants. Yellow Barn is scheduled to commence construction in the spring of 2020 and will be ready for full occupancy in 2021.

Vt Quebec Enterprise Initiative: NVDA completed its work with the Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce on the VQEI initiative. With funding from the Northern Border Regional Commission, we were able to successfully assist four small Quebec-based businesses to locate to the region. These include Pratiko, Inc., Gilbert Technologies, Miti Manufacturing, and Theo Décor. We were also able to assist through cost-sharing 11 existing manufacturers in the area with employee training through programs offered by the VT Manufacturing Extension Center. Programs included Lean Manufacturing, Structured Problem Solving, Set-up Reduction, and Manager Training. As a result of this, 98 incumbent workers have improved work skills.

Vermont Talent Pipeline: Developing a skilled and ready workforce is a critical issue locally and statewide. In FY2019, NVDA continued to partner in the Vermont Talent Pipeline Management initiative. This effort convenes employers from different industry sectors to identify their industry-specific issues and develop employer-led workforce solutions. The industries that convened during FY2019 remained construction, health care, and advanced manufacturing. Employer Collaboratives were formed for all 3 industry sectors; Needs Assessments were also completed for those sectors; and, Career Ladders have been developed for the Construction and Healthcare sectors. Education providers are beginning to engage in implementing the solutions identified by the employers.

Newport City Renaissance Corporation: In FY2018, NVDA assisted the Newport City Renaissance Corporation d/b/a Newport City Downtown Development, the organization that maintains the City's designated downtown district, with the process of renewing its downtown designation which it received in February 2018 for an 8-year period. This is Newport's third downtown designation through the State's Designation Program which supports local revitalization efforts across the state by providing technical assistance and state funding. In addition, NVDA is assisting the downtown organization to develop funding and staffing strategies, and to develop a strategic focus to create a four-season outdoor recreational economy in Newport. Working with both the Board and the committees, NVDA is assisting the organization to use current studies to design projects that create connections and activities that better link Newport's Main street to its waterfront as part of the investments in the outdoor recreational economy.

Bluffside Farm: NVDA continues its collaboration with the Vermont Land Trust, the Newport City Renaissance Corporation d/b/a Newport City Downtown Development, and the City of Newport to develop recreational trails on the Bluffside Farm property, owned by VLT since 2015. The project, which is expected to create up to 10 jobs, will link downtown Newport City to the Canadian border, and link to Prouty Beach directly into downtown Newport. This new, 4-season recreational asset will be a direct benefit to these businesses by connecting downtown Newport businesses to a new market of Quebec visitors and consumers who will be drawn directly into Newport's downtown business district from the trails. The project has obtained more than \$1 million in funding from the Northern Border Regional Commission, USDA Rural Development, the Freeman Foundation, Vermont Housing & Conservation Board, Vermont Community Foundation, Vermont Land Trust, as well as donations from local businesses and individuals.

City of Newport Outdoor Recreation: NVDA worked with the City of Newport to develop a proposal for the Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative (VOREC) Community Grant to support the continued work of the City of Newport, the Vermont Land Trust, the Newport City Renaissance Corporation d/b/a Newport City Downtown Development. The City of Newport was one of only two communities selected state-wide to receive the VOREC grant which will support building a critical trail connection between Prouty Beach and Bluffside Farm as part of the City's Waterfront Recreation Trail and Lake Access project. Newport will serve as a prototype for other cities and towns in Vermont seeking to expand their economies through development of outdoor recreational assets.

Northern Border Regional Commission Grants: NVDA provides grant management support to all recipients of NBRC grants awarded in the Northeast Kingdom. Support includes assistance with reporting, procurement, reimbursements, and tracking of project progress.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

RPCs coordinate the Transportation Planning Initiative (TPI) through a contract with VTrans. This effort has provided a statewide framework for public involvement in planning improvements to Vermont's transportation system, with communities represented through regional Transportation Advisory Committees (TACs). Each regional TAC prioritizes projects, identifies local and regional transportation needs, and provides the platform for public involvement in the planning and development of the state's transportation system. RPCs serve as the point of delivery for the statewide transportation planning process to support local, regional, state, and federal transportation network advancement.

NVDA also supports the efforts of Rural Community Transportation with technical, strategic, and advisory expertise. We remain a vital participant on the RCT Board of Directors, where we leverage our many partnerships and collaborations throughout our region to benefit public transit and improve the transportation opportunities for the least fortunate and most in need citizens. RCT is also making efforts to bring awareness of transportation services to the general population.

Objective #1: Enhance Cooperation and Coordination between VTrans, RPC Regions and Municipalities

- 5 TAC meetings held
- 3 non-municipal TAC members actively engaged in transportation planning
- 45 municipalities actively engaged in transportation planning
- 15 RPC coordination activities with municipalities and VTrans

Objective #2: Better Connect Federal, Regional and Statewide Transportation Planning

- Regional Transportation Plan is current.
- 3 Act 250 applications with RPC comments relating to transportation
- 0 Section 248 applications with RPC comments relating to transportation
- 4 coordination activities in support of regional public transit providers
- 0 VTrans committees that involves RPC staff participation
- Participates in Project Prioritization

Objective #3: Provide Technical Assistance to Municipalities

- 43 municipalities participating in road foreman meetings annually
- 6 municipalities assisted with transportation related grants
- 45% of budget spent on municipal technical assistance
- 6 municipal transportation inventories conducted
- 0 municipal transportation related feasibility/project definition studies completed/undertaken
- 7 municipalities assisted with transportation element of municipal/town plan
- 10 road erosion inventories in support of the MRGP completed using TPI dollars and using other funding sources

Objective #4: Deliver Results that Advance VTrans Strategic and Long-Range Transportation Plans

- 40 data collection activities conducted specifically for VTrans

Objective #5: Provide a Mechanism for Improved Public Outreach and Education

NVDA facilitates a regional Rivers and Roads Working group made up of DEC Staff, County Conservation District Managers, and VTrans.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & DISASTER RESILIENCY

RPCs play key roles in the mitigation and emergency preparedness through its work with Vermont Emergency Management, the Vermont Homeland Security Unit, VT Agency of Transportation, and the Agency of Natural Resources. NVDA provides staff assistance to the State Emergency Operations Center, administrative support to the Local Emergency Planning Committees, and coordination among

responders and planners throughout the State's four Public Safety Districts. NVDA also provides assistance with local floodplain bylaws, prepare FEMA-required hazard mitigation plans, coordinate updates to municipal emergency plans, and provide assistance as needed in special circumstances such as federally declared disasters.

Local Emergency Management Plan (LEMP): Every community is required to have a Local Emergency Management Plan. Beginning in 2019, the LEMP replaced the Local Emergency Operations Plan. The LEMP requires more information than its predecessor and requires more training from select board members. This has been a challenge to many communities due to select board member's various schedules. NVDA has been able to schedule ICS 402 courses in some communities and have worked with other communities to have a select board member take the ICS 100 course on-line. Every community that NVDA serves has at least one select board member who has completed either the ICS 100 or ICS 402 course. As a result of this effort, we have 20 communities with adopted Local Emergency Management Plans for FY 2019, with five more plans pending adoption by the select board.

Table Top Exercise: In FY 2019, NVDA's Emergency Management Specialist participated (along with multiple agencies and first responders) in a table top exercise at Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital (NVRH). The objective of this exercise was to test the capability of our local hospitals, NVRH and North Country Hospital, as well as our EMS, fire, and law enforcement personnel to handle an incident where patients had to be evacuated from the hospitals. Although the actual exercise was only a few hours, it takes several meetings to plan for something like this to make sure all the agencies that should be involved are participating, and to learn what each agency needs to accomplish in this exercise.

Local Hazard Management Plans: NVDA staff assisted with the development of hazard mitigation plans that can minimize losses, as well as out-of-pocket costs in federal disasters. This year Concord, Coventry, Granby, and Peacham adopted Local Hazard Mitigation Plans, bringing the total number of towns with current plans to 23.

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP): NVDA staff met with officials in the Town of Morgan to explore participation in the NFIP, which would make affordable flood insurance available to every resident. Staff also worked with the Town of Westmore to develop flood hazard regulations that would, at a minimum, make the town eligible for participation in the NFIP.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM SERVICES

GIS mapping supports all aspects of the work done at NVDA. Land Use Planning Maps were produced for Brunswick, Coventry, Morgan, Peacham, Sutton, and Westfield.

This year, there were many towns applying for Village Center Designation. This year included Albany, Barnet, Barton, Brighton, Brownington, Concord, Coventry, Craftsbury, Derby, Hardwick Lyndon, and Wheelock. St Johnsbury also updated their Designated Downtown. In some of the towns there were multiple identified village centers.

Energy mapping was also a top priority in the towns of Burke, Charleston, Danville, Norton, Peacham, Sutton, Westfield, and Westmore.

Numerous maps were produced for grant projects for the towns and for the region. These included a variety of subjects including economic development, recreation, and telecommunications.

ENERGY CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT

NVDA integrates energy planning with land use, transportation and natural resources efforts, and economic development to assist with project implementation. We also participate in Section 248 proceedings and support comprehensive planning at the local and regional level to inform the permitting process.

Local Enhanced Energy Plans: In FY2019, NVDA worked with Westfield, Greensboro, Irasburg, and Peacham. Our region now has seven municipalities with plans that will receive “substantial deference” in the Section 248 process. This status gives each community a stronger voice in the review process for siting renewable energy projects.

Local Energy Committees: Our municipalities continue to advocate for clean and efficient energy at the local level. Danville, Westmore, and Barnet joined the towns of Peacham, Ryegate, Sutton, Glover, and Craftsbury in taking local action for forming energy committees. NVDA worked with Vermont Natural Resources Council and the Northwoods Stewardship Center to host a Regional Energy Forum in Charleston. The March event drew more than 30 attendees. NVDA also worked with the Vermont Natural Resources Council and Heat Squad to co-host a webinar on identifying and financing thermal efficiency strategies.

WATERSHED PLANNING & PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Nonpoint source pollution, such as phosphorous loading, is an issue of key concern statewide. NVDA has engaged in a number of partnerships with state agencies, municipalities, and various public and private organization to achieve holistic solutions that focus on local actions with far-ranging impacts.

Water Quality Advisory Committee: NVDA’s vast region encompasses six basin plans, while a seventh (the Winooski) touches the region. This year, staff continued the efforts initiated in FY2017 when the Water Quality Advisory Committee was formed. In FY2018 staff collaborated with the committee as well as multiple stakeholders to develop strategic plans to protect or restore specific waters, and identify appropriate funding and resources to complete the work. The work on Basin 17 The Passumpsic River Basin plan are in the final stages of an update. We are joining the initial stages of an update to Basin 14 The Ompompanoosuc, Stevens, Waits and Wells rivers.

Memphremagog Study Advisory Group: NVDA participates as a partner with our local municipalities. MSAG is an advisory council assembled by the International Joint Commission to make recommendations for solutions to reducing phosphorus levels in Lake Memphremagog. A phosphorus reduction of 29% is needed to meet U.S. Environmental Protection Agency standards.

Memphremagog Stormwater Collaborative: NVDA lends technical and strategic support to the collaborative. Along with our partners we provide planning and outreach efforts to the communities in the greater Lake Memphremagog watershed.

Grants in Aid: NVDA collaborated with the Department of Environmental Conservation, VAPDA, and VTrans to reach out to its member municipalities to participate in the Grants in Aid program, a pilot project which provides funding to municipalities to implement best management practices on municipal roads ahead of the upcoming Municipal Roads General Permit. In FY2019, NVDA directed grants to 34 municipalities in our region, totaling \$343,800. Projects are designed to reduce and/or eliminate erosion on municipal roads. Best management practices include stone-lined drainage ditches, and turnouts on steep slopes, other disconnection and infiltration practices. Improvements also stabilized catch basin outlets, addressed gully erosion on Class 4 roads, improved and replaced culverts, removed grader berms and removed high road shoulders.

Bell Road Project: NVDA and the Northwoods Stewardship Center partnered to inventory Class 4 segments and identified the Town of Jay's Bell Road -- a hydrologically connected road segment with a 13% grade -- as a priority project for water quality improvement. NVDA contributed 604b funds, and The Town of Jay covered remaining costs. Work was coordinated between the Town of Jay and Northwoods Stewardship Center's work crew to reconstruct the road and bridge in order to provide permanent erosion control.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

- In FY2019 a coalition comprised of NVDA, the Town of St. Johnsbury and the City of Newport continued implementing their EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant to facilitate redevelopment of aging, underutilized and potentially contaminated properties in the region. Environmental assessment activities that are facilitating redevelopments have been completed or are nearing completion in Albany (community store), Hardwick (business accelerator), Lyndon (park project), Newport (park project), and St. Johnsbury (housing development, recreation path project, distillery, and a commercial building for new businesses).
- In FY2019, NVDA applied for (and received) business program funding from USDA Rural Development to advance local efforts to bring about or improve broadband infrastructure in the region. Funds will be used to establish and/or assist local broadband committees interested in improving their broadband situation. Lyndon and neighboring towns are interested in establishing a Communications Union District that will have the ability to implement locally-driven broadband solutions. USDA funds will aid this effort.

ADMINISTRATION & FUNDING

NVDA's revenues came from numerous sources, including a share of the state's property transfer funds; private, state, and federal grants; and annual appropriations from each of our 50+ member communities. We also received rental income from our multi-tenant buildings in St. Johnsbury and Lyndonville, and other income from contracted services, such as grant administration, as well as municipal plan and bylaw development, which is usually funded by Municipal Planning Grants.

