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The Addison County Regional Planning Commission (ACRPC) serves 21 of the 23 municipalities within Addison County (Granville and Hancock lie within Addison County, but fall on the other side of the Green Mountains and are served by the Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Planning Commission). ACRPC’s 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 has 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. These committees review various aspects of the commission’s business. Commissioners serve on these committees and make recommendations for action to the full Commission. All 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 provides support to the Commission and its committees and execute the Commission’s program of work.

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 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 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 helped the Towns of Ferrisburgh, Bridport, Addison, Waltham, Ripton, Shoreham, Lincoln and Panton work on their Town plans within FY16. ACRPC helped bring these plans up to meet statutory requirements, including focusing on economic development and flood resiliency.

♦ Addison: Addison completed an 18-month municipal planning grant funded project to complete a town plan revision. This included a community survey with 35% participation, planning area changes to incorporate density-based zoning recommendations for their agricultural areas, among other improvements/updates to the entire plan.
◊ **Whiting**: began a town plan update, including incorporation of flood resiliency, energy, and economic development sections within their town plan.

◊ **Panton**: began a town plan update process, including a community wide survey (in process), statistical update, flood resiliency and energy siting standards.

◊ **Waltham**: completed a plan update with technical assistance provided by ACRPC

♦ ACRPC helped the Towns of Bristol and Leicester draft new zoning regulations to implement their respective plans.

♦ ACRPC provided technical support to all Zoning Administrators within the Region and held two Zoning Administrator Roundtables.

**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 completed updates of the Future Land Use, Introduction and Substantial Regional Impact Sections of its Plan, added an Implementation Section to the Regional Plan and readopted the entire Regional Plan.

ACRPC implemented its plan by focusing a significant portion of its work this year on its three regional centers. It worked to strengthen the infrastructure in Vergennes by helping it to create a master plan to tie the Vergennes Basin to its downtown. In Bristol, ACRPC helped re-write its by-laws and helped to apply for a Community Development Block Grant for a master plan to develop the Stony Hill Business Park within its Village Planning Area. In Middlebury, ACRPC served 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. Please see Economic and Community Development and Special Projects for more details on each of these undertakings.

**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.

♦ ACRPC does not have any Brownfields funding of its own at this time. However, it worked with the Towns of Whiting and Ferrisburgh to help secure resources to remediate contaminated properties in their respective villages. Ferrisburgh removed a burnt out building in its village and Whiting continued to work to remediate contaminated property in its village, near its school and fire station, which will open that property for redevelopment potential.

**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.
♦ ACRPC worked with the Town of Bristol on the Stoney Hill Master Plan it helped write the previous year to create a business park within Bristol’s Village Planning Area. Bristol has traditionally had problems retaining its commercial businesses because they outgrow the Town’s 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 growth of this area.

♦ ACRPC worked as a project manager for the City of Vergennes on a City Master Plan funded by a Better Connections Strong Communities Grant it helped write the previous year. ACRPC was the project coordinator and worked with the consultant team and a steering committee from the City of Vergennes. This project analyzed the physical and economic gaps in linking the downtown area with the Otter Creek Basin parks of Vergennes. Through this analysis and through numerous public participatory events, the report prioritizes projects which will maximize recreation opportunities, stimulate the local economy and connect assets.

♦ ACRPC worked with the Addison County Economic Development Corporation to create regional markers to establish the health and welfare of Addison County and its citizens and supported several grant applications for local businesses.

♦ ACRPC helped municipalities include individualized economic development sections in each of the town plans it created above.

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 (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 Cooperation and Coordination between VTrans, Regions and Municipalities

♦ TAC activity
  ◊ ACRPC’s TAC held 10 meetings with an average percentage attendance of 57% (12 out of 21 member municipalities)

♦ TAC Outcomes
  ◊ The TAC funded three planning studies during FY2016
    • Middlebury Traffic Calming Study which proposed traffic calming measures for 3 local roads in Middlebury and will serve as a model for efforts on similar roads around the region in the future.
    • Middlebury Creek Road Erosion Stability Study, which examined mitigation alternatives to continually rebuilding Creek Road after flooding events.
    • Addison County Regional Transportation Update (See below)
  ◊ The TAC successfully petitioned VTrans for a resurfacing project on Route 22A between Bridport and Addison four-corners
    • The TAC provided a forum for a discussion of a truck bypass proposal advanced by the City of Vergennes around the City using other State highways.

♦ Other Outreach
  ◊ 8 road foreman meetings held (September – April)
Public Transit E&D meetings: 4
Go! Vermont meetings: 2
Addison County Transportation Partners meetings: 7
ACRPC hosted a Vermont Transportation Board Public Hearing on Wednesday, November 18th
Trainings facilitated by ACRPC
- Jim Ryan’s Act 64 Municipal Roads General Permit presentation/training for TAC
- Jim Ryan’s Act 64 Municipal Roads General Permit presentation/training for Addison County Road Foreman’s group
- Alan May’s Better Roads Program presentation/training for Addison County Road Foreman’s group
Trainings attended by ACRPC
- Rivers & Roads Tier II Training – Josh & Tim
- Road Erosion Evaluation & Inventory Training – Josh & Kevin
- RPC meetups x 2 – Josh & Claire
- VLCT Planning & Zoning Forum - Josh
- Vermont Local Roads Workshop - Josh

Data Collection
- Culvert/bridge inventories: Panton, Bridport, Waltham, Leicester
- Traffic Counts: Panton, Bristol x 4, Monkton x 2, Ferrisburgh, Shoreham/Cornwall, Waltham
- Bike/ped counts: Middlebury x 2, Bristol
- Park & Ride Counts: 3

Objective #2 Conformance with Act 200 and Facilitating Decentralized Decision Making
Status of Regional Transportation Plan
- Adopted May 14, 2008
- Incorporated into Addison County Regional Plan
- Currently being updated, with anticipated adoption date of January/February 2017

Participation in Project Development Activities
- ACRPC facilitated an access management upgrade at the Downhome Market in East Middlebury, improving parking and access to and from Route 116
- Scoping of the Weybridge-New Haven Route 17 Bridge 8 over Otter Creek
- Attended one Accelerated Bridge Program meeting
- Scoping of the Orwell Town Hwy Bridge 4 over North Fork Creek to support Local Concerns
- Scoping of the Leicester Town Hwy 12 Bridge 4 Over Leicester River to support local concerns
- Scoping of the Addison VT 125 Bridge to support local concerns
- Worked with the Local Project Management Team on the Middlebury Rail Tunnel

Objective #3 Providing Transportation Planning Support to Municipalities
- Performed a Traffic Study Report for the Town of Bristol
- Created the Middlebury Traffic Calming Study
- Created apps for culvert and road erosion inventories – eventual goal of having towns utilize
these apps for inventory management on their own

- Worked with Local Motion to found the Addison County Walk-Bike Advisory Council and facilitated the formation and growth of this regional council
- Created Whiting and Waltham Transportation Plan updates

Other

- VTrans Bike/Ped Grant Program:
  - ACRPC helped Middlebury draft a successful grant application for phases 1 and 2 of the Exchange Street Sidewalk/Shared Use path. ACRPC is also the project manager to construct this project.
  - ACRPC helped Vergennes draft a successful grant application for Vergennes – North Main Street/Ferrisburgh Road Sidewalk
- Better Roads Program – provided support for numerous grant applications
  - Bridport x 2 – Category A provided by ACRPC; 1 of 2 Category Bs funded
  - Bristol – Category C funded
  - Lincoln x 3 – Category A & B funded
  - Monkton – Category D funded
  - Orwell – Category A provided by ACRPC; Category B funded
  - Ripton – Category A & C funded
  - Shoreham – Category B funded
  - Waltham – Category A provided by ACRPC; Category B funded
- Class 2 Structures & Paving Program
  - Bridport
  - New Haven
- Comprehensive Energy Plan Forum (includes transportation aspects) coordination & facilitation
- VECAN Energy & Transportation Regional Roundtable coordination & facilitation
- Sponsored a table at Addison County Sustainability Expo

Emergency Preparedness and 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. RPCs also help update floodplain bylaws create FEMA-qualified hazard mitigation plans, coordinate updates to municipal emergency plans and assist as needed in special circumstances and declared disasters.

- Twelve of the twenty-one of municipalities in the Region (57%) currently have a hazard mitigation plan either adopted or under review.
- Eighteen of twenty one of municipalities in the Region (86%) currently have an updated local emergency plan.
- ACRPC developed, participated in, and/or hosted four emergency management exercises this fiscal year. They included an emergency management training/workshop for local businesses, a nationally sponsored statewide agriculture exercise, a Vermont Department of Health
C_POD exercise and a Statewide disaster training exercise. Each exercise helped improve the community’s preparation for disaster management.

- Staff trained for Logistics Section Chief, ICS 100, ICS 200, Local Emergency Operations Planning and Rural Emergency Operations Center operations so it could assist the Region in case of disaster. Staff also attended the Vermont Emergency Preparedness Conference and the Resilient Vermont Conference to learn and bring local perspective to the discussions.

- ACRPC hosted and/or developed trainings for local officials in D-Lan (Vermont’s Disaster Reporting and Response software), Vermont Alert (Vermont’s Disaster notification system), a Spring Flood Workshop, Business Emergency Management planning, and Hazardous Materials reporting. Each workshop improved local communities and agencies ability to respond to disasters.

- Staff assisted in the creation and coordination of a regional School Safety Group for Addison Northwest Supervisory Union. Staff attended regular Regional Safety meetings and meetings of the Addison County Emergency Planning Committee, helping local groups prepare for and coordinate a regional response to disasters.

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.

- ACRPC’s mapping supports nearly every planning function it performs. Every town plan or zoning bylaw created contains maps produced by ACRPC

- ACRPC provided mitigation planning maps and data to Salisbury, Leicester, Cornwall and Vergennes, and Bristol

- ACRPC created an app to support the data gathering efforts that its transportation planner is undertaking to map bridges and culverts within the region. The app, built on an existing software platform allows for the quick and efficient collection, storage and transmittal of road data collected to improve water quality.

- ACRPC maintained all regional databases

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, 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’s Energy Committee updated our Solar Siting Guidelines for municipal plans and distributed the guidelines to all municipalities in the Region. ACRPC also helped several communities with creating a landscaping/screening ordinance that could regulate solar screening as permitted by Act 56.

- ACRPC’s Executive Director participated on the Legislative Summer Study Committee representing regional Planning Commissions in developing recommendations to the legislature that formed the basis of the legislation passed last session.
**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 implement river corridor assessments in local planning and regulations which result in better and safer growth management decisions.

- ACRPC received an Ecosystems Restoration Program grant (“ERP”) on the behalf of the Town of Middlebury to complete a green stormwater retrofit study in a high priority sub-watershed within the downtown. ACRPC worked with Watershed Associates Consulting to provide 3, 30% designs for green infrastructure systems – improvements on existing stormwater infrastructure, that the Otter Creek Tactical Basin Plan had prioritized. Watershed and ACRPC staff presented the plans to the Town of Middlebury, Infrastructure Committee, ANR and ACRPC’s Commission. Middlebury is contemplating applying for an implementation grant for the work.

- 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 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 hosted ‘kitchen water chats’.

- ACRPC staff participate 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.

**Special Projects**

- ACRPC completed its work with the Town of Monkton on a Viewshed Study. ACRPC worked with a Monkton advisory committee to document unique views and features of the Town. The project incorporated significant public input and will be used by Monkton to help shape future land use decisions.

- This year ACRPC partnered with Local Motion of Burlington to form an Addison County Walk-Bike Council. ACRPC and Local Motion are assisting the new members of the council in writing their initial workplan and appoint tasks to four working sub-committees. The council includes representatives from across Addison County with a mission to improve and increase the opportunity for safer walking and cycling to all in Addison County. The key topics which the council is focused on include: infrastructure improvements, education and outreach, safety and law enforcement and cultural shift.

  - Sub-committee work will include/but not limited to: technical review of street plans, safe routes work with schools, marketing multi-modal transport for a cultural shift away from single-occupancy trends, and partnership/relationship building with regional law enforcement agencies.

- ACRPC serves as the municipal project manager on three sidewalk/shared use path improvement projects within the town of Middlebury connecting Middlebury’s downtown with other portions of town including its industrial area, a retail area known as the MarbleWorks and neighborhoods in Middlebury and Weybridge that provide a popular walking route around the downtown.

**Administration and 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 fund-
For the 2016 fiscal year, ACRPC’s total projected revenue of approximately $709,000 dollars was derived from 78 percent regional project grant funding, 10 percent municipal project grant funding, 6 percent state performance contract funding, and 6 percent town assessments. While percentages may vary slightly from year to year, the year was typical of our 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. They provide 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 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 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 2015, its most recent audit as in past years, there were no significant findings. ACRPC’s audit for FY 2016 will be completed by December 2016.
The Bennington County Regional Commission (BCRC) was created by the seventeen towns and villages it serves and works 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 eleven full-time staff, including one person who directs a community health coalition overseen by the BCRC, and two full-time Americorps VISTAs. 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 and Implementation**

Regional Planning Commissions 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 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; highlights include:

- The BCRC helped develop new comprehensive plans or plan updates for Manchester Village, Old Bennington Village, Glastenbury, Peru, and Stamford. Each new plan is reviewed for conformance with statutory requirements and implementation projects are clearly delineated.
- Assistance was provided to the Town of Shaftsbury as that community began work on a comprehensive set of revisions to their land use regulations. Important aspects of the work have included ensuring consistency with statutory requirements and the Town Plan as well as sup-
porting appropriate development in the designated village center of South Shaftsbury.

♦ The BCRC continued to provide support for village center designation applications for Arlington and East Arlington (approved), and assisted with new/renewal applications for village centers in Peru and North Bennington.

♦ BCRC staff helped plan and organize a public meeting in Dorset, attended by over 100 residents, focusing on historical development trends in the town’s two village centers and physical and regulatory barriers to making the centers more economically vibrant and attractive to new businesses and residents. BCRC staff have followed up by working with the town to outline needed pedestrian improvements, assisting with a planning grant application, and helping to develop land use regulations that support compact mixed use development.

♦ The BCRC managed and actively participated in a planning study that examined a key block of underutilized and vacant properties in the center of downtown Bennington. A plan for redevelopment was produced that included site and building design alternatives, market analyses, and a description of how the development would support the town’s land use goals and policies. A group of local investors representing important local businesses and institutions has decided to purchase all of the property involved in the study and pursue a redevelopment plan based on the alternatives presented in the BCRC planning study. The BCRC is working with the investor group to coordinate the redevelopment project.

♦ BCRC staff responded to requests for assistance with various planning and zoning issues in 14 municipalities and conducted training for municipal officials on a variety of planning and land use topics including: procedures for land use administrators, boards, and commissions; new water quality rules/green infrastructure and low impact development; land conservation and watershed planning; energy efficiency for downtowns and village centers; and economic development planning. Representatives from each municipality attended at least one of the training sessions.