NVDA also has two Nonprofit Community Development Organization (NCDO) relending funds capitalized by loan repayments from Community Development Block Grants. NVDA made loans to three businesses in FY2019.

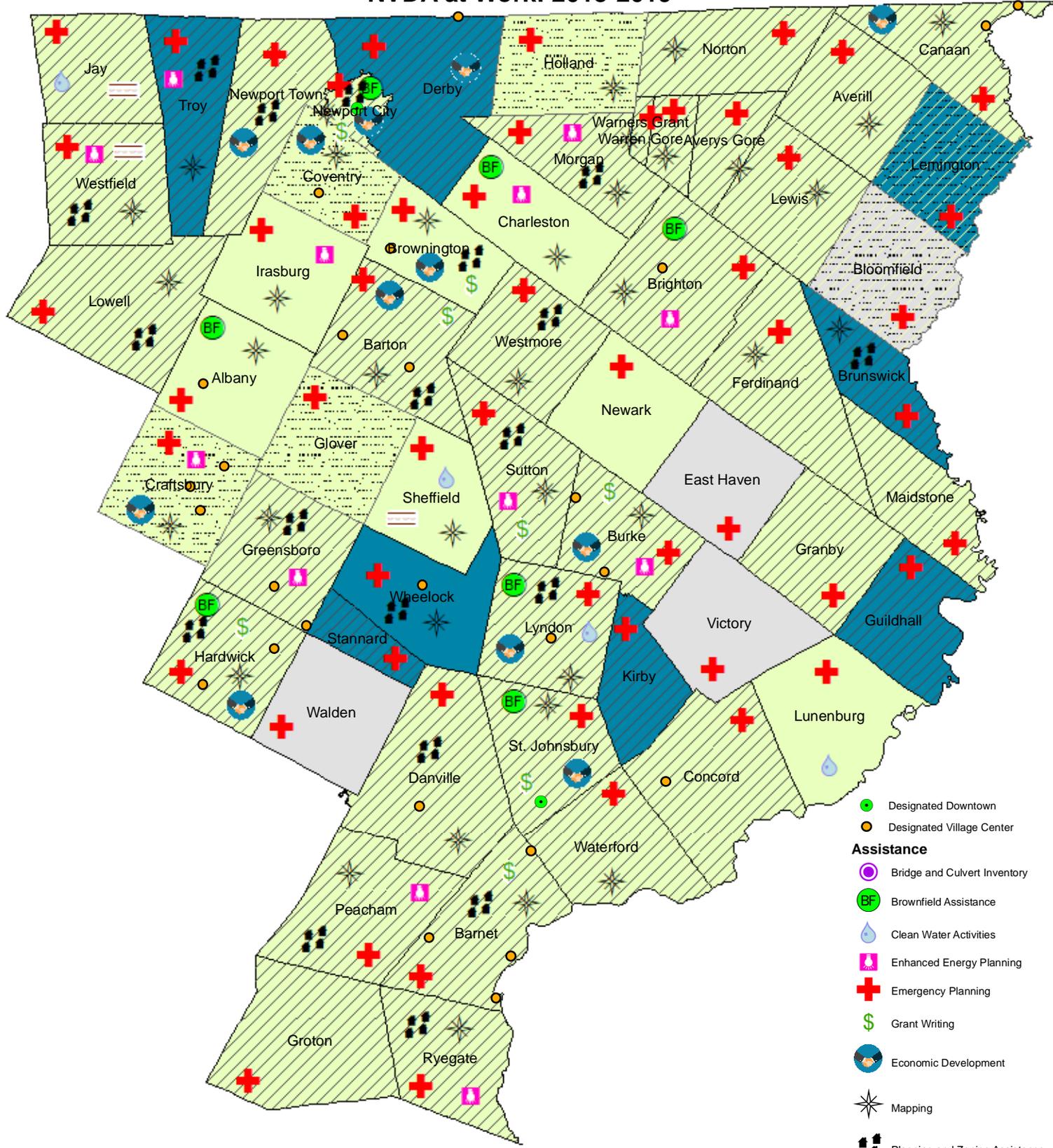
Our FY2018 audit, like previous years, produced no significant findings. Our FY2019 audit will be available in December.

Since 2012, NVDA has published a monthly e-newsletter covering a broad range of news and announcements, training and incentive programs, funding opportunities, a calendar of events, information relating to energy & natural resources, and important updates for municipalities relating to planning, zoning, and economic development. The newsletter mailing list reaches a diverse audience of more than 1,200 individuals within Essex, Orleans, Caledonia counties and beyond. NVDA distributes a quarterly newsletter to nearly 300 stakeholders in the region's thriving food and agricultural sector. NVDA also maintains a Facebook page for the organization.

'AT WORK' MAP

The map depicting the range of services provided by the NVDA is included on the next page.

NVDA at Work: 2018-2019



- Designated Downtown
- Designated Village Center
- Assistance**
- Bridge and Culvert Inventory
- Brownfield Assistance
- Clean Water Activities
- Enhanced Energy Planning
- Emergency Planning
- Grant Writing
- Economic Development
- Mapping
- Planning and Zoning Assistance
- Road Erosion Inventory
- Traffic Count
- Zoning Bylaw Status**
- Adopted
- Flood Regulations Only
- Town Plan Status**
- Current
- Expired
- No Town Plan

Rutland Regional Planning Commission

FY 2019 Annual Report

The Rutland Region is comprised of 27 municipalities in Southwest Vermont ranging in population from under 300 to over 16,000. The Region contains one regional center (Rutland City), with over 30,000 inhabitants, six sub-regional centers of economic activity and a series of smaller villages surrounded by agricultural and forest land.

The economy of the Region is diverse, with industries including GE, one university, two colleges, Killington/Pico Ski Resorts, renewable energy development and a wide variety of small businesses. The physiology of the Region varies dramatically as well, containing the peaks of Southern Green Mountains, which reach up to 4,000' in elevation, the gently sloped farmland of the gorgeous Vermont Valley, the steep Taconic Mountains and Lake Bomoseen, the largest lake within the borders of the state and part of the Champlain Valley.

MUNICIPAL PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION

RPCs act as a cost-effective professional planning staff for many of Vermont's municipalities. Work in recent years has focused on improving town plans and local permitting through education and enhanced consultations, bylaw modernization, grant administration, and implementing newer requirements for economic development and flood resiliency planning. This work is supported through local and regional planning funds, local contributions and other grants. Highlights include:

- Worked with planning commissions in the towns of Ira, Chittenden, Hubbardton, Brandon, Proctor and Mendon to develop language for municipal plans and land use bylaws.
- Provided assistance to promote state land use goals, ensure consistency with Chapter 117 requirements and provide clear community standards regarding the siting of energy and telecommunications facilities.
- Updated flood hazard regulations in the Towns of Hubbardton, Danby and Brandon.
- Provided VCDP Implementation Grant Administration for the Towns of Proctor and Poultney.
- Reviewed approximately 35 Act 250 and Section 248 applications.
- Conducted five Enhanced Consultations.
- Worked with the towns of Castleton and Chittenden on Village Center Designations (both new and renewal).
- Wrote a successful \$45,000 USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant for the Town of Poultney to hire an economic development consultant.
- Worked with Mendon and Proctor on new water quality protection language in their municipal plans.
- Worked with Chittenden to secure an Ecosystem Restoration Program grant for wetland restoration.
- Served on a state task force to help develop local food access planning to municipal town plans.

REGIONAL PLANNING

RPC's coordinate planning at the regional level through the adoption and implementation of a comprehensive regional plan. These plans guide local planning and the investment decisions of the public and private sectors.

- Used the Rutland Regional Plan as a guide to review Act 250 and Section 248 applications, grant applications for transportation and water quality projects, municipal planning and village center designation applications.
- The Rutland Regional Plan was used to guide municipal plan land use chapters and serves as an education tool and guide for municipalities to create healthy and economically resilient communities.
- The RRPC offers three conference rooms for use by local, regional and state organizations at no charge. Frequent users include Castleton University, Rutland Economic Development Corporation, Rutland Region Chamber of Commerce, Workforce Investment Board, VT DEC and a number of transportation-related groups. The ideas and information exchange resulting from the mix of various groups and participants is a valuable tool, making organizations and the region stronger.
- Provided regional presentations and workshops on topics such as economic development and the essentials of land use planning.

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Economic growth is supported best when development efforts are partnered with solid land use planning. RPCs work with towns and in partnership with Regional Development Corporations (RDCs) to this end in a number of ways, including development of comprehensive strategies that will help to position Vermont for long-term economic gain.

- The Rutland Region Workforce Investment Board began contracting with the RRPC for administrative, technical and financial support for the organization.
- Through the RRPC/WIB partnership, the RRPC is actively engaging and connecting local schools and businesses through work in the Real Careers and TIPS programs.
- The RRPC and WIB hosted the Sophomore Summit and Your Journey Starts Here events designed at growing the workforce in the Rutland Region.
- Worked with municipalities to modernize town plans and bylaws to unlock the long-term growth potential associated with traditional development patterns.
- The RRPC assisted local municipalities to plan projects aimed at revitalizing designated villages and downtowns. One example is the work the RRPC has undertaken with the Town of Proctor, using a brownfields site as key in the plan's development.
- The RRPC assisted the Towns of Castleton and Chittenden with their village center designations. The Town of Tinmouth will work with the RRPC this year to explore the possibility of designation.
- The Executive Directors of the RRPC, Rutland Economic Development Corporation, Rutland Region Chamber of Commerce, Rutland Redevelopment Authority and Rutland Downtown Partnership meet monthly to discuss current and future projects with regional impacts.
- Wrote a successful \$45,000 USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant for the Town of Poultney to hire an economic development consultant.

- Economic Development Chapters were updated in the Proctor, Chittenden, and Mendon municipal plans.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & DISASTER RESILIENCY

RPCs play key roles in the mitigation and preparedness phases of emergency management in partnership with Vermont Emergency Management, the Vermont Homeland Security Unit, VTrans, and the Agency of Natural Resources. RPCs provide direct staff support to the State Emergency Operations Center and coordination among responders and planners throughout the State's four Public Safety Districts. RPC's also help update floodplain bylaws and FEMA-required hazard mitigation plans, coordinate updates to municipal emergency plans, and assist as needed in special circumstances such as Tropical Storm Irene and other declared disasters. Highlights include:

- Provided technical assistance and outreach to all towns in completing Local Emergency Management Plans (LEMPs), including offering an LEMP training session.
- 22 of our 27 municipalities have adopted LEMPs.
- Provided extensive assistance to several towns with preparing single jurisdictional hazard mitigation plans, through a Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant. 17 of our 27 municipalities have FEMA approved Local Hazard Mitigation Plans.
- Completed a needs assessment survey to identify training and/or exercise needs in our region. 21 of our 27 municipalities completed the survey.
- Hosted bi-monthly roundtables for local emergency management directors and coordinators October through June to disseminate pertinent information, to share best practices and to provide a platform for municipalities to connect around a common mission.
- Coordinated three additional trainings in our region on the FEMA Public Assistance Program, the Incident Command System, and the Interface between Incident Command and the local Emergency Operations Center.
- Updated the regional public works mutual aid agreement.
- Supported the planning efforts of the Chittenden Reservoir Emergency Planning Team.
- Participated in annual exercises at the Rutland Regional Medical Center and Rutland Regional Airport to strengthen emergency preparedness.
- Collected and communicated local damage information from municipalities after six significant storm events affected the region, in coordination with Vermont Division of Emergency Management, VTrans and Agency of Natural Resources. This includes the April 15 flood event, which became a Federally declared disaster.
- Three RRPC staff continued training to serve in the State Emergency Operations Center.

ENERGY CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT

A renewed focus on clean, renewable, sustainable and affordable energy presents Vermont with great opportunity and significant challenges. RPCs integrate energy planning with land use, transportation and natural resources efforts, and work with municipalities to assist with project implementation. RPCs participate in Section 248 proceedings and support comprehensive planning at the local and regional level to inform the permitting process. The passage of Act 174 created another component with its optional enhanced energy planning. In order to give local communities more say in the siting of renewable energy generation projects, state statute now provides for optional enhanced energy plans at the regional and municipal levels.

Energy issues have dominated the Rutland Region recently, stirring healthy debates and leading towns to update land use and economic development policies. The RRPC played a pivotal role in this process over the last year, significant projects included:

- Assisted all 27 towns with municipal enhanced energy planning by providing energy data analysis and renewable energy maps. The RRPC provided specialized technical assistance to seven towns –Rutland Town, Wallingford, Brandon, Tinmouth, Proctor, Pawlet and Mendon – so that these municipalities have all of the components needed to meet the standards for enhanced energy planning pursuant to Act 174.
- Two Rutland Region towns now have enhanced energy plans with Certificates of Energy Compliance from the Department of Public Service – Benson and Sudbury.
- Assisted the towns of Rutland Town, Brandon, Wallingford, Proctor and Mendon to create new energy chapters in their municipal plans. Clearer community standards were developed to guide the Public Utilities Commission (formerly the Public Service Board) during Section 248 project review.
- Worked with the RRPC Regional Committee and Board to review 20 Section 248 petitions and submitted comments to Public Utilities Commission (formerly the Public Service Board). A majority of the projects were for solar electric generation facilities and telecommunications towers.