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 Bennington County Regional Plan, most recently updated in 2015, 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 four Act 250 and ten 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 new regional energy plan with policies and targeted actions for conservation and efficiency as well as maps/guidelines related to siting new renewable energy based generation facilities); and solid waste (a new plan that includes specific action items to ensure that projects designed to meet specific waste reduction and recycling targets are met).

Improved regional planning for community and economic development has been a key component of the BCRC’s work over the past five years. Implementation of these plans has been greatly facilitated through a new 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.

**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.

Although the BCRC has concluded work under its most recent EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant, it has continued to identify sites that would benefit from assessments, provide information on Brownfield redevelopment, and monitor redevelopment of sites that have been assessed in the past. Brownfield funding awarded to BCRC and the Town of Bennington during the past year has led to the initiation of a major redevelopment effort in the heart of the downtown. Recent community development achievements accomplished through brownfield redevelopment planning include:

- “Barlow Gravel Pit/Landfill” property – Pownal. This property has been sold and is currently being used by a commercial excavator; the balance of the gravel pit land is the site of a new 500 kW solar energy development.
- “Vermont Tissue” property – Bennington, Walloomsac River. Following completion of extensive site assessments and remediation work, the site has begun generating hydroelectric energy. The balance of the former mill building is now occupied by a new craft distillery.
- North Pownal Dam - Pownal. Brownfield funding was used to assist with environmental assessments and remediation related to contaminated sediments. The hydroelectric generating capacity of the dam is being restored as a result, with operation expected to begin in 2017.
- Brownfield funding was used to complete an area-wide plan for part of downtown Bennington. The first part of the plan involved a complete inventory of vacant, underused, and potentially contaminated properties. The second phase of the plan involved a broad-based community effort to identify preferred redevelopment scenarios, including market and feasibility studies, for one specific block in the center of the downtown. With the block now subject to a purchase agreement, additional brownfield funding will be used for more extensive Phase II environmental assessments, with remediation plans to be based on specific redevelopment plans created during the area-wide planning process.
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.

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 in January of this year, following a series of meetings between the boards of the two organizations, the BCIC decided to close its office and contract with the BCRC for the conduct of 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:

- Completion of the Northshire Economic Development Strategy (NEDS), an asset-based economic development program. With the closing of the Manchester and the Mountains Chamber of Commerce, the BCRC has worked with the Shires Marketing Organization to bring local officials and business leaders from around the region together to begin a discussion of how to most effectively tie the NEDS recommendations together with ongoing efforts to implement elements of the Bennington Economic Development Strategy (completed with management provided by BCRC last year).

- As noted above, the BCRC led an effort to study and produce a plan for redevelopment of a large block located at the intersection of Main Street and South Street in downtown Bennington. As a result of this planning effort, and the collaborative relationships developed during the process, a group of local businesses and institutions formed the Bennington Redevelopment Group and purchased the property. The BCRC is now coordinating work between the investor group, developers, consultants, and prospective business and residential tenants, to begin the development process.

- The BCRC continues to work to forge a strong relationship between business, educational institutions, and economic development officials in the northern and southern parts of the region. The BCRC is leading an effort to develop a countywide economic development program that will complement, and may be combined with, the Windham County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. These efforts are being coordinated with funding provided to support the Southern Vermont Economic Development Zone.

- The BCRC is continuing its efforts to support workforce development through regular consultation with businesses and educational institutions, fostering of a business-based internship program, and conducting regular outreach and educational programs in cooperation with the BCIC’s workforce development committee.

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 Trans-
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. Accomplishments over the past year as they relate to the BCRC’s TPI work program include:

♦ **Cooperation and coordination between VTrans, RPCs, and Municipalities**
  ◊ The BCRC’s Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) met quarterly during the past year. TAC meeting attendance has consistently been at about ten members; the full TAC consists of 15 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.
  ◊ The BCRC also conducted outreach and education through the following means:
    • Direct outreach to each town and village regarding codes and standards, and ERAF funding requirements.
    • Organized and participated in road foreman/commissioner meetings, focusing this year on road erosion inventories and the Better Roads program.
    • Presentation at the Vermont Bike-Ped Summit.
    • Presentations on Bennington connectivity and streetscape improvement projects at a meeting of the full BCRC, with local officials in attendance as well.
    • Presentations to select boards and planning commissions in Dorset, Manchester, Sunderland, Arlington, Shaftsbury (part of a village center presentation), North Bennington, Old Bennington, Bennington, Stamford, and Pownal.
    • Participation in a road safety audit – Route 7A and Houghton Lane in Bennington.
    • Hosting a Regional Safety Forum in Bennington.
    • Active participation in the intercity rail / direct bus link public transit studies.

♦ **Conformance with Act 200 and Facilitating Centralized Decision Making**
  ◊ The BCRC’s Regional Transportation Plan was updated and adopted in 2015, at which time it was formally incorporated into the comprehensive Bennington County Regional Plan.
  ◊ The BCRC has been actively involved in development activities for a wide range of transportation projects, including:
    • Scoping and project management for the Willowbrook-Applegate Path in Bennington.
    • Participation in the Rensselaer – Bennington – Manchester rail shuttle (public transit) planning study and the recently initiated project development study for the same project.
    • Project management for the Main Street sidewalk project in Stamford.
    • Project management for the Ninja Trail scoping and design-build project in Bennington.
    • Project management and design support for the Route 67A – Bennington College highway safety and crossing project.
    • Project management for the Manchester Elementary School and Arlington Recreation Center pedestrian access scoping studies.
The BCRC participated in the review of four major Act 250 projects. Transportation issues included: need for ongoing maintenance to ensure safety at the Hill Farm Road/Route 7A intersection in Sunderland/requirement for traffic control during events at Hill Farm Inn; coordinating redevelopment of the Manchester Shopping Center with improvements planned for Routes 11/30; review of traffic impact study for 24-unit apartment project in Bennington.

Providing Transportation Planning Support for Municipalities

- The BCRC worked closely with the Town of Manchester to develop a complete redesign of Depot Street (Routes 11/30) and is assisting with project development activities.
- The BCRC worked with the Town of Sunderland and a consultant to develop a “Safe Roads” plan for the community, with targeted improvements to promote safety and mobility for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- BCRC staff completed a roadway and streetscape design project for the critical Benmont Avenue corridor in Bennington.
- BCRC staff assisted the Town of Manchester with a pedestrian improvement scoping study for School Street, and incorporated ideas for new mixed use development and streetscape improvements.

Emergency Preparedness and 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 Operations Plans (LEOPs); all municipalities in the region either have updated and approved LEOPs (14) or are in the process of working with BCRC and DEMHS to finalize approval (3).
- The BCRC provides support for development and updates to municipal hazard mitigation plans. Nine of the region’s seventeen municipalities have approved hazard mitigation plans. In addition, Manchester’s plan is approved pending adoption, and the Select Board should adopt that this month. Plans are nearing completion for Manchester Village and
- North Bennington, and plans are actively being developed for Bennington, Glastenbury, and Pownal. The BCRC will be updating the Arlington hazard mitigation plan, which was approved in 2012.
- The BCRC provided assistance with revisions and updates to flood hazard area regulations and has supported development and use of new regulatory flood maps through workshops and
direct technical assistance.

- Ongoing support for the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) is provided by BCRC staff; facilitating emergency response exercises, implementation of an effective mass care/mass surge facility, completion of a hazardous materials emergency planning study, and region-wide emergency planning activities.

- Hoosic River Corridor Plan: Work is progressing on the Hoosic River Corridor Plan in Pownal – a hazard mitigation plan addressing residential developments and municipal infrastructure in that community.

- Lye Brook Study: The BCRC is working with students from the University of Vermont engineering program on a project along Lye Brook in Manchester. Under consideration is removal of a berm, possible reconnection of Lye Brook with adjacent wetlands, and needed improvements to Richville Road.

- Invasive Species Surveys: The BCRC has completed surveys of ash trees in North Bennington and Manchester Village because of their potential vulnerability to the Emerald Ash Borer. The BCRC also supported the Bennington County Sustainable Forest Consortium and the Batten Kill Watershed Cooperative Invasive Species Management Association in their surveys and treatments in the Batten Kill watershed.

**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:

- Assessment of the amount of existing and recent development in each of the region’s centers.

- Energy resource maps showing locations having high potential for renewable energy development as well as areas with significant constraints to development.

- River corridor mapping to support resiliency planning for each town in the region including depiction of former and new flood hazard areas, and maps to support watershed planning and development of river corridor regulations.

- New maps to support municipal plan updates in five municipalities; mapping of proposed adjustments to zoning bylaw revisions were completed for three towns.

- Transportation system and corridor mapping near Routes 7A-67A to highlight safety concerns and potential solutions, and to locate potential multi-use routes and possible resource constraints (e.g., wetlands, river corridors, rare species).

- Parcel and infrastructure maps supporting the Bennington downtown area-wide plan.

- Comprehensive map and plan for a system of trails and supporting facilities in Bennington and surrounding towns and villages.

**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, 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 BCRC has taken a lead role working with the Public Service Department, Vermont Energy Investment Corporation, Energy Action Network, and two other regional planning commis-
sions to develop new regional energy plans that focus specifically on energy conservation, efficiency, and renewable generation targets tied to Vermont’s energy goals and new comprehensive energy plan. A final draft plan was completed and will be used to support development of municipal energy plans and to represent the region’s position on applications for new generation projects before the Public Service Board.

- BCRC staff appeared before state agencies, local and regional planners, legislative committees and others to provide background and examples of energy resource mapping, planning for future energy supply and demand, and integration of land use and transportation planning with energy planning.
- The BCRC helped organize workshops on building energy codes, cold climate heat pumps, and best practices for weatherization and use of alternative heating systems in multifamily housing units.
- The BCRC cooperated with Efficiency Vermont in the implementation of a multifaceted program to promote energy efficiency and conservation in Bennington’s downtown and the surrounding area.
- The BCRC has worked with a hydroelectric developer and town officials in Bennington and Pownal to advance two hydroelectric projects with a combined capacity of approximately 1 MW.
- The BCRC has worked with towns and villages concerned about the large number of new commercial solar energy projects being proposed in the region. Information on specific sites as well as guidelines for siting such facilities have been shared with local officials. The BCRC’s energy and development review committees meets with developers and invites local officials to participate in those meetings and technical reviews.

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 implement river corridor assessments in local planning and regulations which result in better and safer growth management decisions.

- The BCRC has worked with the Agency of Natural Resources and local officials to develop watershed plans and to pursue flood resiliency projects in the Batten Kill, Walloomsac, Hoosic, and Mettawee river basins. The BCRC has organized public meetings on the Basin Plan that covers these watersheds involving river corridor engineers, watershed association managers, land conservation experts, and fisheries biologists.
- Assisted VT ANR with completion and associated outreach on the Basin 1 Tactical Plan and convened a regional stakeholder/public meeting.
- The BCRC organized and held a public meeting on Act 64 and Clean Water Initiative funding.
- The BCRC organized and participated in a Green Infrastructure/Low Impact Development public workshop.
- The BCRC provided Manchester, Manchester Village, Peru, Landgrove, Stamford, and Old Bennington with Flood Resiliency information, text, and graphics for use in the municipal plans.
- The BCRC helped Manchester develop a stormwater section for their town plan and provided that town with a model stormwater ordinance.
- BCRC staff has attended monthly meetings of the Batten Kill Watershed Alliance and assisted with their education and water quality improvement projects.
- The BCRC secured Ecosystem Restoration Grants for stormwater master planning in Sandgate and Sunderland.
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 provide staff support for a thirteen town solid waste alliance. Some of the Bennington County Solid Waste Alliance’s ongoing activities include:

♦ Household hazardous waste collection events in the northern, central, and southern portions of the region, and investigation of options for establishment of a permanent household hazardous waste collection facility.
♦ Education and outreach to schools, municipalities, solid waste service providers, and the general public on requirements of the new state and regional solid waste plans and requirements.
♦ Cooperation with developers and local officials in the establishment of a new recycling center in Pownal and onset of operations at the new regional composting center.
♦ Production and distribution of a regular newsletter on solid waste issues and maintenance of a web 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:

Working to improve regional food systems. Specific activities have included development of a market study and related coordination related to the potential for a downtown food store in Bennington’s “food desert,” and a USDA-funded grant to develop a strong regional food organization that establishes ongoing regional and inter-regional partnerships while addressing food security issues in Bennington.

Obtaining multi-year grant funding of approximately $125,000 per year to support the Alliance for Community Transformation’s work in the area of “Drug Free Communities.” Programs cover activities including youth engagement, coordinated planning among social service organizations, development of community facilities, and support for recovery efforts.

Support for business groups and arts organizations in Bennington in furtherance of a “Cultural Bennington” plan and strategy.

Administration and Funding
Each program manager at the BCRC is responsible for work plan and budget development. The executive director/planning coordinator, financial manager, 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 $1.242 million in FY 2016 and total expenditures of approximately $1.201 million. 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 2016 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 Bennington County Solid Waste Alliance, and the Local Emergency Planning Committee. Several board members attend special training each year (e.g., financial management, land use law) 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.
Founded in 1967, the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC) assists its 23 member municipalities in providing effective local government and working cooperatively to address regional issues. CVRPC is governed by representatives from the 20 municipalities of Washington County and the three Orange County towns of Orange, Washington, and Williamstown. The legislative body of each municipality selects the community’s 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 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:

♦ Strengthened compact centers by assisting with new Village Center designations in Marshfield and Waterbury, developing Town Plan language to position Berlin for New Town Center Designation, and updating Montpelier’s Growth Center map.
♦ Trained municipal boards and staff on HUD’s Manufactured Home Rule, The Essentials of Land Use Planning, Managing Stormwater Runoff with Green Infrastructure, the Vermont Clean Water Act, Vermont’s online Forest Stewardship Atlas, and comprehensive energy planning.
♦ Evaluated 13 Town Plans for forest integrity concepts and worked with municipalities to identify and implement tools that protect unfragmented forests.
♦ Facilitated a public meeting in Marshfield to solicit input on the effectiveness of the Town’s zoning regulations in maintaining rural character. The Town intends to complete a natural resources inventory and update its zoning regulations in 2017.
♦ Completed enhanced consultations in Berlin, Cabot, Marshfield, and Waitsfield.
♦ Completed Community Rating System (CRS) checklists for five municipalities. CRS is part of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Communities that enact qualified floodplain management activities exceeding and enhancing NFIP minimum requirements are rewarded with reduced flood insurance premiums for property owners. CVRPC assisted Waterbury to develop programs and regulations. The Town subsequently applied to enter the program.

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 CVRPC adopted the 2016 Central Vermont Regional Plan in July, incorporating changes to the Land Use, Economic Development, and Utilities and Facilities elements.

Concurrently, CVRPC has been working on a full and comprehensive Regional Plan update known as Plan Central Vermont. This four-year planning process is bringing together residents, elected leaders, the professional community and community-based organizations in a conversation around how to best address issues and ensure the long-term health and vitality of the Central Vermont Region. The Plan builds on past regional planning efforts in Central Vermont and looks towards the future using the vision created through the public engagement process.

As identified in Plan Central Vermont, CVRPC adopted a new approach to addressing housing challenges in the region in FY 2016. CVRPC will work with groups of municipalities experiencing shared housing challenges to foster cooperative approaches for addressing the challenges. Work on finalizing Plan Central Vermont will be completed in late 2017.

Adoption of the 2016 Central Vermont Regional Plan will ensure consistency in implementation and evaluation of regionally significant projects. These include applications that are reviewed under Section 248 and Act 250. Specifically, the 2016 Central Vermont Regional Plan recommends actions that should be taken regarding telecommunication facilities (such as colocation) and orienting development to limit impacts on the natural environment. Plan Central Vermont will include more detailed implementation that can be more effectively evaluated to measure progress.

Plan Implementation: CVRPC uses the Central Vermont Regional Plan to evaluate applications and participate in Act 250 and Section 248 projects, to evaluate public and private funding applications, and to establish its annual work program direction. In 2016, seven applications were reviewed for Regional Plan conformance. The Committee determined four did not have Significant Regional Impact. Two applications conformed to the Regional Plan, and the Committee provided comments on traffic issues and site configuration, which applicants chose to address.

An application for telecommunications infrastructure was withdrawn based on local and regional input. Coverage maps provided in Section 248 applications often lack sufficient data to determine whether collocation is feasible, such as data on existing coverage and how new service would enhance, rather than duplicate, coverage. CVRPC advocates for co-location, which provides for the best use of limited public funds and the least impact to environmental and transportation resources.

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.

- Served on Northfield’s Area Wide Plan Steering Committee. Four downtown properties were targeted for redevelopment based on community vision and market, architectural and environmental assessments.
- Guided a multiagency project for a floodplain buy out and restoration in Woodbury’s village
center, ensuring multiple funding sources are coordinated and used efficiently. CVRPC’s Brownfields Program is providing Brownfield assessment funds for the property, a former general store and gas station built over a stream.

- Awarded Brownfield assessment technical assistance to three properties in Barre City to implement the City’s Master Plan. One site will support a low income housing development through development of a parking lot and a pocket park. Two sites will be used together to expand an existing business and add to rental apartment stock.

**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.

- Initiated work on a Village Master Plan for East Montpelier to better position the town’s core village areas to stimulate economic activity and vibrancy.
- Completed a regional infrastructure needs assessment. Prioritized Plainfield, Barre, Montpelier, Northfield, and East Montpelier for assistance with wastewater and water supply challenges that impede robust development.
- Inventoried and mapped over 1,000 sewer manholes in Barre Town, supporting the Town’s effort to strengthen management and maintenance of its infrastructure.
- Partnered with the State of Vermont, Barre City, and Barre Town on the Vermont Economic Resiliency Initiative. This effort evaluates where flooding risk intersects with communities’ economic activity and infrastructure. The overall goal is to develop implementation strategies that protect business and infrastructure, and help them recover more quickly after disasters.
- Discussed green infrastructure options with Plainfield’s Wastewater Committee. The community is facing a significant and costly wastewater treatment plan upgrade.
- Drafted an Urban Forestry Management Plan for Northfield to support its downtown revitalization efforts.
- Managed a Community Development Block Grant for Washington for accessibility modifications to the Calef Memorial Library.

**Transportation Planning**

Through 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.

**Objective #1 - Cooperation and Coordination between VTrans, Regions and Municipalities**

- **TAC activity** - Hosted eleven TAC meetings with an average municipal participation of 58%.
- **TAC Outcomes** -
  - Enhanced a cross-regional approach to transportation infrastructure development.
Developed deeper knowledge of flood resilient solutions for existing transportation infrastructure and how they might be applied by municipalities.

Fostered inter-municipal learning that supports a regional approach to maintenance and expansion of the transportation system.

- **Other Outreach** –
  - Hosted a road foreman meeting on Act 64 and the Municipal Roads General Permit.
  - Coordinated Road Safety Audit meetings in Barre Town, East Montpelier, Fayston, Middlesex, and Waterbury.
  - Hosted a Transportation Board Public Forum.
  - Coordinated five High Risk Rural Road evaluations.
  - Coordinated School Zone site visits in Barre City and Barre Town.
  - Hosted three public meetings on VTrans road improvement projects.
  - Held one Public Transit Elderly & Disabled meeting.

- **Data collection RPCs do for VTrans** –
  - Inventoried bridge and culvert locations in seven communities and loaded data into the VTCulverts online database tool.
  - Conducted 27 traffic counts in Barre City, Barre Town, East Montpelier, Waitsfield, and Woodbury.
  - Conducted 64 park and ride counts.
  - Conducted road erosion inventories in Duxbury, Middlesex, Moretown, and Waitsfield.
  - Conducted a pedestrian count in Northfield.

**Objective #2 - Conformance with Act 200 and Facilitating Decentralized Decision Making**

- **Status of Regional Transportation plan** – Regional Transportation Plan was adopted 9/8/2008. The plan has been updated and will be incorporated into Plan Central Vermont. Adoption is scheduled for fall 2017.

- **Participation in Project Development Activities** - 0 project scoping efforts, 2 project 502 hearings, 0 accelerated bridge meetings. CVRPC participated in redesign of VTrans’ project development process.

- **Participation in Act 250 review related to transportation issues** - One application involved transportation issues, which the applicant addressed based on CVRPC’s comments.

**Objective #3 - Providing Transportation Planning Support to Municipalities**

- **47% of TPI budget (Task # 4 Short Range Transportation Planning) supports municipal planning.**

- Managed the Vermont On-line Bridge and Culvert Tool for RPCs and towns, and participated in its upgrade.

- Completed a Flood Resilient Transportation Analysis for the Mad River Valley, and expanded the analysis to include eight additional towns.

- Trained Warren on the use of VTCulverts, enabling town staff to update the Town’s online data.

- Customize a Road Activity Program for Calais, Cabot, East Montpelier, Middlesex, and Woodbury. Towns use the program to track staff and material resources used by road.
Emergency Preparedness and 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 assist as needed in special circumstances like Tropical Storm Irene and other declared disasters.

- Drafted updates to 10 Local Hazard Mitigation Plans. Developed a GIS analysis tool to assess community vulnerabilities and completed vulnerability field work in nine communities for incorporation into the plans. Towns are increasingly concerned about dam safety.
- Assisted Plainfield to address safety concerns for Marshfield Dam #6, including coordination with Green Mountain Power, two municipalities, and state agencies.
- Assisted 23 towns to update and adopt Local Emergency Operations Plans, which support response to all hazard incidents.
- Identified possible funding sources to address culvert “choke spots” in Calais.
- Staffed Local Emergency Preparedness Committee (LEPC) #5 to improve regional capacity to respond to all hazard incidents. Organized and compiled Tier II data and provided summaries to 23 towns for use in Local Emergency Operations Plans.
- Facilitated updates to local shelter data with the American Red Cross and municipalities to ensure residents can access shelter services during disaster events.
- Completed flood resiliency checklists for 19 municipalities. The Checklists gauge natural disaster preparedness. Results are used to strengthen Municipal Plans, Hazard Mitigation Plans, and other resiliency initiatives.
- Participated on the conference planning committee for the 2016 Resilient Vermont Conference. This conference brought together resiliency experts to discuss ways to make communities more resilient to future hazards.
- Completed LiDAR mapping for sections of Waterbury and surrounding towns to provide detailed elevation data. Managing a subsequent project to identify vulnerable sites based on the updated data.
- Completed a Choke Study investigating the possibility of floodplain reconnections in Waterbury and Duxbury.
- Managed a Community Development Block Grant for Plainfield to study two critical bridges in the village. The study identified how best to reduce the impact of flood damage at, and to, these structures.

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.

- Updated parcel maps and data for Worcester; the first comprehensive update since 2000.
- Trained staff in Cabot and Worcester on the QGIS mapping software so they could begin maintaining their digital parcel data.
Updated zoning maps for Marshfield, East Montpelier, Duxbury, and Montpelier.
Updated Town Plan maps for Woodbury and Williamstown.
Updated road maps for Barre Town, East Montpelier and Washington.
Updated Montpelier’s Growth Center map.
Maintained and updated Town web maps for East Montpelier and Middlesex.
Represented RPCs on the Enterprise GIS consortium.

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, 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.

Fostered the concept of a 3-town comprehensive energy plan for the Mad River Valley; Anticipate the effort will move forward when energy planning standards are completed.
Assisted East Montpelier to evaluate and respond to a Section 248 solar project application. The project site is one of the few remaining parcels that can support wastewater systems in the village area. A lack of wastewater disposal sites is a significant challenge to village vitality.
Completed a Location Affordability Analysis for Central Vermont as an approach to addressing Central Vermont’s transportation energy use. Traditional measures of housing affordability ignore the cost of transportation, typically a household’s second largest expenditure.
Participated in VTrans’ Commuter Rail Feasibility Study evaluating the potential for future service between St. Albans and Montpelier.
Discussed commuter data with the Montpelier Energy Committee. The committee is interested in passenger rail service between Montpelier and Barre City.
Provided guidance to Fayston and Barre Town regarding draft community energy standards language for Town Plans to strengthening the Towns’ position in the Certificate of Public Good process.

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 implement river corridor assessments in local planning and regulations which result in better and safer growth management decisions.

Collaborated with the Friends of the Mad River for Ridge-to-River, a 5-town project to reduce stormwater runoff reaching the Mad River.
Managed two stormwater treatment construction projects for Northfield. Three sites now capture sediment and phosphorus for 16 acres of land in Northfields village.
Completed the Middle Winooski River Corridor Plan. The study assessed 31 miles of river and streams for impacts from development, agriculture, and natural processes on waterway and riparian habitat stability and identified projects to address opportunities and challenges.
Hosted seven municipal outreach workshops on Act 64, the Lake Champlain TMDL, the Municipal Roads General Permit, Developed Lands Permit, and Stormwater Master Planning. 46 individuals from 20 municipalities participated.
Organized and hosted a joint VTrans/ANR/RPC training on the interim road erosion assessment methodology.

Completed a regional landslide and mass failure analysis using Stream Geomorphic assessments to determine if sites posed risks to transportation infrastructure, residential properties, or commercial development. Facilitated an unmanned aerial vehicle flight over a site on the Jail Branch in Barre City to analyze the site further. The site was incorporated into the City’s Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Fostered the concept of an intermunicipal approach to forest integrity planning with rural communities with municipalities, statewide nonprofits, and the VT Dept. of Forests, Parks & Recreation. The concept was incorporated into the State’s 2017 Forest Stewardship application.

Coordinated with local watershed groups to identify and implement six Lake Champlain phosphorus reduction projects using a partnership approach that maximizes each organization’s knowledge, skills, and resources.

Assisted Plainfield to incorporated provisions for protection of river corridors, special flood hazard, and landslide hazard area into its zoning to protect hazardous areas along streams, limit development in floodplains, and avoid future property loss.

Special Projects

Fostered the concept of an 8-town intermunicipal approach to rural water supply planning that serves to address climate change adaptation, fire protection, and forest integrity partnering with the Vermont Association of Conservation Districts and the VT Rural Fire Protection Program. When fully implemented, the project will analyze development patterns, protection needs, and water supply availability and adequacy, and will design water access sites in participating fire districts. Ultimately, towns and fire districts will install hydrants, potentially improving Insurance Service Office (ISO) ratings for residents and businesses, and supporting climate change resilience and hazard mitigation planning.

Received an Excellence in Regional Transportation Award from the National Association of Development Organization (NADO) Research Foundation for Vermont Road Erosion Risk Analysis project. The Analysis assists municipalities to address state and federal clean water requirements by identifying and prioritizing road erosion sites. Using risk analysis data, the Town of Woodbury reduced the cost of road maintenance and improved water quality by improving four road erosion sites. The Vermont Road Erosion Risk Analysis methodology was developed by CVRPC in partnership with the Friends of the Winooski River, Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District, VT Agency of Natural Resource Department of Environmental Conservation, and Stone Environmental. CVRPC’s regional tool expanded statewide in 2015 when the VT Department of Environmental Conservation used it to create a statewide road erosion risk data set. RPCs and the State are working on a version 2.0 of the analysis to refine it as an inventory tool for the Municipal Roads General Permit.

Administration and Funding

CVRPC carries out its mission by leveraging its town assessments and performance-based state grant with other grants and performance based agreements that support specific project work and program needs common to all municipalities. Virtually all of CVRPC’s revenue sources are tied to agreements with scopes of work, guidelines and/or performance measures. Funding received through town assessments is the exception, which makes this funding stream particularly impor-
tant because it gives us the greatest latitude to respond to local and regional needs. The funds are used as matching funds required by grantors and enable us to work with our municipalities in areas such as transportation, emergency planning, energy, natural resources, and water quality. For FY 2016, CVRPC’s total revenue of approximately $758,000 was derived from 37 percent regional program grants, 18 percent municipal project grants, 36 percent state performance contract funding, and 9 percent town assessments.

CVRPC maintains reserve funds to cover operating shortfalls, for non-federal match required for several agreements, and for long-term and equipment reserves. The Commission maintains a four-year plan for equipment and software upgrades and replacement.

The CVRPC’s annual independent audit is completed by Certified Public Accountants. The FY2016 audit will be posted to CVRPC’s website upon completion.

Eight highly qualified staff support the Commission and its committees, and execute the Commission’s program of work: the Executive Director, Finance and Office Manager, Program Manager, two Senior Planners, two Planners, two Assistant Planners, and a summer transportation field intern. For the third year, the Commission partnered with SerVermont AmeriCorps VISTA to host a volunteer focused on incorporating poverty alleviation into CVRPC’s policies and activities. CVRPC celebrated its Grants and Office Manager, Laurie Emery, who retired in 2016 after 26 years of service.

In 2016, CVRPC updated its procurement procedures, contracting documents, and personnel policies, and developed 5-year strategic goals. Board development included refreshers about Open Meeting Law, Roberts Rules of Order, and a training on shared municipal services and Act 89, Inter-municipal Service Agreements.

CVRPC provides administrative, fiscal, and technical assistance to three inter-municipal districts: Wrightsville Beach Recreation District, Mad River Valley Planning District, and the Mad River Resource Alliance. CVRPC also provides administrative support and office space for the Cross Vermont Trail. Supporting these groups promotes municipal cooperation, allows the organization to focus on delivering services, and increases financial efficiency in the region.
The Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) is a cooperative regional forum 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 to all citizens of the region to ensure the implementation of the best regional and transportation plan for Chittenden County. The CCRPC also 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, Chittenden County Transportation Authority (CCTA), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the 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 Commission selects the at-large representatives.