WATERSHED PLANNING & PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

RPCs work with the Agency of Natural Resources to assist with completion of the EPA required watershed plans and tactical basin plans. RPCs also work with municipalities to implement river corridor assessments in local planning and regulations which result in better and safer growth management decisions.

- Assisted VT DEC Watershed Coordinator Angie Allen with review and outreach for an updated Tactical Basin Plan for the Otter Creek Watershed. This tactical basin plan helps address the Vermont Clean Water Initiative and the TMDL for Lake Champlain. Reinstated the RRPC Clean Water Advisory Committee to assist Angie and staff with the Tactical Basin Plan.
- Staff continues to train the region’s municipalities on the provisions of the Clean Water Initiative, including several upcoming mandatory permits and funding opportunities.
- As part of the Clean Water Initiative, RRPC staff is working directly with Proctor and Mendon on increased protection designations for area waterways. This work is being done through the towns’ Municipal Plans.
- Staff is working with Shrewsbury, Brandon and Danby to include River Corridor protections and the latest state river corridor mapping data.
- Assisted 20 towns in the region with the VTDEC Grants-in-Aid Program. These funds help communities get an early start on some of the Best Management Practices that will be required for the upcoming Municipal General Roads Permit. In year three of the grant program, staff is working with 21 municipalities to implement BMPs; eight of those towns also will be receiving funding to purchase equipment.
- Updated a comprehensive Municipal Protectiveness list of policies and regulations to highlight the accomplishments of and opportunities for additional water quality efforts.
- Under an EPA/VT DEC 604b grant, staff assisted VT DEC with its data management of Clean Water Act projects.

- Partnered with the Poultney Mettowee Natural Resources Conservation District (PMNRCD) to promote flood resiliency in the Flower Brook watershed which includes Pawlet, Danby and Tinmouth. This watershed was greatly impacted in Tropical Storm Irene. This is funded by the High Meadows Fund.
- Partnered with PMNRCD to administer a new VT DEC grant – CWBG – to install stormwater runoff infiltration structures at West Rutland School.
- Provided outreach assistance for two Ecosystem Restoration Program (ERP) grants awarded to the PMNRCD. Both are for Stormwater Master Planning; one for Lake Champlain, the other for the Castleton River Headwaters.
- Wrote and was awarded an Ecosystem Restoration Program (ERP) grant for Chittenden’s Wildcat Road. The U.S. Forest Service also will be a partner for this in initial design work.

BROWNFIELDS

Vermont RPCs have sought and been awarded over 12 million dollars for this economic development initiative. Environmental site assessments allow properties to be sold, developed, or re-developed in ways that benefit the local and state economy, create or protect jobs, and increase housing opportunities.

The Rutland Region Brownfields Reuse Program (BRP) has existed for 15 years and has received approximately \$2.5 million in funding from the US EPA to conduct community-wide assessment activities and redevelopment planning. Funding for this work has been reinvested in the Region and leveraged other funding sources, making the program an essential land use and economic development tool for municipalities. Highlights include:

- The RRPC was awarded a \$300,000 EPA Community-Wide Assessment Grant for Hazardous substances.
- The RRPC continues work on a remediation and redevelopment plan for the former Berwick Hotel site in downtown Rutland. The site, known locally as “the Pit”, has served as a parking lot in the heart of the city since 1973, when the original building burned. ESA work and redevelopment planning has this site on the verge of redevelopment into a multi-story, mixed-use development, which will expand economic development opportunities and add to the vibrancy of downtown Rutland.
- Phase I and Phase II assessment work at the former Lynda Lee Fashions manufacturing facility in Rutland City, is setting the stage for a redevelopment of this historic building and site by the Housing Trust of Rutland County. The future residential, commercial and civic uses included in the development will further the revitalization of the City’s Northwest Neighborhood.
- Partnering with the Town of Proctor and Preservation Trust of Vermont, the historic Vermont Marble Company facility in Proctor has received two rounds of Phase II ESA work and Corrective Action planning. This work set the stage for a property transfer to the Vermont Marble Museum, a non-profit, which will continue to operate the museum and redevelop the site for other commercial and possible residential uses. Brownfields work at the site was also a driving factor in leveraging a \$30,000 planning grant from the VCDP to create the Proctor Prosperity Plan, which expanded on work at this site to identify economic development opportunities and strategies in the village core.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Through a contract with VTrans, RPCs coordinate the Transportation Planning Initiative (TPI). This effort has provided a statewide framework for public involvement in planning the improvements to Vermont's transportation system, with local communities represented through regional Transportation Advisory Committees (TACs). Each regional TAC prioritizes projects, identifies local and regional transportation needs, and provides the platform for public involvement in the planning and development of the state's transportation system. RPCs serve as the point of delivery for the statewide transportation planning process to support local, regional, state, and federal transportation network advancement. The RRPC remains focused on working with its municipalities to establish effective multimodal networks, which will serve as a pillar for the development of strong villages and downtown centers, increasing the economic viability of the region at large.

Objective #1: Enhance Cooperation and Coordination between VTrans, RPC Regions and Municipalities

- Worked with municipalities actively engaged in regional and municipal transportation planning.
- Held 6 Rutland Region Transportation Council (RRTC) meetings.
- Worked with 2 non-municipal representatives actively engaged in the RRTC.

Objective #2: Better Connect Federal, Regional and Statewide Transportation Planning

- Began updating the transportation chapters of the Rutland Regional Plan
- Continued membership on Marble Valley Regional Transit District Board of Commissioners.
- Continued membership on the Rutland Airport Committee.
- Coordinated quarterly meetings of regional E&D Public Transit Advisory Committee.
- The RRTC worked with VTrans to prioritize regional transportation projects.
- Provided transportation-related comments on 2 Act 250 and 1 Section 248 application.
- Assisted VTrans with the Public Transit Policy Plan update.
- Established two new regional committees- the Rutland Walk/Bike Council and the Rutland Airport Committee.
- Began work on the Transportation Resiliency Planning Toolkit (TRPT) for the Otter Creek (Headwaters to Furnace Brook) Watershed which includes 14 Rutland Region Towns.

Objective #3: Provide Technical Assistance to Municipalities

- Held 3 Road Foreman Meetings that focused on Town Road and Bridge Standards, Municipal Roads General Permit, Infrastructure Planning, and more.
- 54% of the transportation budget was spent on municipal technical assistance.
- Completed 7 road erosion and culvert inventories, three traffic counts, two Park & Ride Counts, and quarterly bicycle and pedestrian counts on four locations across the Rutland Region.
- Assisted municipalities with applications and technical support for the Better Roads Program, Better Connections Program, Municipal Highway and Stormwater Mitigation Grant Program, and Bicycle and Pedestrian Program.
- Assisting Town of Killington with the Killington Road Master Plan.

- Hosted a Road Erosion Inventory Training at the RRPC. Assisted the Towns of Mendon and Proctor with Transportation Section updates to the Town Plan.
- Assisted Towns of Proctor and Poultney with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Program Grants.

Objective #4: Advance VTrans Strategic and Long-Range Transportation Plans

- Conducted 6 data collection activities for VTrans
- Coordinated activities with municipalities and VTrans.
- Assisted 16 municipalities with transportation related grants.
- Assisted MVRTD with public transit planning and application for the Electric Bus Pilot Program.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM SERVICES

In addition to enhancing the RPC work, RPCs provide municipalities, state agencies, and regional groups with mapping and data analysis in support of their projects.

- **Town and Regional Planning** – Worked with the towns of Ira, Chittenden, Mendon, Hubbardton, Shrewsbury, Danby, Proctor, Pittsford, Fair Haven and West Haven to create and/or update municipal plan and zoning maps. Created Village Center Designation maps for Castleton, Chittenden and Tinmouth. Updated the Future Land Use Map for the Rutland Regional Plan. Assisted local landowners with work on properties in the Current Use program.
- **Bridge and Culvert Inventories** – RRPC GIS staff worked with eleven town road departments to collect culvert data using the commission’s GPS and then completed the inventory, mapping, and updates to www.VTCulverts.com for: Brandon, Fair Haven, Hubbardton, Ira, Mendon, Mount Holly, Pawlet, Pittsford, Proctor, Wells and west Rutland.
- **Transportation Mapping** – Provided mapping support for several transportation related town grants. Continued to work on identifying and inventorying town short structures for the region. Added and updated bridge and culvert inventories, as well as performing road erosion inventory assessments for many towns in the region.
- **Emergency Management** – In support of ongoing emergency management planning and in an effort to inventory and categorize all hazards and potential hazards, RRPC created a regional map of vulnerable sites and areas requiring mitigation, which can be used by all 27 towns. RRPC participated in several training sessions at the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC).
- **Resiliency Support** – Provided several towns with maps of their special flood hazard areas and river corridors. Also worked with a few towns to map site specific flood hazards.
- **Energy Plans** – Continued to work on energy maps for the towns of Benson, Brandon, Mount Holly, Rutland Town, Sudbury and Wallingford.

ADMINISTRATION & FUNDING

Administration of the RRPC’s programs, policies, and finances continue to be managed effectively and efficiently. Highlights include:

- Updated the RRPC Employee Handbook, Bylaws and Policies.
- Successful completion of FY 2018 Financial and Final Reports, as well as semi-annual reports for the Agency of Commerce and Community Development; that included the status of

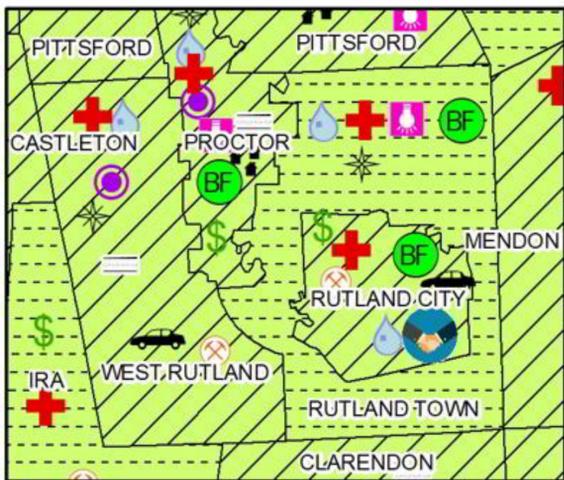
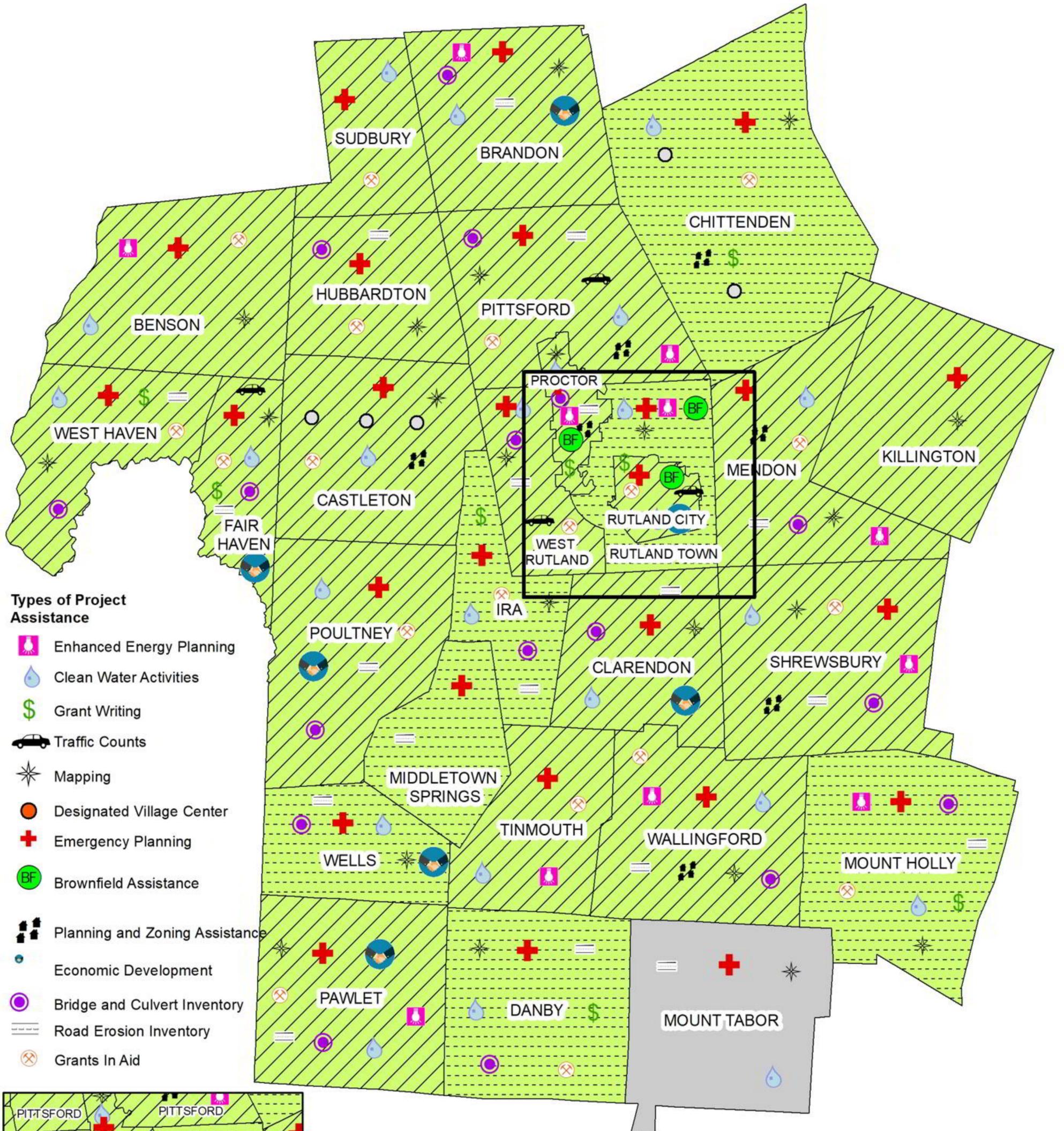
performance measures, budget expenses, and other information.