The CCRPC celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2016 and appreciates the opportunity to work with its municipal members to plan appropriately for the region’s future to protect the special quality of life that is shared throughout Chittenden County. In FY16, the CCRPC invested more than $4.7 million in regional land use, transportation, emergency management, energy, natural resources, public engagement, training, and technical assistance. The program leverages nearly $4.3 million in Federal and State investment with $245,000 in municipal dues and another $200,000 in local match for specific projects—a **9:1 return on investment**.

CCRPC held our 50th anniversary annual meeting in June in which over 80 representatives of municipal, regional, and state government gathered to celebrate— including guest speaker Governor Peter Shumlin. CCRPC staff also developed a timeline that highlights some significant milestones, events, and other happenings throughout Chittenden County and beyond over the last 50 years. ([http://www.ccrpcvt.org/about-us/news/ccrpc-timeline/](http://www.ccrpcvt.org/about-us/news/ccrpc-timeline/))

**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 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:

- **Bolton Town Plan**: Assisted Bolton in their Town Plan rewrite as a pilot for the new State Planning Manual (adoption anticipated in 2017). Approximately 175 people participated in 10 engagement sessions including a kick-off event, neighborhood forums (including one in a horse barn), focus groups, Smilie school mini-planning, and an art contest. Other Town Plan update assistance: provided an initial review of Williston’s and St. George’s existing plan; created Town Plan maps for Bolton, Jericho, Richmond and Williston; provided a data profile and flood resiliency language to St. George; and assisted Richmond in their Town Plan update, particularly with flood resilience workshop, transportation element and a “bringing it all together” land use workshop (adoption anticipated in 2017).
- **Town Plan Approvals**: Approved the Comprehensive Plans and confirmed the planning process for South Burlington, Essex, Jericho and Shelburne (an amendment).
- **Form Based Codes**: Continued assistance in development and adoption of Form Based Code zoning in Shelburne, Westford and Winooski. These Codes will make housing and economic development more streamlined in the areas planned for growth.
- **CIP**: Provided Capital Improvement Plan development assistance to Jericho and Bolton.
- **Development Review Services**: Provided in house development review services for South Burlington, Shelburne and Underhill. CCRPC staff developed a Site Plan Application for Jericho DRB review of the relocation of Jericho Park & Ride. Moreover, staff worked with the Town and the State to secure appropriate permits once the application was approved by the Jericho DRB. CCRPC researched and answered statutory questions on various sections of the Unified Land Use and Development Regulations at the request of the Underhill Planning Commission.
- **Training**: The CCRPC held the Planning Commissioners Summit, and two Green Infrastructure Trainings – 67 people (50 filled out surveys) from 18 of our 19 municipalities participated. CCRPC also hosted a Regional Highway Safety Forum with VTrans, and continued hosting meetings and online webinars open to municipalities and regional partners covering topics such as: Equity Issues in Transportation Planning; Achieving Multimodal Networks: Applying Design Flexibility and Reducing Conflicts; Complete Streets policies; VOB/CIT/VCulverts (http://www.vtculverts.org/); and the entire 12-webinar series from the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycling Professionals

**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.

- **Plan Updates**: The *Chittenden County ECOS Plan* combines the regional plan, comprehensive economic development strategy, and metropolitan transportation plan. The *ECOS Plan* was amended in May 2016 to more adequately address child care, compatibility and consistency with surrounding regions, facilities, earth resource extraction, flood resiliency, and the Lake Champlain phosphorus TMDL. In addition, we’ve continued to monitor our progress through
an annual indicator report. The **2015 Annual Report** is a summary that highlights a number of regional accomplishments, trends, and high priority actions. The ECOS Scorecard hosts the ECOS Partners’ shared measurement system that monitors how Chittenden County is doing with regard to achieving our shared ECOS goals. ([https://app.resultsscorecard.com/Scorecard/Embed/8502](https://app.resultsscorecard.com/Scorecard/Embed/8502))

**Plan Implementation:** CCRPC implements the Plan through collective impact relationships and projects with the GBIC, Department of Health, United Way, Fletcher Allen, 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 Form Based Code projects mentioned above, permit reviews, and planned transportation investments in those places resulting in 80% of residential growth in these areas. CCRPC used the ECOS Plan to evaluate applications and participate in Act 250 and Section 248 hearings.

**Legislative Forum** – CCRPC hosted the 2nd annual Legislative Breakfast in December to discuss priority issues: smart growth, water quality, and municipal shared services.

**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 applied for and was awarded a $400,000 EPA Brownfield grant. The Brownfields Advisory Committee was re-established and a system will be developed to award funds in FY17.

**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.

- **Lake Champlain Byway** – As part of the Byway ([www.lakechamplainbyway.com](http://www.lakechamplainbyway.com)) CCRPC staff continued to promote improvements to traveler information and to interpretation of the area’s historic, recreational and scenic resources. Specifically, the Lake Champlain Byway Story map was developed - [http://map.ccrpct.org/lcbyway/](http://map.ccrpct.org/lcbyway/); and finalized and installed the informational panels at the Railroad Avenue kiosk to support the implementation of the Lake Champlain Byway program and facilities.

- Continued our strong partnership with GBIC/LCRCC working together to advance plans, policies, and projects that improve our economy.

- **Supporting the STEM Industry Cluster and Young Professionals** – CCRPC examined these issues and produced a white paper in June 2016. This white paper explains the important role that the STEM cluster and young professionals play in the County’s economy; examines the current conditions of the STEM cluster and young professionals in Chittenden County; explores the building blocks necessary for growing the STEM cluster economy; and offers suggestions for future work that can be undertaken by the CCRPC to help support the STEM economy. ([http://www.ccrpct.org/our-work/economic-development/](http://www.ccrpct.org/our-work/economic-development/))
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 also 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 are 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 - Cooperation and Coordination between VTrans, Regions and Municipalities
❖ **TAC Activity** - The TAC met 10 times in FY16. Attendance varied from 14 to 19 members, more than 50% of total membership.
❖ **TAC Outcomes** – The TAC approved consultant selection for the following projects:
  ◇ Regional Active Transportation (Bike/Ped) Plan
  ◇ Advanced Traffic Monitoring System (ATMS) using Bluetooth Technology
  ◇ Update of the Regional Transportation Model

The TAC approved, discussed, heard presentations on and/or made recommendations on the following projects/tasks:
  ◇ The FY16 Transportation Improvement Program
  ◇ Regional Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Plan
  ◇ CCRPC Web tools for traffic data
  ◇ VTrans Plans & Policies: Rail, Park & Ride, Street Tree Policy, White Paper on Class 1 THs
  ◇ VTrans High Risk Rural Roads & Systemic Local Road Safety Program
  ◇ Burlington International Airport development plans
  ◇ Health Impact Assessments on three projects from the VT Dept. of Health
  ◇ ANR’s Municipal Road Permit Program & Road Erosion Inventories
  ◇ Vermont Energy Plan
  ◇ Town Highway Bridge and Project prioritization
  ◇ Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act or "FAST Act"
  ◇ VT, NH and ME Tri State Advanced Traffic Management System
  ◇ The FY17 Unified Planning Work Program
❖ **Other Outreach Assistance provided by CCRPC:**
  ◇ Road manager meetings – no meetings but regularly shared events and funding opportunities
Codes & Standards – no meetings but solicited updated forms via email
Transportation Board Forum: Fall 2015, Essex High School
Staff participated and encouraged municipalities to participate in numerous TMDL meetings and attended the August 27, 2015 public meeting on the final draft TMDL.
Drafted the transportation element for the Richmond Municipal Plan update and assisted with the Williston Transportation Plan update and Williston Village Master Plan
Provided Annual Traffic Alert! Communications outreach program.
Staff continued to participate in public transit planning activities including:
  ◦ The Elders & Disabled program advisory committee
  ◦ CCTA’s ADA Advisory Committee
  ◦ United Way’s Neighbor Rides volunteer driver program Advisory Committee

CRPC Data Collection in FY 16:
  ◦ 107 Traffic (ATRs) and Turning Movement (TM) counts for the following municipalities: Bolton, Burlington, Colchester, Essex, Essex Junction, Hinesburg, Huntington, Jericho, Milton, Shelburne, South Burlington, Underhill, Williston and Winooski.
  ◦ 14 Municipal Infrastructure Inventories (culverts, sidewalks, signs, parking and pavement) for the following municipalities: Burlington, Bolton, Huntington, Milton, Richmond, St. George, Westford, Williston and Winooski.
  ◦ Park-and-ride counts were completed in Charlotte, Colchester, Essex, Hinesburg, Huntington, Richmond and Westford.

Objective #2 - Conformance with Act 200 and Facilitating Decentralized Decision Making
Status of Regional Transportation plan – The current Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) is incorporated into the Chittenden County ECOS Plan adopted in 2013. CCRPC staff began internal discussions on updating the Metropolitan Transportation Plan as well as other elements of the ECOS plan. The updated MTP needs to be adopted in 2018.
Participation in Project Development Activities – Below is the list of 13 Scoping and Municipal Construction Projects that the CCRPC managed in FY16:
  ◦ Railyard Enterprise Scoping/PEL Project (Burlington)
  ◦ Williston Blair Park Pedestrian Facility Scoping
  ◦ Allen Martin Drive/VT Route 15 Scoping (Essex)
  ◦ Essex Junction Train Station Scoping
  ◦ Richmond Road Bike/Pedestrian Facility Scoping (Hinesburg)
  ◦ Huntington Lower Village Bike/Ped Scoping
  ◦ Jericho Four Corners/Lee River Road Bike/Ped Scoping
  ◦ Shelburne Southern Gateway (US 7) Scoping
  ◦ South Burlington Sidewalk/Path Close-the-Gaps Scoping
  ◦ Williston Road Network Transportation Scoping (South Burlington)
  ◦ Winooski River Bridge Railing Study
  ◦ Milton Railroad St. Rail Crossing Bike/Ped Improvements
  ◦ Charlotte Park and Ride Lot Scoping
  ◦ LPM services for Underhill sidewalk construction on VT 15
  ◦ LPM services for Shelburne sidewalk construction on US 7
LPM services for South Burlington sidewalk construction on VT 116

- Participation in Act 250 review related to transportation issues – CCRPC staff reviews all applications in Chittenden County but responds only to major applications and a small number of minor ones with potentially significant impacts. In FY 16, staff reviewed 9 major Act 250 applications and provided written comment to the District 4 Environmental Commission.

Objective #3 - Providing Transportation Planning Support to Municipalities and the Region

- % of TPI budget (Task # 4 Short Range Transportation Planning) that supports municipal planning? The TPI budget question is not applicable since the CCRPC receives Federal Metropolitan Planning Funds.

During FY 16, the CCRPC initiated and completed major regional plans and initiatives and assisted municipalities with various planning projects. Please see below for more information on these activities:

- Conducted 5 Multimodal Corridor and Area-wide Studies for the following municipalities: Burlington (Winooski Avenue Corridor and Area Wide Circulation Study); Milton (US 7 Corridor Study); South Burlington (Land Use and Transportation Plan for VT116/Kimball Ave/Tilley Dr. and the Chamberlin Neighborhood Land Use & Transportation Plan); and Winooski’s Transportation Master Plan.

- CCRPC submitted and was awarded 8 Better Roads Category A grants for Bolton, Essex, Huntington, Jericho, Richmond, St George, Underhill, and Williston. Staff began road erosion inventories in those communities.

- Staff evaluated safety concerns in Hinesburg and Richmond as part of the Systemic Local Road Safety Program; reviewed safety improvements in Milton along West Milton Road and Bear Trap Road as part of the High Risk Rural Roads Program; completed the Shelburne Bay Road Pedestrian Safety Study and are assisting the town with a pilot project at this location; conducted a Ferry Road Safety Analysis for Charlotte; assisted Westford with school safety planning and Williston with safety studies.

- Assisted with the planBTV Walk Bike, Burlington’s walk/bike master plan.

- Funded and assisted Burlington with Residential and Downtown Parking Assessments and Innovations.

- The CCRPC was involved in the following Transportation Demand Management (TDM) initiatives and studies:
  - Go! Chittenden County, a one-stop-shop for information and advice about our region’s transportation resources. www.GoChittendenCounty.org
  - Travel Smarter, an online trip planner providing directions and displaying the impacts -- time, cost, calories -- of walking, biking, busing, or driving. www.TravelSmarterVT.org
  - 12th annual Way to Go! Challenge to encourage non-single occupant vehicle travel and demonstrate the environmental and financial benefits. www.WayToGoVT.org
  - Burlington TDM Transit Pass and Parking Cash Out Study

- Provided technical assistance on a variety of transportation issues to the following municipalities: Bolton (Speed Study), Burlington (North Avenue Pilot Project/road diet data gathering and analyses & public opinion survey), Colchester (crosswalk inventory), St George (VT 116 / Winterbottom Rd sight distance study), Underhill (River Road Speed Study), assisted with the Winooski School Transportation Action Team initiative.
Completed the Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Plan for Chittenden County.

Completed the evaluation of the SURTRAC Adaptive Control System to reduce traffic congestion in the Main Street/US 2/Dorset Street corridors in Burlington and South Burlington.

Initiated the Advance Traffic Monitoring System using Bluetooth Technology project, in close cooperation with VTrans and FHWA, for 5 high traffic corridors/areas in Chittenden County.

Capital Improvement Program assistance for Bolton and Jericho.

Since Spring 2013, the CCRPC has been investing in Neighbor Rides 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 mode of transport.

Emergency Preparedness and 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. RPCs also help update floodplain bylaws and FEMA-required hazard mitigation plans, coordinate updates to municipal emergency operations plans and assist as needed in special circumstances like Tropical Storm Irene and other declared disasters.

- **Hazard Mitigation Plan:** 19 (100%) municipalities in the CCRPC region currently have an adopted hazard mitigation plan as part of Chittenden County’s Multi-Jurisdictional All Hazards Mitigation Plan approved by FEMA in August 2011. In FY16, CCRPC staff, in consultation with municipal staff, have been working to develop the 2016-2021 Chittenden County Multi-Jurisdictional All-Hazards Mitigation Plan along with individual Hazard Mitigation Plans for each municipality. We anticipate adoption by the end of 2016.

- **Local Emergency Operations Plans:** 15 (79%) municipalities in the CCRPC region currently have an updated Local Emergency Operations Plan. Three other municipalities have had LEOPs in the past, but have not yet updated them (Milton, Shelburne, Winooski).

- **ERAF:** Staff continued assisting with information and details regarding new rules for Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund (ERAF) and flood resiliency planning requirements.