- Continued to implement recommendations of the Strategic Plan, including financial and management structure.
- Provided an RPC presence by serving on local boards such as WIB, REDC, Chamber, The Bus and Southern Vermont Rutland Region Airport Committee.
- Completed FY18 Audit which resulted in “No findings” and was distributed to requesting granting agencies.
- Leveraged ACCD funds to provide match for grants from VTrans, VEM and EPA, which enabled the RRPC to cover indirect costs incurred to expand work into diverse areas of planning.
- Increased RRPC visibility through serving on statewide committees, attending legislative events, newsletters and increased presence on social media. Efforts have been channeled into our brand identity, promotional materials and website.

‘AT WORK’ MAP

The map depicting the range of services provided by the RRPC to member municipalities is included on the next page.

RRPC at Work: FY 2019



RUTLAND REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
www.rutlandrpc.org
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Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission

FY 2019 Annual Report

The Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission (SWCRPC) is a compact of ten (10) municipalities in east-central Vermont. It was founded in 1966, and is a political subdivision of state government organized under 24 V.S.A. Sub-Chapter 3. The Commission now serves the towns of Andover, Baltimore, Cavendish, Chester, Ludlow, Reading, Springfield, Weathersfield, West Windsor and Windsor. The SWCRPC's activities and programs are governed by a ten-person Board of Commissioners; each appointed by the legislative body of his or her member town, with assistance from up to three "at-large" Commissioners as appointed by the Board of Commissioners. In addition, the Board has the responsibility of hiring staff to carry out the goals and policies of the SWCRPC.

The primary intent of the SWCRPC and its advisory committees has always been to assist with and advocate for the planning and development activities of its member towns. The SWCRPC exists primarily to provide technical assistance to its member towns; assist in mediating inter-jurisdictional planning and development issues that arise between member communities; facilitate discussion and understanding between local and state entities; develop plans, policies, strategies, and procedures for addressing issues that are regional in scope; assist communities with downtown revitalization and community development projects; annually compile, review, and prioritize regional transportation improvement projects for submission to the Agency of Transportation; and to serve as an information resource for member towns and residents.

MUNICIPAL PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION

RPCs act as a cost-effective professional planning staff for many of Vermont's municipalities. Work in recent years has been focused on improving town plans and local permitting through education and enhanced consultations (on-site training), bylaw modernization, facilitating transition to Development Review Boards, and implementing new requirements for economic development and flood resiliency planning. Current and clear plans and bylaws are essential in smooth state and local permitting. This work is supported through local and regional planning funds, local contributions and other grants. All technical assistance provided this year is shown on the At Work map; highlights include:

- Provided a range of services to assist with municipal plan updates for Ludlow, Reading, West Windsor and Windsor.
- Helped planning commissions to prepare zoning bylaw updates in Reading, Springfield, and Windsor.
- Assisted with local efforts to implement municipal plans and supporting plans, including in Springfield and Windsor.

REGIONAL PLANNING

RPCs coordinate planning at the regional level through the adoption and implementation of a comprehensive regional plan, and related studies. These plans guide local planning and the investment decisions of the public and private sectors.

- The Regional Plan was amended on June 25, 2018. We continue to refine draft updates to the Land Use Chapter, and began to prepare updates to the Utilities and Facilities Chapter.
- Efforts this year to implement the Regional Plan included the following activities:
 - Reviewed all Act 250 applications and Section 248 petitions as each relates to goals and policies in the Regional Plan.
 - Assisted in the development of a multi-jurisdictional outdoor recreation plan for Weathersfield, West Windsor and Windsor.

BROWNFIELDS

Vermont RPCs have sought and have been awarded over 10 million dollars for this economic development initiative. Environmental site assessments and clean-up allow properties to be sold, developed or re-developed in ways that benefit the local and state economy, create or protect jobs and increase housing opportunities.

- Provided brownfields assistance for 10 properties in 2 towns.
 - Springfield: Park Street School, 1620 Park Street, Woolson Block, Jones Center, One Hundred River Street, and Jones and Lamson.
 - Windsor: Goodyear, Windsor Railyards, Windsor Armory, and Windsor Resource Center
- The SWCRPC continues to work with Springfield Regional Development Corporation on the clean-up of various properties and with the Town of Springfield as Administrator for their Brownfields EPA Assessment Grant Program

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Economic growth is supported best when development efforts are partnered with solid planning functions. RPCs work with towns and in strong partnership with Regional Development Corporations (RDCs) to this end in a number of ways, including development of comprehensive strategies that will help to position Vermont for long term economic gain.

- Supported downtown revitalization efforts in Springfield and Windsor, and village revitalization initiatives in Chester, Ludlow, Weathersfield and West Windsor.
- Continued to assist with the multi-year process to develop an environmental review for the redevelopment of the Jones and Lamson site in Springfield.
- Completed an analysis of the availability and access to primary aspects of health care for all populations.
- Supported Springfield's redevelopment efforts for the Park Street School and Woolson Block buildings and Weathersfield to bring a public facility up to ADA compliance

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Through contract with the VTrans, RPCs coordinate the Transportation Planning Initiative (TPI). This effort has provided a statewide framework for public involvement in planning the improvements to Vermont's transportation system, with local communities represented through regional Transportation Advisory Committees (TACs). Each regional TAC prioritizes projects, identifies local and regional transportation needs, and provides the platform for public involvement in the planning and development of the state's transportation system. RPCs serve as the point of delivery for the statewide

transportation planning process to support local, regional, state and federal transportation network advancement.

Objective 1

Enhance Cooperation and Coordination between VTrans, RPC Regions and Municipalities

| | |
|--|----|
| # of TAC meetings held | 7 |
| # of non-municipal TAC members actively engaged in transportation planning | 7 |
| # of municipalities actively engaged in transportation planning | 10 |
| # of RPC coordination activities with municipalities and VTrans | 8 |

Objective 2

Better Connect Federal, Regional and Statewide Transportation Planning

| | |
|--|---|
| # of regional transportation plans that are current (within 8 years) | 1 |
| # of Act 250 applications with RPC comments relating to transportation | 1 |
| # of Section 248 applications with RPC comments relating to transportation | 2 |
| # of coordination activities in support of regional public transit providers | 4 |
| # of VTrans committees that involves RPC staff participation | 4 |
| # of regions participating in Project Prioritization | 1 |

Objective 3

Provide Technical Assistance to Municipalities

| | |
|--|-----|
| # of municipalities participating in road foreman meetings annually | 5 |
| # of municipalities assisted with transportation related grants | 9 |
| % of budget spent on municipal technical assistance | 45% |
| # of municipal transportation inventories conducted | 5 |
| # of municipal transportation related feasibility/project definition studies completed/undertaken | 1 |
| # of municipalities assisted with transportation element of municipal/town plan | 3 |
| # of road erosion inventories in support of the MRGP completed using TPI dollars and using other funding sources | 5 |

Objective 4

Deliver Results that Advance VTrans Strategic and Long Range Transportation Plans

| | |
|---|----|
| # of data collection activities conducted specifically for VTrans | 78 |
|---|----|

Objective 5

Provide a Mechanism for Improved Public Outreach and Education

See Performance Measure/Objective descriptions

[The RPC engaged with bicycle advocates in the area to identify bicycle routes and develop a bicycle route guide to encourage residents and visitors to Ride Windsor County.](#)

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & DISASTER RESILIENCY

RPCs play key roles in the mitigation and preparedness phases of emergency management in partnership with Vermont Emergency Management, the Vermont Homeland Security Unit, VTrans and the Agency of Natural Resources. RPCs provide direct staff to the State Emergency Operations Center, administrative support to the Local Emergency Planning Committees and coordination among responders and planners throughout the State’s four Public Safety Districts. RPC’s also help update floodplain bylaws and FEMA-required hazard mitigation plans, coordinate updates to municipal emergency plans and assisted as needed in special circumstances like Tropical Storm Irene and other declared disasters.

- Ten municipalities in the region (100%) currently have adopted hazard mitigation plans. Seven municipalities in the region (70%) currently have an updated local emergency plan.
- Assisted 9 towns with updates to their Local Emergency Management Plans this year.
- Worked with the Town and Village of Ludlow and the Town of Springfield to update their Local Hazard Mitigation Plans.
- Provided technical assistance with the buyout of a flood-damaged property in Weathersfield and assisted with potential applications in Ludlow.
- Assisted Ludlow with the Commonwealth Avenue stormwater project.
- Continued to provide guidance to the Town and Village of Ludlow with flood hazard review, as requested.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM SERVICES

In addition to enhancing the RPC work, RPC's provide municipalities, state agencies and regional groups with mapping and data analysis in support of their projects.

- Highlights of activities:
 - Creation of a pilot Tier II hazardous materials site webmap.
 - Prepared maps for municipal plans, zoning bylaws and other projects.
 - Uploaded all zoning district maps into the Vermont Open Geodata Portal.
 - Integrated "Collector for ArcGIS" into regular fieldwork activities, including MRGP related erosion inventories.

ENERGY CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT

A renewed focus on clean, renewable, sustainable and affordable energy presents Vermont with great opportunity and significant challenges. RPCs integrate energy planning with land use, transportation and natural resources efforts, and work with municipalities to assist with project implementation. RPCs participate in Section 248 proceedings and support comprehensive planning at the local and regional level to inform the permitting process.

- Participated in the review process for 8 energy projects (Section 248).
- Facilitated numerous educational sessions for local officials on Act 174 and enhanced local energy plans.
- Issued a Certificate of Energy Compliance for Ludlow.
- Assisted the towns of Chester, Reading, Springfield and Windsor to refine their enhanced energy plans.
- Assisted the towns of Cavendish, Weathersfield and West Windsor to develop draft enhanced energy plans.

WATERSHED PLANNING & PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

RPCs work with the Agency of Natural Resources to assist with completion of the EPA required watershed plans. RPCs also work with municipalities to implement river corridor assessments in local planning and regulations which result in better and safer growth management decisions.

- Worked with the towns of Reading, West Windsor and Windsor to implement recommendations from the Mill Brook Stream Geomorphic Assessment including, but not

limited to, Mill Brook water quality monitoring and removal of the Volunteer Fire Department Dam in West Windsor.

- Supported the efforts of 6 towns to complete projects under the Grants-in-Aid program bringing 24 priority road segments up to Municipal Roads General Permit Standards.
- Assisted the Town of Springfield to secure or seek funding for:
 - Completing engineering designs for the Lincoln Street stormwater mitigation project.
 - Implementing stormwater improvements at the Transfer Station.
 - Completing a stormwater master plan, including 8 conceptual design plans for the highest priority projects.
 - Engineering design in support of removal of the Valley Street Dam.
- Worked with the Town of Andover to manage the Horseshoe Acres flood mitigation and fish passage restoration project.
- Provided grant writing assistance to the Town of Windsor for a large in-stream culvert upgrade on Weeden Hill Road.
- Provided grant writing assistance to the Town of Ludlow to complete a stormwater master plan and 12 conceptual design plans for high priority projects.
- Provided grant writing assistance to the Town of Windsor for the Paradise Park stormwater mitigation engineering design project.
- Provided assistance to the Town of Weathersfield with managing the Baltimore Road culvert upgrade project.
- Continued to assist municipalities to better understand flood resiliency and to consider adoption of model ANR river corridor bylaws, including West Windsor and Windsor.
- Administered the first round Clean Water Block Grant of \$1,500,000 from the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources to support 22 clean water projects throughout the state.
- Awarded an additional \$1,500,000 grant from the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources to support state-wide implementation of water quality improvement projects over the next two years.
- Hosted a stream reclassification public forum.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

- Held a presentation on the Working Communities Challenge Initiative at the East Central Vermont Economic Development District spring workshop in Randolph. The Working Communities Challenge is a grant program geared towards funding cross-sector leadership teams to build strong economies and vibrant communities.

ADMINISTRATION & FUNDING

The SWCRPC is funded by performance and project contracts with federal, state and local levels of government, foundation support, and contributions from member municipalities. SWCRPC's FY 2019 budget was approximately \$1,047,373. Core funding provided by the Agency of Commerce and Community Development of \$199,576 leveraged \$352,644 in additional federal sources.

SWCRPC has an annual independent audit conducted by Certified Public Accountants. A single audit was not necessary for the past fiscal year. No significant findings nor material weaknesses have been identified in recent years.

SWCRPC serves 10 municipalities and operates with a Board of Directors that develop and implement policy and oversee a staff of 10.

‘AT WORK’ MAP

The map depicting the range of services provided by the SWCRPC to member municipalities is included on the next page.

SWCRPC at Work: FY 2019

Designated Downtown or Village

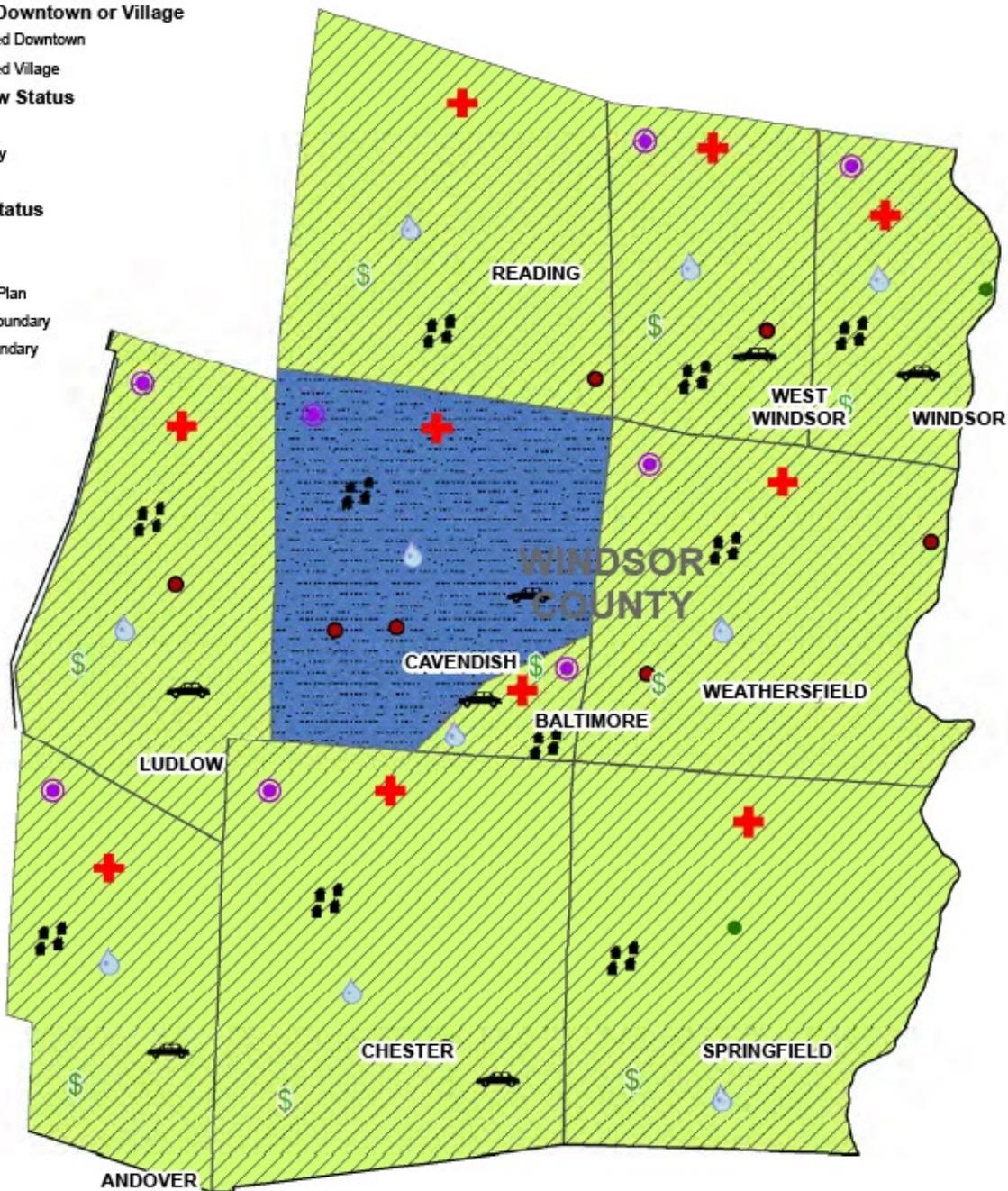
- Designated Downtown
- Designated Village

Zoning Bylaw Status

- Adopted
- Flood Only
- None

Town Plan Status

- Current
- Expired
- No Town Plan
- County Boundary
- Town Boundary



Types of Projects 2019

Assistance

- Bridge and Culvert Inventory
- Brownfield Assistance
- Clean Water Activities
- Enhanced Energy Planning
- Emergency Planning

- Grant Writing
- Economic Development
- Mapping
- Planning and Zoning Assistance
- Road Erosion Inventory
- Traffic Count



Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission

FY 2019 Annual Report

The Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission (TRORC) provides technical assistance to a 30-town area in east central Vermont. Our primary goals are to advocate for the needs of our member towns, and to articulate a vision for building a thriving and sustainable regional economy while enhancing the region's quality of life. TRORC staff provide technical services to local, state and federal levels of government and to the Region's non-profits and businesses.

MUNICIPAL PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION

TRORC has a staff with more than 80 years of combined experience providing technical assistance to towns. We regularly field ad hoc questions from zoning administrators and town staff, as well as work under contract on larger projects. We act as a cost-effective professional planning staff for many of our municipalities. Work in recent years has been focused on improving town plans and local permitting through education and consultations (on-site training), bylaw modernization, facilitating transition to Development Review Boards and implementing requirements for economic development, flood resiliency, energy and forest resources planning. Current and clear plans and bylaws are essential in smooth state and local permitting. This work is supported through local and regional planning funds, local contributions and other grants. All technical assistance provided this year is shown on the TRORC at Work map; highlights include:

- Downtown/Village Center Designations - TRORC Staff worked closely with the towns of Bridgewater, Brookfield, Corinth, Rochester and Strafford to renew or apply for state designations.
- TRORC staff worked on comprehensive town plan rewrites with Hancock, Royalton, Topsham, Corinth, Fairlee, Bethel, Granville, Plymouth, Randolph, Braintree, and Rochester.
- In addition to the extensive town plan rewrites above, TRORC provided technical assistance to 13 additional towns related to plan language and bylaws changes.
- TRORC hosted five municipal events in FY19, two on statewide training areas, and three based on regional needs. These events were attended by many types of town officials, representing a wide range of municipalities from our Region.
 - Land Use Decisions (Bradford, VT), with 14 participants
 - Flood Bylaw Administration Training (Woodstock, VT), with 5 participants
 - "How TRORC Works for You" breakfast (South Royalton, VT), with 15 participants
 - Mediation Training (White River Junction, VT), with 9 participants
 - Community Engagement Training (South Royalton, VT), with 11 participants

REGIONAL PLANNING

RPCs coordinate planning at the regional level through the adoption and implementation of a comprehensive regional plan and related studies. These plans guide local planning and the investment decisions of the public and private sectors.

- Regional Plan Updates: TRORC has continued to eliminate redundancies and update the Regional Plan. In FY19 TRORC started the hearing process for adoption and we fully expect

adoption in early FY20. This update will incorporate new language and maps to protect forest blocks and habitat connects, as well as other new land use designations throughout the Region.

- Regional Plan Implementation: TRORC used the Regional Plan to evaluate applications and participate in the Act 250 and Section 248 projects. In FY 19, forty-three applications were received.

BROWNFIELDS

- Environmental site assessments remove concerns about contamination and allow properties to be sold and redeveloped in ways that benefit the local and state economy, create or protect jobs, provide greenspace, and increase housing opportunities.
- TRORC was awarded \$400,000 in EPA assessment funds in FY 16 and has reviewed all known sites in the region with VTDEC, as well as met with our regional development corporation and larger towns to identify their priority sites.
 - Finished an area wide planning project with Hartford for a downtown block.
 - Pre-demolition testing conducted at a site in Bethel for a company expansion.
 - Conducted assessment and prepared corrective action plans for 2 sites in Hartford.
 - Conducted Phase I assessments at 2 sites in Tunbridge (North Tunbridge General Store) and Bridgewater (former Bridgewater School).
 - Assessments conducted at floodplain buyout sites in Pittsfield, Stockbridge, and Cambridge.
- TRORC has been awarded an additional \$300,000 in EPA assessment funds through September 2022.

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Economic growth is supported best when development efforts are partnered with solid planning functions. RPCs work with towns and in strong partnership with local and regional development groups to this end in a number of ways, including development of comprehensive strategies that will help to position Vermont for long term economic gain.

- TRORC continues to support the Cornerstone Creative Community of Vermont (3CVT) as the Zone Agent to help implement projects related to the creative economy. In FY 19 TRORC held two community meetings and one statewide gathering focused on the creative economy, bringing together over 150 artists and arts organization representatives. Through this effort, TRORC also serves on the statewide Vermont Creative Network as the RPC representative. During FY 19 TRORC worked through a USDA Rural Development grant to build the narrative for promotion of the east central Vermont region.
- TRORC continues to work with East Central Vermont Economic Development District in writing and supporting goals, strategies and actions of our federally approved Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Objective #1: Enhance Cooperation and Coordination between VTrans, RPC Regions and Municipalities

Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) activity - Total of 6 meetings held, average member participation rate 40% (expressed as a % of total TAC membership)

TAC Outcomes

- TRORC participated in numerous policy stakeholder meetings as requested by VTrans and other agencies:
 - VTrans VPSP2 (project prioritization revamping methodology) – 18 meetings.
 - Staff continued RPC road erosion methodology discussion for road erosion inventory collection for summer 2018 and 2019
 - Staff had TAC discussion on the new Town Road and Bridge Standards that incorporated the MRGP standards.
- **Other Outreach** - Two road foreman/commissioner meetings held, 2 Public Transit Elderly and Disabled meetings held, 2 Vermont Local Road Stakeholder meetings, 3 2020 VT Walk Bike Summit planning committee calls
- **Data collection RPCs do for VTrans** – 8 bridge/culvert inventories completed, 3 Park & Ride counts conducted, 1 municipal road surface management inventory, 16 Bike ped counts, 25 traffic counts, 27 town complete streets inventory)

Objective #2: Better Connect Federal, Regional and Statewide Transportation Planning

- **Status of Regional Transportation Plan** – Adopted in July 2017 as part of the TRORC Regional Plan.
- **Participation in Project Development Activities** - Two project scoping efforts, 2 accelerated bridge meetings.
- **Participation in Act 250 review related to transportation issues** - none in 2018-2019

Objective #3: Provide Technical Assistance to Municipalities

- **Fifty percent (50%) of TPI budget (Task # 4 Short Range Transportation Planning) supports municipal planning.**
- **Other Better Roads (BR) - related work** – assisted 30 towns with 28 BR grant applications for 2018 and completed 9 town 2017-2018 BR road erosion and culvert inventories.
- **Participation in public transit efforts** – TRORC staff continued to participate in Advance Transit’s Strategic Planning Committee and participated in Stagecoach’s changed service routes reflected by mapping technical assistance. TRORC also provided a letter of support for VTrans in applying for a FTA grant for Stagecoach’s future bus barn facility in Bradford which got awarded. Staff participating on the project stakeholder group. TRORC provided letter of support for the Vermont Agency of Transportation’s application to the Federal Transit Administration’s LONO program to purchase battery-electric buses for Advance Transit which was also successfully awarded.
- Staff worked with the Town of Fairlee and assisted with the grant application for the Better Connections grant (successfully awarded).

- Staff provided technical assistance and coordination efforts during the April 15, 2019 flood disaster with VTrans Districts, FEMA and VEM. Staff participated in FEMA town kick off meetings invited by towns.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & DISASTER RESILIENCY

RPCs play key roles in the mitigation and preparedness and recovery phases of emergency management in partnership with Vermont Emergency Management, VTrans and the Agency of Natural Resources. RPCs provide direct staff to the State Emergency Operations Center, administrative support to the Local Emergency Planning Committees and coordination among responders and planners throughout the State's four Public Safety Districts. RPCs also help update floodplain bylaws and FEMA-required hazard mitigation plans, coordinate updates to municipal emergency plans, help communities access grant funds, arrange training, and assisted as needed in special circumstances like Tropical Storm Irene and other declared disasters. TRORC's staff played a strong role in regional emergency response.

- TRORC staff are often tasked by VEM to poll towns for disaster damage in the wake of incidents. TRORC also has a very good working relationship with our VTrans Districts and coordinates with them in times when road damages are expected. We do outreach with our road foremen on disaster recovery and we staff our regional LEPC #12.
- Most (27) of our municipalities have updated local emergency management plans, and TRORC staff went out to assist towns transitioning to this new plan format.
- Writing Hazard Mitigation Plans for our towns.
 - Overall in TRORC Region: 29 Towns with Final Approval by FEMA for Local Hazard Mitigation Plans.
 - TRORC staff are working with three communities on updating their Plan, and 1 town is pending FEMA approval.
- TRORC staff was appointed to the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) to represent regional planning commissions.
- TRORC has worked with Norwich and Royalton to plan for and conduct tabletop exercise, and worked with Tunbridge to bring emergency services together to form a new plan.
- TRORC continued its lead role in providing HUD and VHCB funds from the Agency of Commerce and Community Development for buying out flood damaged properties.
- TRORC led a statewide hazardous materials commodity flow study.
- TRORC staff updated their Tier II mapping project and disseminated the new maps to member towns.
- TRORC staff were trained to be staff in the State Emergency Operations Center.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM SERVICES

In addition to enhancing the RPC work, RPCs provide municipalities, state agencies and regional groups with mapping and data analysis in support of their projects.