- Working on a pilot program with VTrans and VANR to advance information management and accessibility, including risk assessment integration, for high hazard riparian and transportation corridors.

- **Local Emergency Planning Committee:** CCRPC, with Local Emergency Planning Committee 1 (LEPC 1 [http://www.ccrcpcvt.org/em/lepc/]), served as a key conduit between municipalities and the State in collecting and sharing damage assessment information after disasters, helped with emergency preparedness for hazardous materials incidents, hosted workshops on a wide array of emergency preparedness topics, and facilitated Incident Command System training.

- **Hazard Mitigation Grant:** Provided support with the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program for the Huntington Acres home elevation project. Collaborated with FEMA to develop post-storm damage assessments and assisted with hazard mitigation grant applications for several Richmond properties. Worked with FEMA’s Benefit Cost Analysis software to evaluate a culvert project within the Bartlett Brook neighborhood in South Burlington.
Hazardous Materials: Worked to help make “Tier II” hazardous materials information more easily accessible and usable by first responders, by identifying challenges with existing software reporting systems and opportunities for improvements.

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.

- **Town Plan Maps**: Created for Jericho, Richmond, Williston; and a data update for Williston.
- **GIS Data**: Developed or updated numerous GIS datasets (zoning, speed limits, culverts, signs, sidewalks, pavement, scenic resources, state designations, groundwater source protection areas, trails, utilities, etc.) for Charlotte, Colchester, Essex, Essex Junction, Hinesburg, Milton, Shelburne, Underhill, Westford, Williston and Winooski.
- **Colchester Map Service**: Continue 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.
- **Shelburne Sewer**: Worked in partnership with the Town Manager, Planner and Wastewater Director to develop two online maps to provide information about sewer and water accounts, and show sewer and water easement information.
- **Colchester Bayside Build-out Analysis**: Finalized this analysis project that identified various transportation and land use alternatives for the West Lakeshore Drive Corridor to accommodate potential additional development.
- **VOBCIT**: CCRPC continues to work with partners to improve, enhance and support the VOBCIT website (https://vtculverts.org).

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, 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.

- **Burlington**: Provided technical assistance to Burlington’s Sustainability Coordinator for complying with the World Wildlife’s Fund’s Earth Hour City Challenge eligibility requirements. This involved updating and reporting the City’s greenhouse gas emissions and joining the Compact of Mayors (http://www.compactofmayors.org/)
- **Essex**: Provided Essex with information on electric vehicle station equipment model bylaw language and assisted with electric vehicle charging inquiries.
- **Municipal Energy Plans**: Reviewed and made recommendations on 3 (Jericho, Underhill, and Williston) municipal energy plan elements to ensure content meets state statute.
- **Electric Vehicles**: Collaborated with Vermont Energy Investment Corporation (VEIC) to develop case studies on municipalities’ inclusion of electric vehicles in their fleets and businesses that provide workplace charging.
Regional Energy Forum: Co-Hosted a Regional Energy Forum with the Vermont Energy and Climate Action Network for Energy Committees to provide an overview of the Regional Energy Plan project, legislative updates on energy planning, siting, the Community Energy Dashboard, and South Burlington Energy Code Adoption.

Indicators: Updated the ECOS indicators that measure natural gas and electricity consumption in the County and also track renewable energy generation sites/capacity.

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 implement river corridor assessments in local planning and regulations which result in better and safer growth management decisions.

Water Quality Outreach: CCRPC is managing, and all RPCs are sub-contractors to, 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 has begun work with municipal staff and boards to provide information about the requirements for municipalities triggered by the VCWA and also worked 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.

Clean Water Advisory Committee: The CCRPC formed the Clean Water Advisory Committee (CWAC) to oversee CCRPC activities and policy development regarding, but not limited to, the Vermont Lake Champlain TMDL Plan and its related plans and programs.

Stormwater – Provided ongoing staff support to the Chittenden County Stream Team (http://www.ccstreamteam.org/) and Chittenden County Regional Stormwater Education Program (http://www.smartwaterways.org) to facilitate multi-municipal cooperation to comply with EPA stormwater permit requirements for public participation and involvement.

Jericho Stormwater Master Plan: Worked with Town of Jericho to obtain a DEC Clean Water Initiative Grant to develop a Jericho Stormwater Master Plan.

NFIP: Assisted St. George with efforts to join the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

Road Erosion Inventories: Worked with DEC and fellow RPCs to develop and refine a GIS-based methodology to conduct municipal road erosion inventories to comply with pending Municipal Roads General Permit. A road erosion inventory was completed for Underhill in June 2016. Many more towns will have inventories completed in 2017.

South Burlington: Managed contractor who scoped and recommended improvements to stormwater infrastructure to address stormwater flooding concerns in select neighborhoods in South Burlington.

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: CCRPC has provided back-bone support (including hiring two staff and fiscal management) for the new Chittenden County Opioid Alliance (CCOA) - a collaborative partnership with the State, City of Burlington, non-profit social service agencies,
UVM Medical Center, business leaders and community members to reduce the opioid crisis and the burden it brings to our community.

- **Building Homes Together** – The CCRPC, Champlain Housing Trust and Housing Vermont are leading a coordinated campaign to strengthen Chittenden County communities by building 3,500 homes by 2021 for people of all incomes, including 700 affordable homes. This campaign began in spring 2016. ([http://www.ecosproject.com/building-homes-together](http://www.ecosproject.com/building-homes-together))

- **Prevention Network**: Continue to serve as the lead agency for the Department of Health’s Partnership for Success to reduce alcohol and substance abuse among youth.

- **Urban Forest Management Planning** – Collaborated with the Tree Advisory Committee to create the Shelburne Street Tree Management Plan.

**Administration and Funding**

The CCRPC receives most of its funding through performance-based grants and contract with the state. Town assessments constitute a small but very important percentage of our funding. For the 2016 fiscal year, the CCRPC’s total revenue of approximately $4.5 million dollars was derived from 83 percent federally funded grants, 10 percent state funding, and 7 percent municipalities with $2.3 million or 51% passing through to consultants.

All of the CCRPC’s revenue sources are tied to 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. For FY 2016, as in past years, there were no findings.
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, including 10 towns and five incorporated villages. The county’s economy is primarily tourism-based - including two major ski resorts - with a growing number of homegrown, 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 provides support to the Board and its committees and execute the Commission’s multifaceted work program.

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 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:

♦ After a multi-year process with the full assistance of the LCPC staff, the Town of Hyde Park and Village of Hyde Park both adopted Unified Development Bylaws. The Village’s bylaws replace large setbacks with more flexible standards that better reflect the Village’s traditional development pattern. The Land Use and Development Regulations (LUDRs) also contain some elements of Form Based Code, such as roof design and building façade standards, aimed at fostering pedestrian scale, mixed use development.
♦ The Town of Wolcott is considering adopting bylaws that will enhance existing provisions for “conservation subdivisions” in rural areas and facilitate infill/redevelopment in the Village, in light of the closure of Buck’s furniture.
♦ With assistance from LCPC, Cambridge and Jeffersonville continue to implement major aspects
of the “Jeffersonville Flood Mitigation Master Plan.” The mitigation measures are funded through a mix of 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 assisted the Town and Village of Johnson with developing a Unified Municipal Development Plan. This is the first time the Town and Village decided to create a unified plan rather than two separate plans.

♦ With LCPC’s assistance, the Town of Eden began the process of revising their Town Plan and evaluated whether or not to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program.

♦ 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 the Better Back Roads Florence Road project.

♦ A new Brownfields Revitalization grant will complete environmental site assessments and clean-up planning so properties can be sold or re-developed to benefit the economy, create/protect jobs, enhance quality of life, and increase housing opportunities.

♦ 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 Assistance and assisted in the development of the Lamoille River Tactical Basin Plan.

♦ LCPC provided assistance identifying appropriate funding sources, defining project scope, and writing applications for numerous municipalities which among other grants resulted in municipal planning grants for Eden, Johnson and Wolcott.

♦ The Commission provided application development and mapping assistance to assist Johnson and Waterville with Village designation. Staff also provide mapping and application assistance to the Town of Morristown for an application to the Downtown Transportation Fund.

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 Lamoille County Planning Commission completely revised 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. The Planning Commission reviewed and commented on seven major Act 250 applications and four Section 248 applications with hearings.

The revised Lamoille County Regional Plan was adopted in November 2015. The Commission began the process of redefining Substantial Regional Impact (SRI) criteria in the spring. The SRI criteria included in the Lamoille Regional Plan had not been updated since 1991 and we believe that this update will be crucial to further improving LCPC’s Act 250 review process.

Adoption of the new Regional plan furthered the implementation of responsible infill and LCPC is considered a leader in assisting with the implementation of the new criteria 9L in the Act 250 process.
Data included in the revised Regional Plan assisted the Lamoille County Solid Waste District in receiving a Northern Borders Commission grant for a new composting facility. Such a facility was identified as a high priority in the regional plan.

**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 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). A major focus of this year’s round of assessments is revitalizing properties along the recently opened Lamoille Valley Rail Trail. In FY16 we communicated with four potential beneficiaries with the goal of presenting their funding requests to the LCPC’s Brownfields Committee in FY17. The beneficiaries included the Village of Jeffersonville, the Town of Hyde Park, the Village of Johnson and a property owner of a former foundry in Morrisville. The Village of Jeffersonville strives to transform the former Bell Gates lumber yard into a gateway park to the Village and regrade uncontaminated portions of the property for flood storage and conveyance. The Town of Hyde Park would like to develop a vacant parcel adjacent to the former railroad as a trailhead facility serving Lamoille Valley Rail Trail users. Johnson Village applied for planning assistance to prepare an economic revitalization plan for village areas adjacent to the Rail Trail. A vision for the former foundry is to transform it into a makerspace for new entrepreneurs and a sculpture park.

**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.

Over seventeen miles of the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail spanning Lamoille County are now open for year round recreational use. LCPC, through a grant awarded by the Northern Border Regional Commission, worked with six municipalities to construct trailside amenities, develop a wayfinding system and produce trail maps. Thanks to this work, Jeffersonville, Cambridge and Wolcott now have beautiful trailhead kiosks. Hyde Park is in the process of installing attractive wayfinding signs throughout Hyde Park Village to enhance connectivity between the Village and the trail. The LCPC entered into a contract to design and provide information brochures and outdoor maps for municipalities along the open section of the trail.

The Wolcott, Hyde Park, and Hyde Park Village bylaw amendments noted earlier contain simplified review process, including administrative review. All three bylaws also contain provisions for “agricultural enterprises” and forest products processing that will ensure these activities can occur in rural areas of the working landscape.

LCPC reached an agreement with the Lamoille Economic Development Corporation such that the Executive Directors of each organization now serve ex officio on the others’ boards. This new
level of coordination allows for improved communication, development and community outreach.

In 2016, the Executive Director of LCPC 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 the first full 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.

**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.

In this reporting period, the Lamoille County Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) met 10 times, with a member participation rate of 36%. Three outcomes of this year’s TAC activities include:

1. Revised TAC Rules of Procedure for purpose of encouraging municipal participation.
2. Morrisville-Stowe Airport (KMVL) presentation by Airport Management Staff which resulted in municipalities’ renewed enthusiasm and improved understanding of master planning process.
3. Fostered communication and coordination between municipalities and ANR regarding Clean Water Fund, Municipal Road Permits, and other water quality issues.

The Lamoille County Road Foremen Network was successfully revitalized in 2015 after several years of inactivity. The Road Foremen and Commissioners quickly recognized the importance of spending time with their peers in neighboring municipalities, and excitedly requested regular, quarterly meetings. The group has met three times during this reporting period. 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 three road foremen network meetings, two meetings about road and bridge codes and standards and six outreach meetings about water quality issues.

Transportation staff helped complete a multi-year cross-county interpretive panel project as part of the Green Mountain Byway (route 100 from Waterbury to Stowe). The panels provide cultural and historical information for tourists and other users of the byway.
Working with the Smugglers’ Notch Partnership, LCPC designed and erected interpretive panels along Route 108 from Stowe to Cambridge.

In 2016 the Commission concluded a multi-year scoping study of the potential for bicycle and pedestrian connectivity between Morrisville and Stowe.

The LCPC conducted a road erosion inventory in Stowe and began another in Hyde Park. Road erosion inventories are an important tool for towns to use in prioritizing water quality projects.

The Commission collaborated on a road safety audit, participated in two elderly & disabled public transit meetings, facilitated and sponsored a roads & rivers training with ANR staff and conducted two road surface and sign inventories.

Data collected by the LCPC for VTrans included: 2 bridge/culvert inventories, 23 traffic counts, 13 bike/ped counts, and 6 park-n-ride counts. The staff conducted four project scoping efforts, and participated in an accelerated bridge program public meetings.

The LCPC Regional Transportation Plan is incorporated into the Regional Plan, adopted November 24, 2015. The LCPC staff participated in the review of 7 Act 250 applications which involved transportation issues.

The TPI Short Range Planning Task budget, which supports municipal planning, is approximately 20% of LCPC’s total TPI budget. Example projects that fall under Short Range Planning are:

- Water Quality: provided coordination with ANR and facilitated group and individual discussions with municipal staff and boards in all 10 towns.
- Road Erosion Inventories: LCPC GIS Planner continued coordination and software development input to other RPC staff and ANR; combined other funds with TPI budget to optimize resources and outcomes; conducted one inventory and began another.
- Feasibility Study: in coordination with staff and volunteers from Jeffersonville and Cambridge, LCPC staff managed a master plan and scoping study for the Jeffersonville area and presented the final report to both municipalities.
- Traffic Counts: extensive collaboration, beyond our usual annual counting program, with VTrans traffic counting staff to collect data for analysis of traffic pattern changes before and after the Morristown Truck Route Project.

**Emergency Preparedness and 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.
The LCPC developed a hydraulic model of the Lamoille River Main Stem to identify potential actions to reduce flood impacts in Lamoille County towns. This model was then refined with surveyed data for specific areas in Jeffersonville, Cambridge and Johnson to develop a range of potential measures to reduce flooding. Examples of measures include infrastructure retrofits, flood plain restoration, or elevation of structures. The findings of this investigation will be incorporated into town plans and hazard mitigation plans. The flood modeling was made possible thanks to a grant from High Meadows and the consulting work of Milone & MacBroom engineers.