- Produced custom maps for town requests (EAB, road name, infrastructure atlases etc.).
- Updated town plan maps and zoning maps.
- Supported town asset inventories (culvert, road erosion).
- Supported parcel mapping project with town outreach
- Uploaded Regional Future Land use and updated town zoning layer to VCGI portal

- Completed regional plan maps.
- Completed Hazard Mitigation Plan analysis and maps.
- Act 174 renewable energy generation maps

ENERGY CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT

A renewed focus on clean, renewable, sustainable and affordable energy presents Vermont with great opportunity and significant challenges. RPCs integrate energy planning with land use, transportation and natural resources efforts, and work with municipalities to assist with project implementation. RPCs participate in Section 248 proceedings and support comprehensive planning at the local and regional level to inform the permitting process.

- TRORC has continued to update and maintain town energy data reports and energy resource maps that align with the data needed for Act 174 compliant plans.
- TRORC reviewed or commented on nine petitions for a Certificate of Public Good within the region, the bulk of which were for solar projects.
- TRORC provided technical assistance to six municipalities towards draft enhanced energy plans: Corinth, Fairlee, Hancock, Hartland, Rochester and Royalton.
- TRORC continues to work with partners on regional energy planning implementation through participation with Efficiency Vermont, Vital Communities Energy Advisory Committee, and Green Mountain Power programming.

WATERSHED PLANNING & PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

RPCs work with the Agency of Natural Resources to assist with completion of the EPA required watershed plans. RPCs also work with municipalities to implement river corridor assessments in local planning and regulations which result in better and safer growth management decisions.

- TRORC continues to play an active role in commenting on water quality initiatives by the state, as well as promoting high quality waters through basin planning processes. We have remained active in both the Basin 9 and 14 planning processes and have supported the implementation of water quality initiatives identified through the most recent Basin 10 planning process. We have also remained active in Outstanding Resource Water (ORW) designations as well as reclassification of waters to A1 or B1.
- TRORC continues to coordinate our Clean Water Advisory Council (CWAC) which plays an active role in advising TRORC activities. The CWAC provides local and regional input regarding storm water, groundwater, wetlands, stream stability, project priorities, and other water quality issues.
- Developed Flood Resilience Elements for Town Plans that identify streams, rivers, infrastructure and properties in town that vulnerable to flooding and/or fluvial erosion and designates these areas for future protection. TRORC also held a Flood Bylaw Administration Training to support Zoning Administrators in their work regarding flood regulations.
- Through the Our Ottauquechee Project, TRORC worked to promote clean water and increase the visibility and accessibility of the Ottauquechee River. This initiative provided outreach to riparian landowners, included various outreach events that featured the use of the River Flume Table and identified a buffer planting project that occurred at Billings Farm earlier this spring.

- The Ayers Brook River Corridor and Watershed Outreach Easement Acquisition Feasibility Project identified river corridor easements, best management practices and green stormwater initiative projects throughout the Ayers Brook watershed, a stressed tributary to the Third Branch of the White River.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

- TRORC continues in its role as the statewide coordinator of CDBG-DR funding for the buyout of flood damaged structures, having completed over 150 buyouts statewide. TRORC has also managed 12 buyouts that have been redesigned as river access points or parks.
- TRORC has continued to partner with the Mt. Ascutney Prevention Partnership (MAPP) in working with communities on policies that focus on healthy communities. In FY 19, TRORC further refined a health chapter template for towns to use as part of a larger health and wellness toolkit for communities. TRORC has presented and shared this health chapter template to planning commissions, select boards, and other Upper Valley health groups.

ADMINISTRATION & FUNDING

TRORC is funded by performance and project contracts with federal, state and local levels of government, foundation support, and contributions from member municipalities and non-profits. TRORC's FY 19 budget was approximately \$2.2 million. Property Transfer Tax funding passed through by the Agency of Commerce and Community Development of \$280,000 leveraged about \$950,000 in additional federal sources that addressed the needs of citizens and communities in the TRORC region. TRORC created a non-profit arm in FY 19 to complement and further the work of TRORC and access national foundation funding on emerging topics

TRORC had a Single Audit conducted by an independent Certified Public Accounting firm and has numerous field audits and reviews by funders. No significant findings, material weaknesses, nor questioned costs were identified. Staff continuously avail themselves of professional development opportunities on program and administrative areas.

TRORC serves 30 municipalities and operates with a Board of Directors that develop and implement policy and oversee a staff of 10. The Board systematically updates all accounting practices and safeguards and organizational policies on an ongoing basis.

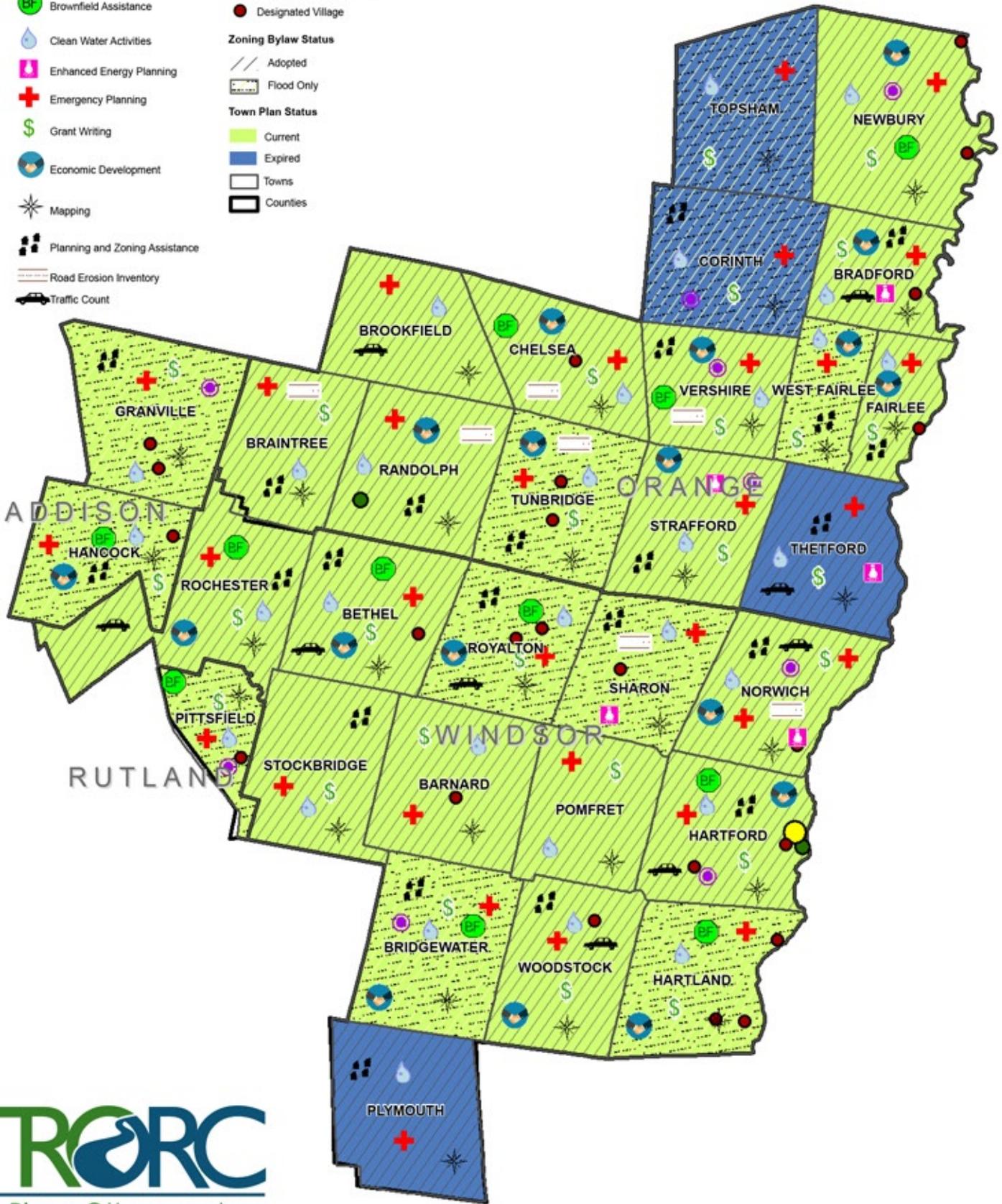
'AT WORK' MAP

The map depicting the range of services provided by the TRORC to member municipalities is included on the next page.

TRORC at Work: FY 2019

- Projects Assistance**
- Bridge and Culvert Inventory
 - Brownfield Assistance
 - Clean Water Activities
 - Enhanced Energy Planning
 - Emergency Planning
 - Grant Writing
 - Economic Development
 - Mapping
 - Planning and Zoning Assistance
 - Road Erosion Inventory
 - Traffic Count

- Designated Downtown or Village**
- Designated Downtown
 - Designated Growth Center
 - Designated Village
- Zoning Bylaw Status**
- Adopted
 - Flood Only
- Town Plan Status**
- Current
 - Expired
 - Towns
 - Counties



Windham Regional Commission

FY 2019 Annual Report

Celebrating our 54th year, the Windham Regional Commission (WRC) is an important resource to 27 towns of southeast Vermont, including all of the towns of Windham County, the towns of Readsboro, Searsburg, and Winhall in Bennington County, and Weston in Windsor County. In the absence of county government we are an essential link between local, state, and federal government. Our mission is to assist towns in Southeastern Vermont to provide effective local governance and work collaboratively with them to address regional issues.

Each town's Selectboard determines who will represent the town on the WRC. Each member town can appoint two [commissioners](#) who represent that town's interest in regional affairs. The exception is Somerset, where the commissioner is appointed by the Governor. Additionally, the WRC has up to ten citizen interest [commissioners](#) who represent other regional interests such as business and industry, healthy communities, agriculture, natural resources, energy, and housing. The WRC is organized around a strong committee structure. These [committees](#) are where most of the work gets done and the decisions made. Commissioners serve on these committees and make the decisions. The WRC has 10 highly-qualified [staff](#) with more than 80 years of combined professional experience who provide support to the committees, and execute the Commission's [program of work](#).

MUNICIPAL PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION

RPCs act as a cost-effective professional planning and plan implementation staff for many of Vermont's municipalities. Work in recent years has been focused on improving town plans and local permitting through education and enhanced consultations (on-site training), bylaw modernization, and implementing new requirements for flood resiliency, forest continuity, energy, and water quality planning. Current and clear plans and bylaws are essential to smooth state and local permitting. This work is supported through local and regional planning funds, local contributions and other grants. The technical assistance provided this year is shown on the At Work map; highlights include:

- Provided assistance to 24 towns in updating town plans and land use regulations. This included extensive work with nine towns on town plans and 15 towns on zoning bylaws, flood hazard area regulations, and subdivision regulations. Work updating town plans included assisting four towns in addressing new Act 174 energy planning standards and associated requirements. Work updating bylaws included assisting three towns with updating flood hazard area regulations to address protection of river corridors, as well as with administration and enforcement of such regulations.
- Provided general technical assistance to 22 towns on topics including Chapter 117 processes and requirements, and administration/enforcement of land use regulations.
- Worked with two towns on new Village Center designation applications and one town on a Village Center designation renewal application.
- Presented a regional training session on Basics of Land Use Planning and Regulation; participants included nine people representing seven towns. Also provided customized Basics of Land Use Planning and Regulation training for Planning Commission members and interested others, e.g., Selectboard and Zoning Board of Adjustment or Development Review Board members, in several towns.

- Presented a regional training session on Housing to 21 people representing 13 towns.
- Conducted nine municipal consultations, involving town Planning Commissions and Selectboards, to discuss town plan review / approval and the towns’ planning processes.
- Assisted five towns in developing and submitting Municipal Planning Grant applications for a town plan, zoning updates, village wastewater, and growth center planning.

REGIONAL PLANNING

RPCs coordinate planning at the regional level through the adoption and implementation of a comprehensive regional plan, and related plans and studies such as the regional energy plan and regional transportation plan. These plans guide local planning and the investment decisions of the public and private sectors.

- The WRC completed its two-year comprehensive regional plan update and adopted the new plan in September, 2014. In 2018 the WRC adopted a regional energy plan as an amendment to this plan. We are now in the process of developing the scope of a regional plan update and regional transportation plan update.
- During this reporting period the WRC reviewed 28 Act 250 applications and 18 Section 248 applications. The latter were mainly solar projects. Act 250 applications included those related to Mount Snow Resort, Stratton Mountain Resort, redevelopment of the Magic Mountain ski area, Brattleboro Memorial Hospital building changes, expansion of the Boulder Ridge housing development in Dover, and a vehicle storage facility in Searsburg.
- WRC is following the decommissioning and site restoration of the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station.
- The WRC is active in the deliberations over the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission relicensing of dams on the Connecticut River in Vermont and Massachusetts.

BROWNFIELDS

- The WRC [brownfields program](#) since its inception in 2000 has brought a total of \$5.2 million dollars in federal brownfields funds to the region for assessment and cleanup of brownfields sites.
- Attended statewide brownfield roundtable meetings with other planners, Vermont Agencies and the U.S. EPA.
- Attended Mandatory Brownfields New Grantee Training
- During this past year WRC Brownfields program has worked on the following sites:

| Site | Town/Village | Brownfields Work | Reuse plan |
|---------------------------|---------------|---|--|
| Groundworks Collaborative | Brattleboro | WRC Brownfields Cleanup Grant for asbestos removal. | Building demolition to make room for new structure for homeless shelter and associated support services. |
| Saxtons River Park | Saxtons River | Project Management assistance for EPA Cleanup Grant, which received additional funds this year. | Redevelopment of former mill and gas station parcels into a community park. Project |

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|---|---|
| | | WRC Brownfields Cleanup Grant. | will be completed in 2019. |
| Robertson Paper Mill | Village of Bellows Falls | Continue to assist Town and BFADC on brownfield issues related to redevelopment. Participated as part of the Vermont's BERA team for this site. WRC Brownfields Cleanup Grant. | Purchased by Bellows Falls Area Development Corp (BFADC) for Redevelopment. Cleanup completed Spring of 2019. Town marketing site and reconsidering zoning to include mixed use. |
| Vermont Graphics | Village of Bellows Falls | Phase I and II ESA. Additional testing this year. | Redevelopment by owner of industrial building for light industrial use. |
| Unified Data | Grafton | Phase I and II ESA. Additional testing this year. | Redevelopment of industrial site for solar panels. Potential new owner interest in continued reuse for light industrial. |
| TLR | Village of Bellows Falls | Phase I and II ESA. | Redevelopment by town for museum and part of historical park. |
| Green River Floodplain | Guilford | Phase I and II ESA. Additional testing this year. | The site will be conserved through a conservation easement held by Vermont River Conservancy. The easement will restrict future development of the parcel and provide for public access to the property and the adjacent Green River. |
| NEYT Arts Campus - 48/64 Elm St. | Brattleboro | WRC Brownfields Cleanup Grant/Loan Part A approved. | Redevelopment by New England Youth Theatre for additional outdoor space. |
| Putnam Block | Bennington | WRC Brownfields Clean Up Loan. | Major mix used redevelopment in the heart of downtown Bennington underway. |
| Thermal House | Brattleboro | Phase II ESA. | Redevelopment for |

| | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------|--------------|---|
| | | | maple syrup warehouse and distribution facility. |
| Friends of the West River | Londonderry | Phase I ESA. | Preliminary plans include redevelopment of the property for public use with a walking trail and river access. |
| | | | |

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Economic growth is supported best when development efforts are partnered with solid planning. RPCs work with towns and in strong partnership with Regional Development Corporations (RDCs) to this end in a number of ways, including development of comprehensive strategies that will help position Vermont for long-term economic gain.

- Participated on Southeastern Economic Development Strategies (SeVEDS) Board and the [Southern Vermont Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy](#) (CEDS) Committee.
- Continuing to collaborate with the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation (BDCC) in assisting the State of Vermont with the administration of the Windham County Economic Development Program, funding for which is provided through the settlement agreement between the state and Entergy Vermont Yankee.
- Participation in the USDA-funded Rural Community Development Initiative being led by the BDCC to develop regional capacity to support economic development across Windham and Bennington counties. The goal of the effort is to improve coordination by and between public and private sector partners concerning economic development initiatives such as workforce training, retention, recruitment, and sustainable business investment.
- Continue to assist Windham Region communities with village center and downtown designation applications.
- Working to establish a Sister City/Region relationship for the Windham Region with a community in Sweden.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Through contract with the VTrans, RPCs coordinate the Transportation Planning Initiative (TPI). This effort has provided a statewide framework for public involvement in planning the improvements to Vermont’s transportation system, with local communities represented through regional Transportation Advisory Committees (TACs). Each regional TAC prioritizes projects, identifies local and regional transportation needs, and provides the platform for public involvement in the planning and development of the state’s transportation system. RPCs serve as the point of delivery for the statewide transportation planning process to support local, regional, state, and federal transportation network advancement.

The following five categories are performance measures reported to VTrans as part of their report to the legislature.

Objective #1: Enhance Cooperation and Coordination between VTrans, RPC Regions, and Municipalities

- Held 9 TAC meetings. Engaged 7 non-municipal TAC members actively in transportation planning.
- Actively engaged 20 municipalities in transportation planning.
- Coordinated 14 RPC activities with municipalities and VTrans.

Objective # 2: Better Connect Federal, Regional, and Statewide Transportation Planning

- Regional transportation plan is current (within 8 years).
- Reviewed 2 Act 250 applications with RPC comments relating to transportation.
- Coordinated 2 activities in support of regional public transit providers.
- Staff participated on 14 VTrans committees.
- Participated in Project Prioritization.

Objective # 3: Provide Technical Assistance to Municipalities

- 11 municipalities participated in road foreman meetings.
- Assisted 14 municipalities with transportation-related grants.
- Spent 45% of budget on municipal technical assistance.
- Conducted 8 municipal transportation inventories.
- Assisted 6 municipalities with transportation element of municipal/town plan.
- Conducted 4 road erosion inventories in support of the MRGP completed using TPI dollars and other funding sources.

Objective # 4: Deliver Results that Advance VTrans Strategic and Long-Range Transportation Plans

- Performed 68 data collection activities specifically for VTrans.

Objective # 5: Provide a Mechanism for Improved Public Outreach and Education

- Coordinated with VTrans on outreach for Grafton Bridge 20 and Westminster Bridge 5 scoping alternatives presentations.
- Coordinated with VTrans outreach consultant on the Guilford Welcome Center outreach coordination.

FY 2019 Highlights

- Hinsdale-Brattleboro Bridge Infrastructure Planning - Currently undertaking the Hinsdale-Brattleboro Bridge project that calls for replacing the existing Route 119 bridges crossing the Connecticut River between Downtown Brattleboro, Vermont and Hinsdale, New Hampshire. Planning for the Hinsdale-Brattleboro Bridge project began in the early 1990's. The new bridge is to be a steel I-beam girder bridge with aesthetic enhancements and a sidewalk on the upstream side. The existing Route 119 bridges will remain open at all times during project construction. After construction, the existing Route 119 bridges are planned for rehabilitation as a recreational, pedestrian, and bicycle resource. At this time the Hinsdale-Brattleboro Bridge project is in the Final Design phase. The project will be put out to bid in May, 2020 with work completed in 2023.
- Hinsdale-Brattleboro Bridge Scenario Planning - the Hinsdale/Brattleboro Existing Bridge Subcommittee is tasked with identifying a vision for the reuse of the existing Hinsdale-Brattleboro Bridges. The purpose of the Existing Bridges Subcommittee "is to develop a vision

for the Charles Dana and Anna Hunt Marsh Bridges and Hinsdale Island, including the envisioned activities and uses of the bridges and island, physical changes, management and maintenance considerations, and expected impacts on economic development, tourism, transportation/access, and recreational opportunities." The committee decided to pursue a scenario planning approach to arrive at a recommended vision. The subcommittee will be able to explore how different investment options and constraints might impact alternate plans for the bridges. The subcommittee visioning process is planned as an approximately two-year process and will enable the committee to develop a publicly supported and feasible alternative to recommend to the Hinsdale-Brattleboro Bridge Project Advisory Committee. The committee will work with a local landscape design master's program to develop professional quality design scenarios for the space. There will be extensive public outreach efforts in order to incorporate the two communities into the process.

- Route 30 Infrastructure Study - Currently undertaking this corridor planning project in coordination with VTrans serving as the project lead. The first Route 30 Management Plan was developed in 1999. The process will be about coordination of interests, plans, and needs along the corridor and will include community needs such as traffic calming. The extent of this project is from Brattleboro to the intersection of Route 30 and Route 11 in Winhall.
- Studying Connections to Increased Rail Service to Greenfield, MA - The WRC is working with the VTrans Public Transit department to explore the feasibility of a transit connection between Greenfield and Brattleboro to capitalize upon increased rail service scheduled to begin in 2019. Massachusetts plans to add two additional round trips per day from Springfield to Greenfield, and one round trip on the weekends, as part of a 2-year pilot. This would allow for one-seat trips to New York City departing from Greenfield including round trip day trips. We are also contemplating the feasibility of commuter rail service into southeastern Vermont within 10 years.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & DISASTER RESILIENCY

RPCs play key roles in the mitigation and preparedness phases of emergency management in partnership with Vermont Emergency Management, the Vermont Homeland Security Unit, VTrans, and the Agency of Natural Resources. RPC's also help update floodplain bylaws and hazard mitigation plans, coordinate updates to municipal emergency plans, and serve as local liaisons between towns and the State Emergency Operations Center in special circumstances like Tropical Storm Irene and other hazard events.

- The WRC develops local hazard mitigation plans for our towns, with the exception of Brattleboro, which created its own. Of our 27 towns, 24 (89%) have hazard mitigation plans either adopted, with updates underway, or have a draft under review by the state or FEMA.
- Twenty-three of the 27 towns (85%) currently have updated local emergency management plans in place.
- WRC holds quarterly Emergency Management Director (EMD) and Fire Chief Roundtables. Topics are chosen by the EMD and fire chief participants. Beginning in October, 2018, three roundtables were held this fiscal year. January's roundtable discussed the statutory role of the EMD, delegations of authority for the EMD, an after-action discussion, and an introduction to the concept of community resilience organizations. The April meeting brought Green

Mountain Power to the table, per discussion from the January meeting, and the group shared ideas from both sides on enhancing communication during long term power outages. Future roundtables are planned.

- WRC has re-established the WRC Emergency Planning Committee. The group met in April 2019 and began an initiative to develop a phone-tree tool to connect towns with agencies serving vulnerable populations living independently. This initiative is getting traction, with a tabletop exercise to practice the phone tree planned for the next fiscal year.
- A series of brown-bag lunches were held for Floodplain Administrators in the region to learn about topics related to floodplain regulation, as well as to serve as a roundtable discussion opportunity about the responsibilities of the role.
- The WRC serves as the local liaison to communicate damages and the needs of towns to the State during disasters. WRC staff, in conjunction with the regional ANR River Management Engineers and VTrans Districts 1 and 2, has in place a damage reporting/situational awareness protocol that expedites the gathering of accurate information from towns with the goal of minimizing duplicate requests for information. That protocol is kept updated and shared with new staff members that have a role.
- WRC worked with three towns on developing updated flood hazard bylaws, which incorporate state-designated river corridors. All three towns utilized the WRC model bylaw for their update.
- A buyout and demolition of a structure located in a floodway in Wardsboro was completed. This grant was started last fiscal year and the work was completed this fiscal year.
- WRC staff participated in numerous FEMA sponsored trainings as part of the new State Emergency Operations Center training program.
- Staff attended the annual Vermont Emergency Management conference.
- WRC's executive director was elected to serve as the vice chair, and later chair, of the Vermont Disaster Recovery Fund.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM SERVICES

In addition to enhancing the RPC work, RPCs provide municipalities, state agencies, and regional groups with mapping and data analysis in support of their projects.

- GIS staff provided support to the Transportation Planning Initiative for data collection activities, which included culvert inventories, sign inventories, parking inventories, traffic counts, park and ride counts, and bike/ped counts.
- WRC began an effort to study bike parking in downtown Brattleboro by conducting an inventory of bike racks, and on one day each month of bikes parked in the downtown district.
- Town plan maps were updated for Grafton, Vernon, Wardsboro, and Wilmington. Additional mapping was done to support the Jamaica Planning Commission as they work on their town plan update. Updated census data was provided to Marlboro for their town plan update. Zoning map updates were done for Westminster, and mapping support was provided to Windham as they work to update their zoning bylaw.
- We helped in the Village Center application process for two towns (Grafton and Townshend) as they work to develop village center boundaries.
- WRC continues to support towns in their efforts to update their flood regulations and incorporate river corridor protection, and information for local emergency management

plans. GIS staff provided maps and analysis of the impacts of such protection to Guilford, Jamaica, Vernon, Rockingham, Stratton, Wardsboro, Whitingham, and Wilmington.

- WRC continues to provide data and mapping assistance to numerous agencies and organizations in the region, including this year Health Care and Rehabilitation Services, Grace Cottage Hospital, Strolling of the Heifers, West Brattleboro Association, Windham and Windsor Housing Trust, and Windham Solid Waste Management District.
- GIS staff continues to provide support for transportation-related inventory and mapping work. We updated culvert inventories and/or maps for Dover, Jamaica, Readsboro, Searsburg, Vernon, and Wilmington and worked on a sign inventory for Wilmington. Support for towns as they prepare for Vermont's Municipal Roads General Permit has been extensive. One aspect of this support is conducting road erosion inventories; we worked on inventories for Dover, Dummerston, Jamaica, Putney, Readsboro, Searsburg, Vernon, Wardsboro, and Wilmington.
- WRC continues efforts to provide support for our communities regarding trails and recreation paths. We have been working with the Brattleboro District Office of the Vermont Department of Health to provide mapping support and trail information for their "Windham on the Move" initiative, and in cooperation with Brattleboro Memorial Hospital, the RiseVT passport program. We continued to work with Vernon to create a map of their revived town forest trail system and develop that system more fully. WRC provided trail mapping support to Scott Farm/Landmark Trust and Friends of the West River Trail, and worked with Wilmington on mapping issues with the Valley Trail and enhancing their trail mapping and kiosks.
- WRC continues its robust pedestrian counting program on sidewalks, recreation paths, and trails. We undertook 56 counts in 15 towns. We also conducted counts at five different times over the course of a year on sidewalks in Wilmington's downtown district to provide a more comprehensive view of pedestrian traffic there.
- WRC continues to do traffic studies, generally at the request of towns. We did 25 studies in seven towns in FY19.
- WRC continues to further efforts to improve the status of digital parcel data in the region. We worked with VCGI to convert Somerset's data to the a format that meets the State's new Parcel Data Standard, and hosted a Statewide Parcel Mapping Program meeting, which representatives from seven of the region's towns attended.
- WRC purchased a bicycle tube counter to begin inventories of bike use on both recreation pathways and highways. WRC conducted nine counts in six different towns during FY19.
- WRC provides mapping support to towns when they apply for various grants, including Dummerston and two for Wilmington.
- WRC participated in the US Census Bureau's Participant Statistical Areas Program to recommend updates to census tracts, block groups, and census designated places. WRC proposed to add 13 census designated places to be able to get detailed census data for villages and hamlets, and changes to block group boundaries in five towns so that they better align with the town's local geography.
- Staff provided E911 data and mapping support to Marlboro and Somerset, and provided updated building footprint data to the Vermont E911 Board. We also created a new map showing Brattleboro's 300-plus road names for their dispatch center.
- We participated in an effort coordinated by VAPDA to create a statewide database of industrial parks.