♦ Ten of 10 (100%) of municipalities in the region currently have a hazard mitigation plan either adopted or under review.
♦ Ten of 10 (100%) of municipalities in the region currently have an updated local emergency plan.
♦ The LCPC continued to provide administrative and technical assistance to LEPC#11 (Local Emergency Planning Committee) to host trainings and emergency preparedness discussions.
  ◊ Emergency preparedness trainings/presentations held in FY 2016 include:
    • VT Health Department’s role in emergency response.
    • Tactics for responding to public information requests from the media/community members during an emergency.
    • Avian Flu Training on the impacts of Avian Flu and preparedness steps.
    • CFATS (Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards) Program and steps companies can take to improve security at their facilities.
    • Presentation on the results of the Smugglers’ Notch Hazardous Materials Survey, focused on assessing response capabilities in the Notch.
    • FirstNet, the National Public Safety Broadband Network.
    • Demonstration on capabilities of the Lamoille County Mass Casualty Incident Trailer.
♦ Assisted LEPC#11 in conducting a Mapping Project focused on assisting towns in updating and developing emergency maps to aid navigation throughout Lamoille County during emergency events.
♦ Assisted in developing and analyzing a Lamoille County survey to gauge interest in rebuilding the Lamoille Community Emergency Response Team (CERT).
♦ Assisted in updating 4 Local Annex’s to the Lamoille County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (Eden, Elmore, Waterville, Stowe).

**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.

♦ Conducted Town Road Infrastructure and Flood Damage Susceptibility GIS analysis and field visits to examine areas in Belvidere and Stowe that may be vulnerable to flood damage. This effort can help the towns improve their flood resiliency.
♦ Continued mapping support for the Friends of Bobolink volunteer monitors that enabled them to pinpoint and document the location of these grassland birds, which have declined in number by 75 percent since 1966.
♦ Used GIS technology to develop road erosion inventory procedure for Hyde Park and future
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As local watershed inventories. The procedure is part of the interim guidance for ANR’s Municipal Roads General Permit and will help Hyde Park be better prepared for future permit applications.

- Developed maps for the following:
  - 2016 Unified Johnson Town Plan.
  - Morristown zoning updates.
  - Morristown Designated Downtown Maps.
  - Wolcott zoning updates.
  - Eden Town Plan.
  - Act 250 Permits.
  - Stowe Culvert Inventory.
  - Village Center Designation Applications for Morristown, Johnson, Waterville, and Hyde Park.
  - e-911 address points for emergency responders in Wolcott and Elmore.
  - Johnson and Belvidere Hazard Mitigation Plans and flood hazard maps for the Town of Eden.
  - Town of Cambridge Hazard Mitigation project to depict flood improvement and floodplain restoration project locations.
  - River Corridor Planning process in Elmore.
  - Hyde Park unified bylaws.
  - Emergency maps for Johnson State College.
  - Updated flood hazard bylaws for Wolcott.

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, 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 2016, LCPC was identified as one of the regional planning commissions that would be part of the second round of pilot projects on energy planning, review and analysis. The Lamoille County Planning Commission worked with municipalities to incorporate incentives for energy efficiency and green development into their land use by laws.

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 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, conducted outreach on the Lamoille Tactical Basin Plan and assisted ANR with the development of the plan. Also conducted outreach on updates to water quality standards, river corridor planning, stormwater master planning, and flood resiliency.
- Provided grant writing technical assistance for a Stream Geomorphic Assessment and River Corridor Plan for the Seymour River Watershed in Cambridge. The plan will help to identify
restoration and protection projects to be included in later versions of the Lamoille Tactical Basin Plan and be eligible for upcoming grant opportunities.

- Assisted the Cambridge Conservation Commission and Cambridge Elementary School in hiring a storm water specialist to design two mitigation projects to control runoff from impervious surfaces on school grounds, which will improve water quality in the Brewster River.
- As part of the High Meadows Fund, hired and managed consultant to develop flood model to help Lamoille watershed communities understand their risks and prioritize roads and other infrastructure for restoration, conservation, or adaptation. Also conducted flood resiliency workshops with High Meadows funds to educate businesses, residents, and contractors about ways to reduce risks and flood damage to their properties.
- Provided grant writing technical assistance to Hyde Park for a Better Roads grant to improve water quality through reduced sedimentation from road erosion and began road erosion assessment. This assessment will result in toolkit for Hyde Park to repair damaged area themselves or to apply for future grants to comply with the upcoming Municipal Roads General Permit.
- Assisted Town of Elmore with adopting river corridor protection ordinance.
- Worked with Town of Wolcott on updating flood hazard regulations for stronger protections.

**Special Projects**

Last year, 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.

With the model complete, the next step is to test potential alternatives. The model can be adapted to local conditions and the specific needs of a community by testing a range of mitigation alternatives such as retrofits of bridges and culverts, elevations of structures, and conservation. The first set of locations will include the Wrong Way Bridge/Pumpkin Harbor Road in Cambridge and the Wastewater Treatment Plant/Sterling Market in Johnson -- both areas where the local communities have expressed concerns related to flooding. While there are only enough resources in the current grant to test these two locations, the model will be available to Lamoille County communities to evaluate alternates throughout the watershed. In the future the model will be another tool for communities working to become more flood resilient.

The project also included three flood resiliency workshops. LCPC worked with Stevens and Associates in Brattleboro, VT to run the workshops. The first workshop was geared towards business owners. A second workshop was targeted towards homeowners and business owners.

The Commission, in partnership with Lamoille Family Center and funding from the VT Department of Health, developed “A Primer on Planning for Prevention.” The Primer serves as a guide for mu-
municipalities interested in including substance abuse prevention policies and actions into their town plans. Because addressing substance misuse in municipal plans and regulations is an emerging field, the Primer was written with the goal to engage municipal officials and planning commission in a discussion about this important topic.

Administration and Funding
In 2016, The Commission updated all internal financial processes and procedures to ensure compliance with all federal, state and grant requirements. In addition the Commission actively engaged in Board recruitment resulting in more board seats being filled from a diversity of municipalities and a newly energized and engaged board.

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.

For the 2016 fiscal year, the LCPC’s total projected revenue of approximately $1.062 million dollars was derived from a mix of regional project grant funding, municipal project grant funding, EPA Brownfields funding, a grant from the Northern Border Regional Commission, state performance contract funding, 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.

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). The LCPC is audited on an annual basis.
As the state’s only combined Regional Planning Commission (RPC) and Economic Development Corporation, NVDA offers seamless delivery of a full complement of services in general planning and transportation planning, mapping, community development, economic development, and grant writing and administration. Each year our staff provides more than 8,000 hours of assistance to its 50 member municipalities.

Municipal Planning and Implementation
RPCs act as a cost effective professional planning staff for many of Vermont’s municipalities. This is especially true in the Northeast Kingdom, where few municipalities have dedicated planning or community development staff. Work in recent years has been focused on improving town plans and bylaws and keeping abreast of statutory requirements. All technical assistance provided this year is shown on the At Work map. Highlights include:

Area designation:
◆ Staff provided on-site trainings for the newly formed Lunenburg Planning Commission and the Hardwick Planning Commission.
◆ NVDA assisted the Towns of St. Johnsbury, Danville, Sheffield, and Newark in efforts to update their respective plans.
◆ Planning staff were instrumental in the development and adoption of new plans in Craftsbury and Waterford, both funded by Municipal Planning Grants.
◆ We continue to work on plan updates in Canaan, Groton, and Holland, all of which have been funded by Municipal Planning Grants.
◆ NVDA assisted the Town of St. Johnsbury in master planning for public access to the Passumpsic River from the Designated Downtown. This work was funded in part by a Municipal Planning Grant.
◆ Our region gained a new Designated Village Center when we helped the Town of Concord prepare a successful application. We also assisted the Town of Brighton in renewing and expanding its Designated Village Center.
◆ NVDA worked with Hardwick to update its Unified Development Bylaws to make the town eligible for Downtown Designation. Finally, our staff worked with the St. Johnsbury Planning Commission to identify areas suitable for application to the State for 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.

◆ Plan Updates: NVDA’s Regional Plan was extensively updated and adopted in early FY2016.
The Housing and Economic Development sections of the Regional Plan were used as the basis of the Town of Lunenburg’s first efforts at municipal planning and have assisted Glover in its plan updates. The regional plan also provided support for the Town of Lunenburg’s successful VCDP application for an economic development project.

Additional regional planning endeavors:
- NVDA staff developed and edited the Northern Vermont Economic Development District (NVEDD) Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) with participation from many regional constituents. NVEDD is comprised of the six northern counties in Vermont: Caledonia, Essex, Franklin, Grand Isle, Lamoille, and Orleans and has received its designation from the Economic Development Administration of the US Department of Commerce. The CEDS provides the District with an economic development strategy to improve the regional economy.
- NVDA staff has supported the development of the strategic plan for the Northeast Kingdom Collaborative. This strategic plan maintains the Rural Economic Area Partnership (REAP) designation by USDA Rural Development for the Northeast Kingdom. This designation allows Caledonia, Essex and Orleans counties to access a reserved set of grant funds only available to REAP Zones to support economic and community development initiatives.
- NVDA staff provided comment on the State’s Qualified Allocation Plan, providing a regional perspective on priorities in the allocation of Low Income Housing Tax Credits, and provided comment on proposed state legislation regarding workforce housing.

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.

- While NVDA did not receive any EPA awards for environmental site assessments in the past year, we did continue to help the Towns of St. Johnsbury and Barton identify and pursue new uses and developments for contaminated properties in their Designated Downtown and Village Center.

Economic and Community Development
Economic growth is best supported when development efforts are partnered with solid planning functions. Because we are a fully integrated organization, holistic economic and community development is an NVDA forte.

- In late April, NVDA helped to organize and participate in the VT – Quebec Enterprise Initiatives Business to Business event at Jay Peak Resort. Twenty-six Quebec companies interested in doing business in VT were represented at the networking event. Day 2 of the event involved a tour of local manufacturers.
- NVDA helped three local manufacturers receive Regional Economic Development Grant awards from the VT Dept. of Buildings and General Services. The awards have allowed each company to expand and create new jobs.
- Working with the VT Council on Rural Development, NVDA was heavily involved in Community Visit processes in Craftsbury and Hardwick. These events attract huge numbers of local resi-
students and are instrumental in establishing community priorities over the near and long term.  

- NVDA provides ongoing support to the Economic Restructuring Committee in St. Johnsbury, the town’s Designated Downtown organization. NVDA staff is also very active on the Economic Development Committee, the Business Retention and Recruitment Sub-committee, and the Board of Directors of the Newport City Renaissance Corporation (NCRC), the city’s Designated Downtown organization.
- NVDA provided the Quebec data research and consumer profiles and administered the *Bienvenue Newport* USDA grant for NCRC. This grant is designed to assist Newport businesses in understanding marketing opportunities to Quebec consumers. Additionally, NVDA hosted business forums for Orleans County businesses on employee retention and marketing strategies in the face of the opening of the Walmart SuperCenter in Derby.

**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. Highlights for FY2016 include:

- NVDA continued the inspection and mapping of “Town Highway Shorts” (structures between 6 and 20 ft.) These structures have not been mapped or inspected by VTrans for many years, so our towns lack accurate information on their condition. NVDA is working with towns to compile information into the VT Online Bridge and Culvert Inventory Tool (VOBCIT) by the end of calendar 2016. In FY16 we completed preliminary inspection and mapping for 19 towns.
- NVDA facilitates quarterly E&D (elderly and disabled) Transit joint working group meeting for Lamoille, NEK service providers and RCT. These are productive working meetings that bring service providers and transit administrators together to improve work flow as well as address concerns and prepare for special events.
- Staff also facilitates Road Foreman meetings in VTrans Districts 7 and 9. These meetings have been very productive venues for addressing the Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP) requirements, as well as in-stream permit procedures, and ditching and road maintenance best management practices. We also continue to train road foremen on the use of the VOBCIT.
- NVDA facilitates and coordinates the NEK Rivers and Roads Working Group. This group includes staff from the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), Caledonia, Essex, and Orleans County Conservation District Managers, regional watershed managers, and VTrans District Maintenance Project Managers. This group collaboratively assists towns in the region with issues related to erosion inventories (to comply with the MRGP), Better Backroads applications, and project implementation.
- NVDA completed 107 traffic counts for our towns, as well as six speed studies.
- Storage and distribution among the region’s agricultural entrepreneurs and food producers remains a challenge. In FY2016, the CAE and NVDA commissioned a distribution and storage study among producers, growers and distributors to identify opportunities for collaboration and establish best practices. The study also identified a potential need for a shared used re-
fridgeration truck service (modelled after Zipcar™). NVDA has commenced an additional study to determine feasibility and profitability.

Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Resiliency
RPCs play key roles in the mitigation and emergency preparedness through its work with Vermont Emergency Management, the Vermont Homeland Security Unit, VTrans 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 helps update local floodplain bylaws, prepare FEMA-required hazard mitigation plans, coordinate updates to municipal emergency plans and assist as needed in special circumstances like federally declared disasters.

- NVDA staff is working diligently to development FEMA-approved local hazard mitigation plans. Currently, five of our municipalities have approved plan, and another four have plans under review. Other plans are being developed.
- Thirty-nine towns (78 %) in the NVDA region have up-to-date Local Emergency Operations Plan.
- NVDA sponsored an Emergency Planning Workshop in 2016 for mobile home residents on emergency preparedness.
- NVDA worked with the town of Canaan to secure a grant to put a new generator in the Municipal Building which serves as the Emergency Operations Center during a disaster/emergency.
- NVDA staff participated in the State Vigilant Guard Exercise that was conducted from July 27, 2016 through August 1, 2016. First responders from NVDA towns, as well as the two hospitals in the region, participated in this exercise to be more agile in their response to major incidents, such as mass casualties or epidemics.

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. Highlights for FY2016 include:

- NVDA’s GIS specialists provided critical support for Village Center Designation efforts (current and potential) to Orleans Village, Barton Village, Brownington, Concord, Hardwick, Irasburg and St. Johnsbury.
- Our staff provided plan maps (either in draft or final form) to Barton, Canaan, Craftsbury, Granby, Holland, Irasburg, Sheffield and Waterford. Zoning maps included Barton, Danville, Granby, Maidstone, Peacham, Ryegate and Waterford.
- Staff also produced maps in support of flood resilience initiatives in Burke, Canaan, Craftsbury, Holland, Irasburg, Newark, Sheffield, Waterford and Wheelock.
- In addition to producing maps in support of NVDA’s new Regional Plan, we mapped the distribution points for regional food producers and growers and also analyzed the changes to crop-land vs. development using data from USDA’s National Agricultural Statistics Service.
- An additional special project included the Northern Borderlands Region free trade zone industrial park inventory and presentation map, as well as a sub-regional analysis of development (and land fragmentation) patterns. This analysis is innovative in that it is conducted by road
segments in towns impacted by expansion in the Burke Mountain and Jay Peak ski areas.

**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, 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.

- NVDA staff followed developments in solar siting standards and amendments to state statute affected by Act 174 and advised member municipalities of these changes.
- NVDA publicized energy efficiency opportunities and other state programs to businesses and municipalities through our newsletters and direct outreach.
- NVDA worked with a solar developer on the purchase and redevelopment of a previously contaminated industrial property in North Troy. The solar project will provide benefits to the public buildings in the community.
- NVDA assisted the Town of Lunenburg with a Community Development Block Grant to facilitate the development of the Kingdom Pellets project at a former paper mill site. The grant will be loaned to the business, and loan repayments will recapitalize a regional revolving loan fund. NVDA also supported the business’ application for a VT Employment Growth Incentive award for its job creation aspects.

**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 implement river corridor assessments, resulting in better and safer growth management decisions.

- NVDA planners conducted public outreach in Newport City and St. Johnsbury to address the implications of Act 64 (aka the Vermont Clean Water Act).
- We helped numerous towns navigate the River Corridor identification and protection process by providing technical assistance and producing maps for Lyndon, Groton, Ryegate, Jay, Granby, Greensboro, and Brighton. The Town of Lyndon, which has the most extensive level of flood risk exposure in our region, adopted River Corridor protection regulations. It is the first municipality in our region to achieve the maximum level (80%) of state funding under the Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund.
- Our tactical basin planning updates included outreach and collaboration between watershed planners and towns within the Missisquoi Bay, Lamoille River, and Lake Memphremagog watersheds. Plan updates are ongoing.
- We also continue to provide technical assistance, outreach, and education for road erosion risk analyses and storm water master planning to interested municipalities.

**Special Projects**
The Northeast Kingdom has seen significant growth and opportunity in the agriculture and food-based economy. NVDA’s ongoing partnership with the Center for an Agricultural Economy (CAE) is helping to sustain this thriving sector. Since 2011, we have been the only region to have a comprehensive Regional Food System Plan. In FY2016 NVDA staff worked closely with the CAE to exten-
sively update the original plan, with public outreach culminating in a Food System Summit that drew more than 100 attendees. The Plan is expected to provide significant guidance in agriculture - and food-related planning and economic development initiatives. Additionally, NVDA and the CAE co-hosted the statewide 2015 *Financing the Working Landscape Conference* at Sterling College in Craftsbury. The event attracted 100 working lands participants. NVDA is organizing the 2016 conference, which will be held in Orleans.

In recent years, NVDA’s staff have pursued and maintained professional designations such as American Institute of Certified Planner (AICP) from the American Planning Association and Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) from the Association of State Floodplain Managers. Both designations have helped to raise the caliber of NVDA’s technical service offerings, and, through a commitment to continuing education, allowed us to bring fresh perspectives and ideas to our planning communities. NVDA recently hosted a training for local floodplain administrators led by officials from the DEC and FEMA. Our ongoing collaboration with the DEC is likely to lead to more towns joining the National Flood Insurance Program, as well as improvement floodplain administration practices in towns that currently participate in the program.

**Administration and Funding**

NVDA’s revenues come from numerous sources, including a share of the state’s property tax funds; private, state, and federal grants; and annual appropriations from each of our member communities. We also receive rental income from the Charles E. Carter Business Resource Center, and other income from contracted technical support services, such as grant administration and municipal plan and bylaw development.

NVDA also has two Intermediary Relending Programs from USDA Rural Development, and a Non-profit Community Development Organization relending program capitalized by loan payments from Community Development Block Grants. Although NVDA has no new relending activity to report for FY2016, our board recently amended our lending policy, which will allow us to tailor more flexible and competitive loan packages for new and expanding businesses in the near future.

Our FY2015 audit, like previous years, produced no significant findings. Our FY2016 audit will be available in December.
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 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 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:

♦ Completed workshops attended by municipal staff and volunteers from 18 municipalities on the Essentials of Land Use Planning and the Open Meeting Law.
♦ Assisted Alburgh and Sheldon in basic updates to their municipal plans, including the addition of a new flood resiliency section as required by statute.
♦ Completed comprehensive municipal plan updates for the Town of Montgomery and the Town of Georgia with Municipal Planning Grant funding. Each plan focused on making their communities more flood resilient.
♦ Reviewed and provided regional approval to 7 municipal plans.
♦ Consulted with St. Albans City, Franklin, Alburgh, and Grand Isle on local planning and con-
firmed their planning efforts to retain eligibility for municipal planning grants.
- Assisted the Town of Grand Isle in developing a draft Capital Improvement Plan.
- Assisted the Town of Sheldon with transitioning to a Development Review Board.
- Began working with the Village of Enosburg Falls, Town of Bakersfield, and Town of South Hero to complete bylaw amendments with Municipal Planning Grant funding.
- Helped Bakersfield, Richford and Montgomery complete their renewal applications for designated village centers.
- Answered general planning and zoning technical assistance questions for the towns and villages of Berkshire, Bakersfield, Enosburgh, Enosburg Falls, Fairfax, Georgia, Grand Isle, Highgate, Montgomery, Richford, Sheldon, St. Albans Town, and South Hero.

**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 adopted unanimously by the Board of Commissioners in July 2015. The revised plan has clearly stated goals and policies, relevant data and indicators, and a strategic implementation plan. The plan is based upon NRPC’s Healthy People, Strong Communities project and has three major components: Healthy Physical Region, Healthy Social Region, and Healthy Economic Region.

NRPC published its first annual regional plan implementation report in July 2016. The report showed that NRPC has already made progress on 33 of its 39 short term and ongoing implementation priorities.

NRPC reviews state permit applications to ensure proposed projects conform with the regional plan. The Policy and Project Review Committee reviewed eighteen Section 248 and four Act 250 major applications for conformance with the regional plan. The committee made final determinations on eleven 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 dollars for this economic development initiative. Environmental site assessments allow properties to be sold, developed or redeveloped in ways that benefit the local and state economy, create or protect jobs and increase housing opportunities.

NRPC currently has 4 active EPA Brownfields grants, including one Revolving Loan Fund (awarded in 2010), two hazardous materials assessment grants (awarded in 2013 and 2014) and a petroleum assessment grant (awarded in 2013). During FY16, the following projects were either finished or started:

Assessment Projects:
- **St. Albans City Department of Public Works.** St. Albans City is interested in exploring redevelopment opportunities for the property currently housing their Department of Public Works,
which may be relocated to the Fonda property. NRPC has funded a Phase 1 Assessment and a Quality Assurance Project Plan and a workplan for a Phase 2 Assessment. Once these are approved by regulatory agencies, NRPC anticipates funding a Phase 2 Assessment to characterize any contamination at the site and help the City better understand redevelopment opportunities and cleanup costs.

- **Former Fonda Container Company Feasibility Investigation.** NRPC is funding a redevelopment feasibility investigation exploring the potential for locating a new police and fire station and Department of Public Works at the St. Albans City owned Fonda site. The project has developed a conceptual site plan that leaves all but a few small areas of the existing slab in place by designing around PCB and TCE use limitations. The project also involves coordinating with federal and state regulatory agencies on cleanup requirements. The next phase of the project will be the development of a corrective action plan.

- **Catherine St., Stebbins St., Market St. Targeted Area Wide Plan.** NRPC is working with a team of consultants to prepare a targeted area wide plan around an intersection of the planned Federal Street Multi-Modal Connector Project. The goal of this area wide plan is to encourage and guide public and private investment around a community supported vision. The plan will develop market based re-use concepts and feasibility analysis that can be used to attract investment.

**Cleanup Projects:**

- **43 Lake Street, St. Albans City.** 43 Lake Street is in the heart of downtown adjacent to the City Center Project that includes a new State Office Building and a Parking Garage. After funding a Supplemental Phase 2 Assessment looking at vapor intrusion potential, NRPC sub-granted cleanup funds to transport and dispose of contaminated urban fill at the site. The cleanup is complete and construction of a new hotel is underway.

**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.

- Re-established the [Northern Vermont Economic Development District (NVEDD)](https://www.nvermonted.com/) in partnership with the three RDCs and RPCs in the six northern counties. A new advisory Board helped to create a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy that was adopted in April 2016 and approved by EDA. NRPC serves as the administrative coordinator for NVEDD.

- Completed a [Grand Isle County activity guide](http://grandislecountyactivityguide.com/) that promotes tourism opportunities in the Lake Champlain Islands.

- Key partner and organizer of In Good Taste, an annual local food event.

- Assisted with promotion and grant writing for the Northern Border Regional Commission implementation grants.

**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 - Cooperation and Coordination between VTrans, Regions and Municipalities

♦ TAC activity - NRPC held 6 TAC meetings. Attendance ranged from 11-16 TAC members per meeting, a 53% municipal participation rate.

♦ TAC Outcomes
  ◦ Held a Regional Transportation Roundtable for TAC members and local legislators.
  ◦ Hosted a VTrans presentation on Class 1 Town Highways.

♦ Outreach
  ◦ Hosted a November 2015 Transportation Board Forum in St. Albans.
  ◦ Hosted 2 Public Transit E&D meetings.
  ◦ Initiated 4 Roadway Drainage & Erosion Inventories.
  ◦ Participated in 4 Road Safety Audit Reviews.
  ◦ Provided outreach to 10 municipalities on the General Roads Municipal Permit.

♦ Data collection
  ◦ 5 bridge and culvert inventories (Alburgh, Enosburgh, Fairfield, Swanton and Grand Isle). Tech assistance to 1 other town for culvert inventory update.
  ◦ 2 pedestrian counts.
  ◦ 2 traffic counts.

Objective #2 - Conformance with Act 200 and Facilitating Decentralized Decision Making

The Regional Transportation Plan was adopted July 29, 2015 and is integrated into the Regional Plan.

NRPC participated three project scoping efforts and attended one 502 hearing (VTrans right-of-way acquisition). NRPC also assisted with outreach for 3 bridge projects: North Hero/Grand Isle drawbridge, Georgia I-89 culvert, and North Hero Bridge #5.

Through our Policy and Project Review Committee, NRPC reviewed and/or provided comments on 6 Act 250 applications with substantial transportation elements. As a result of NRPC comments sidewalks were added to two projects to conform with the transportation plan.

Objective #3 - Providing Transportation Planning Support to Municipalities

Short-range transportation planning providing direct assistance to municipalities is 27% of NRPC’s transportation budget. A large portion of the coordination activities also include municipal assistance. Municipal projects included:

♦ Wrote or provided significant technical assistance to 14 transportation-related grant applications for municipalities. Includes Better Roads Program, Transportation Alternatives, Strong
Communities/Better Connections, Bicycle and Pedestrian, and ACCD Municipal Planning grant applications.

♦ Completed culvert inventory updates for Alburgh, Grand Isle, Enosburgh, Fairfield and Swanton.
♦ Identified 3 culvert replacement projects in the Town of Richford to increase aquatic organism passage and expand access to upstream habitat for brook trout. Vermont Fish & Wildlife funds will be used to design replacements for these structures which will have water quality and resiliency benefits in addition to providing additional aquatic organism passage.

Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Resiliency

RPCs play key roles in the mitigation and preparedness phases of emergency management in partnership with Vermont Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, VTrans and the 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 responders and planners throughout the State’s four Public Safety Districts. 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 declared disasters. Twenty-two municipalities (96%) in the region currently have an updated local emergency operations plan. Ten municipalities (43%) 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 Operations Plans (LEOPs).
♦ Served as the Local Liaison to municipalities for the Planning Section of the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) following severe weather events. Duties including reaching out to local EMDs /EMCs to assess damages, compiling damage assessments in coordination with Vermont Agency of Transportation 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.
♦ Provided direct staff support for Operation Vigilant Guard: a state-wide emergency management exercise involving the Vermont National Guard and various state and local agencies that tested the state’s ability to respond to a state wide catastrophic exercise. Three NRPC employees served in the State Emergency Operations Center during the Vermont Yankee graded exercise. The exercise simulated a series of simultaneous catastrophic events, testing state-wide capacity to communicate, respond to, and manage such an event.
♦ Served on the State Emergency Response Committee which oversees the state’s hazard materials program including carrying out the state and federal requirements of the committee.
♦ Served on the State Citizens Corps Council Working Group which oversees the Community Emergency Response Teams, Volunteers in Police Service, Disaster Animal Response Team and Neighborhood Watch Program.
♦ Provided data and information to municipalities for hazard mitigation grant program applications for transportation infrastructure improvements, home buyouts in hazardous areas and landslide risk analysis study.
♦ Assisted Grand Isle County Mutual Aid Association with the transition of Emergency Dispatch Services.
♦ Mapped potential emergency repeater locations for the Grand Isle County Mutual Aid Association.

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 over half of our municipalities.
♦ Prepared Village Designation Maps for communities seeking village designation.
♦ Completed E911 Maps for all municipalities for use by town officials, emergency responders and others. The maps include a community poster map, a bound atlas with individual pages for each roadway and basic road map.
♦ Assisted Enosburgh Town and Sheldon with parcel mapping projects funded through the Northern Borders Regional Commission.
♦ Created interpretive panels for the Lake Champlain Byways Kiosk, including recreational resources, activities and places of interest.

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, 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.

♦ Actively participated in the Section 248 proceedings for the New England Clean Power Link transmission cable project, the VELCO transmission cable project, Vermont Green Line Deveo, LLC transmission cable project, and 15 other renewable energy generation projects between 20 MW and 500 kW in size.
♦ Continued work on a pilot project, along with three other RPC, to draft regional energy plans focused on achieving the state goal of 90% renewable energy usage in Vermont by 2050 and meeting the requirements of Vermont’s new energy law, Act 174. The project includes energy demand and generation modeling and mapping of areas with renewable generation potential in the region.
♦ Provided a workshop attended by municipal officials and volunteers about municipal participation in the Section 248 process.

Watershed Planning and 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 TMDL. RPCs also work with municipalities to implement river corridor assessments in local planning and regulations which result in better and safer growth management decisions.
♦ Provided direct training to municipal boards and regional commissioners about Act 64, the Vermont Water Quality Bill, which was enacted during 2015 session.
♦ Worked with the towns of Berkshire, Highgate, Swanton and Bakersfield to develop water quality related language in town plans and bylaws related to shoreline, stream buffers and river corridor regulations.
♦ Developed and presented a property owner training that focused on assessing and solving stormwater problems.
♦ Assisted the state’s Watershed Coordinators with Plan development for the Missisquoi River and Lamoille River basins.
♦ Identified innovative stormwater practices and projects in the Northern Lake Champlain and Missisquoi Basins that incorporate green infrastructure or road management best practices. This information was incorporated into an online map to share information with partners and educate the public.

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

NRPC has assisted the Vermont Natural Resources Council on a project to promote an understanding of how housing location affects transportation costs, energy use and inclusiveness with a goal of creating housing opportunities that are affordable and inclusive. This project covers Chittenden, Franklin and Grand Isle Counties and includes a partnership with Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission, AARP, and Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity.