ENERGY CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT

A renewed focus on clean, renewable, sustainable, and affordable energy presents Vermont with great opportunity and significant challenges. RPCs integrate energy planning with land use, transportation, and natural resources planning, and work with municipalities to assist with project implementation. RPCs participate in Section 248 proceedings and support comprehensive planning at the local and regional level to inform the permitting process.

- The WRC has continued to manage the Windham Wood Heat Initiative. The program has assisted 7 institutions (4 schools, 1 municipal building, and 2 public serving institutions) in switching to modern wood heating systems through technical and financial assistance in the past year, and has funded 3 comprehensive energy audit reports in the past year. The program is also working with 3 modern wood heating systems that are currently upgrading and fixing their previously installed systems. Several more projects are being considered or are getting underway with the conversion. Outreach and public education have been central to this program. Marion presented on the program at the REV2018 annual conference as well as several local organizational meetings. During the Windham County Capital for a day tour, the Green Street School installation was featured as a success story. The installations have been featured on the [Feel Good Heat website](#) as “Stoked Stories” or testimonials for automated wood heat. The program continues to be advised by strong local partner organizations. The funding for this \$1.6 million project is through the Clean Energy Development Fund (CEDF), which was made possible through the state’s settlement agreement with Entergy Vermont Yankee.
- WRC continued to manage the Windham County Renewable Energy Program. This program awards grants towards the development renewable energy generation projects. The projects awarded went to 2 rooftop solar installations, 2 ground-mounted net-metered solar projects. The Windham County Renewable Energy Program has awarded \$592,523 to date and has displaced or avoided over 6,800 tons of CO2 emissions.
- The WRC worked with 4 towns (Halifax, Putney, Newfane, and Townshend) on the development of their Act 174-compliant town plan energy elements. This was the third round of towns to receive this technical assistance. The plans are currently being drafted. The towns which participated in the previous rounds of technical assistance (Londonderry, Westminster, Vernon, Grafton, Wardsboro, Weston, Windham, Rockingham, and Jamaica) worked towards adopting their energy plans as part of their town plans. Westminster and Londonderry’s plans were reviewed for Determination of Energy Compliance and received the certificate of compliance from WRC. This grants the plans substantial deference from the PUC during Section 248 reviews.

WATERSHED PLANNING & PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

RPCs work with the Agency of Natural Resources to implement the state’s Clean Water Initiative through basin planning and assistance to municipalities in meeting statutory and regulatory requirements. RPCs also work with municipalities and watershed organizations to implement river corridor assessments in local planning and regulations which result in better and safer growth management decisions. The WRC has gone a step further in organizing community efforts to connect people with their watersheds, and to create watershed “identities.”

- Developed, proposed, and finalized a charge for the Clean Water Advisory Committee (CWAC) to the Windham Regional Commission's Executive Board. The CWAC's role includes providing local and regional input regarding project priorities and water quality issues important to the Windham Region, and serving in an advisory capacity to the WRC Executive Board and Full Commission.
- Additionally, the CWAC began to help the VT DEC's Watershed Coordinator develop the draft of the Tactical Basin Plan for the Deerfield River Watershed (Basin 12-13) and provide appropriate outreach or assistance to towns. The WRC Water Quality Planner has attended all Regional Water Quality Coordination meetings, hosted by the VT DEC Watershed Coordinator.
- Wrote a grant proposal to, and secured, a VT DEC Watershed grant to support public education and outreach within the on-going Green River Watershed Alliance initiative (started in 2017). These public events addressed environmental issues, placemaking, watershed study, place-based education, and ecological restoration; all of which highlighted the importance of watershed awareness in the Green River watershed for water quality and flood resilience.
- Successfully assisted with the enrollment of 24 towns in the FY20 Municipal Roads Grants in Aid Program to proactively reimburse towns for road drainage improvements that bring hydrologically-connected road segments up to fully-meeting the Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP) standards.
- For the previous FY19 Municipal Roads Grants in Aid program, facilitated the reimbursement of over \$300,000 to 20 Windham Region towns that had completed work on these road segments.
- Participated in various collaborative watershed efforts, including:
 - Worked with the Vermont Rivers Conservancy on pursuing river conservation easements and associated site restoration of two parcels on the Green River and Whetstone Brook.
 - Worked with and staffed the Green River Watershed Alliance in securing a VT DEC Watershed grant to extend public outreach and education into the 2019 field season.
 - Participated in the VT Resilience Networks conference at Norwich University in May 2019. Presented on the role of placemaking and community engagement in watershed planning and watershed resilience efforts overall.
 - Worked with the Connecticut River Conservancy to fund an engineering plan, and secure grant funding for the construction phase for the removal of a defunct dam on the Crosby Brook in Dummerston, with two grants secured through the Ecosystem Restoration Program (ERP).
 - Worked with the Connecticut River Joint Commission's Wantastiquet Local River Subcommittee to link and represent Connecticut River towns to relevant planning issues along the River.
 - Hosted and planned a panel discussion at the 2019 Leahy Summit at the ECHO Center to link watershed science and placemaking statewide, as a result of the WRC's expertise and experience with The Confluence Project partnership.
 - Attended the Watersheds United Vermont Spring Meeting in Waterbury in March, 2019. Discussed and collaborated on issues relevant to water quality planning, watershed groups, and Conservation Districts, and legislation related to clean water funding.
- In coordination with the Rich Earth Institute, launched the Village Sanitation Pilot Study, which provided Westminster West and West Dummerston with technical assistance and customized

information regarding their septic systems and proposed alternatives to those systems, such as urine diversion or composting toilets. This pilot project aims to inform a neighborhood about how eco-sanitation systems might be more broadly applicable to help sustain our historic village centers.

- Developed a position for and hosted, an ECO AmeriCorps Service Member in the role of “Wastewater Planning Associate” for 2019. This position is designed to support the Village Sanitation Pilot Study, wastewater planning in affected Windham Region municipalities, and clean water efforts overall.
- Worked with the Deerfield River Watershed Association and the VT DEC to host an ECO AmeriCorps Service Member to assist with water quality monitoring sampling throughout the Windham Region, and especially the Deerfield Basin. This member organized volunteers and assisted with sampling day logistics.
- Attended the meeting of the Staying Connected Initiative, a visionary partnership working to restore and enhance landscape connections for the benefit of people and wildlife across the Northern Appalachian/Acadian region of the eastern U.S. and Canada, in Orford, Quebec.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

- Continued collaboration with the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation, and our counterparts in NH and MA, to address the economic impacts of the closure of Vermont Yankee.
- WRC continues to make the case at the Federal level for the substantive inclusion of host communities in the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission’s policymaking process that is creating nuclear power plant decommissioning policy, as well as the U.S. Department of Energy’s consideration of a consent-based spent fuel and high-level radioactive waste siting initiative.
- Participated in the first federal roundtable sponsored by the Nuclear Decommissioning Collaborative. The purpose of this meeting was for nuclear host communities to share their experience and how federal agencies might use existing programs to help mitigate the economic impact of nuclear plant closures.
- Actively engaged with the Vermont Nuclear Decommissioning Citizens Advisory Panel, which was created by the legislature to advise state agencies, the Governor, the Legislature, and others about matters related to the decommissioning of Vermont Yankee. Executive Director Chris Campany chairs the Panel.

ADMINISTRATION & FUNDING

Virtually all of the WRC’s revenue sources are tied to contracts with scopes of work, guidelines, and/or performance measures. This means that the WRC has limited control over how it chooses to use the vast majority of its funding. Funding received through town assessments is the exception, which makes this funding stream particularly important because it gives us the greatest latitude to respond to WRC-identified needs in the region. Town assessments, and the funding received through the WRC’s performance contract with the state, are also necessary to provide matching funds required by grantors. The grants we receive enable us to work with our towns on areas such as transportation, emergency planning, community development, brownfields redevelopment, energy, and natural resources. Revenue from virtually all federal and state grantors requires matching funds,

and typically non-federal matching funds. Required match ranges from 10 percent (Transportation Planning Initiative) to 50 percent (Emergency Management Planning Grant).

The WRC has an audit on an annual basis.

The WRC has adopted a [Municipal Services Policy](#) that is intended to provide guidance for the Commission in the delivery of professional services to member municipalities. It describes technical assistance available to member towns as part of the commission's core activities, and the opportunities for expanded service when funded as a special project.

'AT WORK' MAP

A map depicting the range of services provided by the WRC to member municipalities is included on the next page.

WRC at Work: FY 2019



Projects

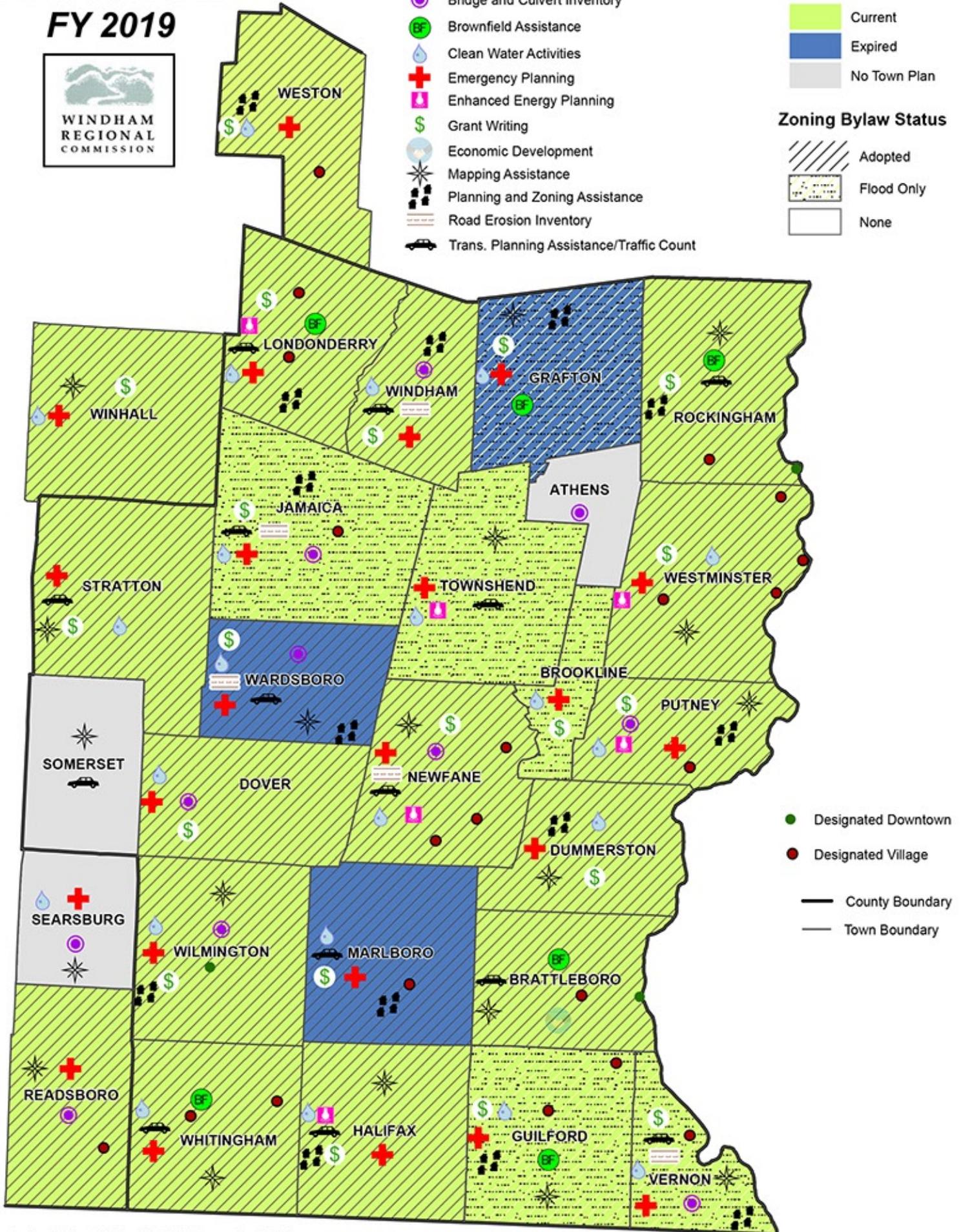
- Bridge and Culvert Inventory
- Brownfield Assistance
- Clean Water Activities
- Emergency Planning
- Enhanced Energy Planning
- Grant Writing
- Economic Development
- Mapping Assistance
- Planning and Zoning Assistance
- Road Erosion Inventory
- Trans. Planning Assistance/Traffic Count

Town Plan Status

- Current
- Expired
- No Town Plan

Zoning Bylaw Status

- Adopted
- Flood Only
- None



- Designated Downtown
- Designated Village
- County Boundary
- Town Boundary