Administration and Funding
NRPC purchased a building in September of 2013 to serve as a permanent office location. This provides budget certainty and enables NRPC to hold and manage an asset rather than pay rent. Building costs will increase slightly over the next five years due to renovations and the Board adopted 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 16 NRPC budget was approximately $1.2 million. Revenue sources included state and federal performance contracts, grants and local assessments. Virtually all of 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 town 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 redevelop-
ment, 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 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 2016. NRPC has had no audit findings in recent years and as such is considered a ‘low risk’ grantee by federal agencies. Staffing in FY 16 included 8 employees: the Executive Director, Assistant Director, Senior Planners (2), Regional Planners (2), GIS Technician and Office Administrator. Six of the eight employees have been with NRPC for over thirteen years.
Rutland Regional Planning Commission
Fiscal Year 2016 Annual Report

The Rutland Region is comprised of 27 communities ranging in population from under 300 to over 16,000. The Region contains one regional center (Rutland City), six sub-regional centers of economic activity, and a series of smaller villages surrounded by agricultural and forest land. The Rutland Region has a diverse settlement pattern, with everything from compact village centers surrounded by rural landscapes, to second homes for part-time residents to industrial development.

The economy of the Region is diverse, with industries including GE, 1 University, 3 colleges, Killington/Pico Ski Resorts, solar development and also a wide variety of small, family-run businesses. The physiology of the Region varies dramatically as well, containing the peaks of the Southern Green Mountains, which reach up to 4,000 feet in elevation, the gently sloped farmland of the Vermont Valley, the steep Taconic Mountains, Lake Bomoseen, the largest lake within the borders of the state, and part of the Champlain Valley.

Municipal Planning and 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 (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 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 appears on the At Work map; highlights include:

♦ The RRPC worked with the Planning Commissions in the towns of Sudbury, Danby, Rutland Town, Poultney, Fair Haven, Chittenden, Clarendon, Pawlet, Hubbardton, Mendon, Fair Haven and Castleton to develop language for municipal plans and land use bylaws.
♦ RRPC 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. Significant effort went into flood resilience education.
♦ An update of the Town of Wallingford Zoning Regulations – focused on creating form-based standards to allow for new development in the historic village center to recreate and reinforce existing development patterns.
♦ Review of approximately 30 Act 250 and Section 248 applications.
♦ Seven Enhanced Consultations with towns.
♦ Worked with the towns of Middletown Springs, West Rutland, Proctor and Danby on Village Center Designations (both new and renewals).
♦ Model flood resiliency language was created for use in municipal plans.
RRPC created model municipal plan language for solar generation siting and provided municipalities with checklists for evaluating solar and wind generation projects.

- Worked with Pawlet on amending its Unified Bylaws to add more current River Corridor Protection language to its zoning.
- Presented Castleton and Hubbardton with water quality protection language for draft municipal plans.
- With VT DEC Watershed Coordinator Ethan Swift, scheduled a joint Selectboard and Planning Commission meeting in Clarendon to discuss water quality and flood resilience projects.

Regional Planning
RPCs 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.

- The RRPC updated four chapters including Land Use, Agriculture, Forestry and Energy. These revisions reflect the required and recommended changes identified by the independent review of regional plans, Acts 64 and 171, as well as changes the RRPC decided were needed.
- The RRPC used the Rutland Regional Plan as a guide for reviewing Act 250 and Section 248 applications. The Commissioners’ analysis and evaluation of projects refers to the content and goals cited in the Regional Plan. Grant applications for transportation projects, municipal planning, and village center designation applications all refer to supporting language in the Regional Plan.

Brownfields
Vermont RPCs have sought and been awarded over 10 million dollars for this economic development initiative. Environmental site assessments allow properties to be sold, developed, or redeveloped 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 twelve 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.

- 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 newly created 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 $30K 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.
- The RRPC worked 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 physically complete the street wall, adding to the aesthetics and vibrancy of Downtown Rutland.

♦ Assessment work at the former Watkins School in Rutland City has led the way to redevelopment of the former school, which ceased operations in 1978, into 22-units of affordable senior housing by the Housing Trust of Rutland County.

♦ Assessment work continues on two high-profile Rutland City sites primed for redevelopment; the White’s pool site and former Rutland Plywood property.

Economic and Community Development
Economic growth is supported best when development efforts are partnered with solid planning functions. 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 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.

♦ Completed a Strong Communities-Better Connections study funded by ACCD and VTrans that included the communities of West Rutland and Rutland Tow and Business Route 4 Corridor that connects the two towns. Seven specific economic development recommendations resulted from the study that the two towns are considering for future action.

♦ The RRPC assisted the Towns of Pawlet, West Pawlet and West Rutland with their village center designations. The Town of Sudbury will work with the RRPC this year to explore the possibility of designation.

♦ RRPC is working with the Town of Castleton on a land use and economic development study to analyze potential commercial and industrial locations for these uses. The VT Route 30 corridor is receiving significant attention with respect to balancing growth and desirable land use patterns.

♦ Economic Development Chapters were updated in the Danby, Chittenden, Clarendon, Pawlet, Poultney, Sudbury, Hubbardton, Fair Haven, Brandon and Rutland Town municipal plans.

♦ With funding from a USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG), RRPC hosted a two day conference on agritourism: Welcoming Customers on Your Farm that was held at a variety of venues around the Rutland Region, including three farms. The conference attracted 100 participants. The grant also help fund the creation of 13 best Management Practices and How-To guides on agritourism. Those guides can be downloaded on a UVM Extension site at: https://www.uvm.edu/vtagritourism/?Page=guides.html

Transportation Planning
Through 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.

**Objective #1 – Cooperation and Coordination between VTrans, Regions and Municipalities**

- The Rutland Region Transportation Council meets on a monthly basis but generally takes the months of July and August off. There is a combined November/December meeting (taking into account the holiday season), when state legislators from the region are also invited. This meeting takes on a mixer format and formal attendance is not taken. From July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016, the TAC met 8 times, with an average participation rate of 47 percent.
- Held 10 road commissioner/foremen networking meetings, focusing on pertinent issues such as transportation legislation, legal load limits, workplace safety, Tier II reporting.
- The RRPC completed 10 bridge/culvert inventories, 5 traffic counts, and twice assisted VTrans with Park & Ride counts (one round for state, one for municipal). Road surface inventories are performed for municipalities as part of the Better Roads grant, and sign inventories are done if requested.

**Objective #2 – Conformance with Act 200 and Facilitating Decentralized Decision-Making**

- The Regional Transportation Plan was adopted in 2015 and is incorporated into the Rutland Regional Plan.
- Participated in two reviews of Act 250 applications involving transportation issues.

**Objective #3 – Providing Transportation Planning Support to Municipalities**

- Approximately 41% of the RRPC TPI budget supports municipal planning, in the form of short range planning and public participation and coordination.
  - Worked with Tinmouth on Capital Improvement Plan as part of Better Roads grant.
  - Produced road erosion priority segment maps for municipalities.
  - Through road commissioner meetings, site visits and private meetings, worked with VTrans and DEC to educate municipal officials on transportation implications of Clean Water Act. Assisted towns in acquiring grants for necessary inventories and remediation efforts.
- Organized the 2016 Vermont Walk/Bike Summit in Rutland, in coordination with VTrans and Rutland Area Physical Activity Coalition.
- Worked with other RPCs and state officials in creating a Road Erosion Inventory field application; purchased necessary equipment for use in this task.
- Continued membership on Marble Valley Regional Transit District Board of Commissioners.
- Coordinated quarterly meetings of regional E&D Public Transit Advisory Committee.
- Served as project manager for continued expansion of Rutland Creek Path.
- Continued working with contracted towns on Better Roads grants, and assisted towns in applying for newly expanded grants for FY17 round. RRPC is currently working with 7 towns on 2015-16 grants and is scheduled to work with 11 for the 2016-17 round.

**Emergency Preparedness and 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. 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.

- RRPC provided technical assistance and outreach to all towns in completing Local Emergency Operations Plans (LEOPs), including offering an LEOP training session.
- RRPC provided extensive assistance to 7 towns with preparing single jurisdictional hazard mitigation plans, through a Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant as well as an HMGP megagrant. Support for the plans of other municipalities was provided upon request.
- RRPC supported the Rutland Region LEPC #2 by organizing monthly meetings (including mini-tabletop exercises), coordinating special projects, and keeping LEPC #2 members informed of training and grant opportunities. RRPC lead LEPC # 2 through a full bylaw update (last completed in 2006); and to establish three special task forces to work within the areas of Tier II/ EHS facilities; community engagement; and emergency responders.
- RRPC 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.
- RRPC collected local damage information from towns after significant storm events at the request of Vermont Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security.
- Four RRPC staff were trained to serve in the State Emergency Operations Center, including Incident Command System, SEOC Incident Coordination Team, RPC Local Liaison, and DisasterLAN trainings. Four staff participated in Vigilant Guard.
- RRPC provided extensive technical assistance to several towns applying for Hazard Mitigation Grants, particularly with benefit-cost analyses for emergency generators and culvert replacements.
- There are 15 (55%) FEMA Approved Local Hazard Mitigation Plans in Rutland County. There are 10 (37%) expired LHMPs in Rutland County. These expirations will be addressed by the RRPC’s “mega-grant.”
- RRPC Staff met with DEC Floodplain manager to present the importance of adopting river corridor language to the Chittenden Planning Commission and Select Board.
- RRPC attended FEMA’s Debris Management training and Continuity of Operations training. RRPC staff attended BACH DA.
- Twenty-six of the 27 municipalities (96%) in RRPC territory have adopted LEOPs.

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.

- **Bridge and Culvert Inventories** – RRPC GIS staff worked with ten town road departments to collect culvert data using the commission’s GPS. RRPC then completed the Inventory, mapping, and updates to [www.VTCulverts.com](http://www.VTCulverts.com) for Castleton, Chittenden, Danby, Middletown Springs, Pittsford, Poultney, Tinmouth, Clarendon, Ira and Pawlet.
- **Transportation Mapping** – Provided mapping support for several transportation related town
grants. Continue to work on identifying and inventorying town long structures for the region. And we continue to add and update bridge and culvert inventories, as well as performing road erosion inventory assessments for many towns in the region. We also provide maps and support for the statewide Walk and Bike Summit held in Rutland, April 1, 2016.

- **Emergency Management** – RRPC participated in ICS 200 training, and several training sessions at the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC), including a full-scale statewide emergency exercise, Vigilant Guard, in which GIS staff filled four shifts and had the opportunity to act as GIS Unit Leader and GIS Unit Assistant.
- **Flood 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.
- **Municipal Plans** – Worked with the towns of Clarendon, Pawlet, Hubbardton, Fair Haven, and Brandon: creating municipal plan maps to support their town plan or zoning documents.
- **Regional Plan** – Continued to update and add maps to the regional plan. Future Land Use, Agriculture, Forestry and several energy maps have been worked on.
- **Pre-Disaster Mitigation Planning** – In support of ongoing emergency management planning and in an effort to inventory and categorize all hazards and potential hazards, RRPC created a set of three maps for each town: Areas of Local Concern, Hazard Analysis, and a Town Base map. Maps identifying known issues were created and will be used to help alleviate potential problems for Chittenden, Clarendon, Danby, Mount Holly, Sudbury, Tinmouth, and Wallingford.
- **Rutland Creek Path** – RRPC continues to provide GIS, mapping, and technical support for the project which connects Giorgetti/Pine Hill Park to the College of St. Joseph.
- **Vermont’s Use Value Appraisal Program** – RRPC worked with local land owners in several towns on this service.
- **Rutland Area Farm and Food Link (RAFFL)** – RRPC worked with RAFFL staff to map out general service areas as well as provide technical, mapping, and plotting support.
- **Village Center and Downtown Designations** – RRPC updated the Village Center Designations for West Rutland, West Pawlet, Pawlet and Belmont Village in Mount Holly and updated the Downtown Designation for Brandon.
- **Rutland Economic Development Corp. and Rutland Region Chamber of Commerce** – RRPC worked as part of Mountain Bike and Trail Riding Committee, a large regional collaboration of agencies to promote mountain biking in the region. RRPC created a web site on trail locations and amenities as well as bike shops.
- **Rutland Southern Vermont Regional Airport** – RRPC worked with the airport manager to create a set of airspace overlay maps for the town of Rutland, RRPC also updated the airport’s grid map. This work also supplemented a presentation by the airport manager to the RRPC TAC.
- **Southern Vermont Council on Aging** – RRPC provided a set of maps to support the purchase of a new structure for the agency.

**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, 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.
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:

◆ The RRPC assisted the towns of Danby, Sudbury, Pawlet, Chittenden and Clarendon to create new energy chapters in their municipal plans. Clearer community standards were developed to guide the Public Service Board during Section 248 project review.
◆ The Energy Chapter of the Rutland Regional Plan was updated to reflect current conditions and trends affecting the Rutland Region. Standards for energy generation facilities (solar and wind) were developed to guide the PSB during its review of these projects.
◆ RRPC staff worked with the Board to review 15 Section 248 petitions and submitted comments to the Public Service Board. A majority of the projects were for solar electric generation facilities and telecommunications towers.
◆ RRPC created solar and wind generation facility checklists as well as model Municipal Plan language to encourage clear concise community standards regarding solar development.
◆ Staff has started work on creating an Energy section for the Rutland Regional Plan pursuant to Act 174.

Watershed Planning and Project Development
RPCs work with the Agency of Natural Resources to assist with completion of the EPA required watersheds 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.

◆ RRPC contracted with the Town of Rutland to implement stormwater management measures to reduce stormwater pollution in Moon Brook for its MS4 permit from the VT Dept. of Environmental Conservation.
◆ Staff are providing outreach assistance for two Ecosystem Restoration Program (ERP) grants awarded to the Poulney Mettowee NRCD. Both are for Stormwater Master Planning; one for Lake Champlain, the other for the Castleton River Headwaters.
◆ Staff are assisting VT DEC Watershed Coordinator Ethan Swift with outreach on an updated Tactical Basin Plan for South Lake Champlain Watershed to help address the Vermont Clean Water Initiative and the TMDL for Lake Champlain. Staff are also working to train the region’s municipalities on the various other provisions of the Clean Water Initiative, including several upcoming mandatory permits, and funding opportunities.
◆ As part of the Clean Water Initiative, RRPC staff are working directly with Castleton and Hubbardton on water quality reclassification and increased protection designations for area waterways. This work is being done through the towns’ Municipal Plans.

Special Projects
◆ **High Meadows Fund.** RRPC partnered with the Poulney Mettowee Natural Resources Conservation District to create a watershed-level flood resiliency checklist template that RPCs and towns can use. The collaboration also resulted in a tri-town outreach event to promote flood resiliency in a watershed that was greatly impacted in TS Irene.
◆ **RAPAC (Rutland Area Physical Activity Coalition)** RRPC worked with the VT Dept. of Health, Rutland City, Rutland Regional Medical Center, and Mentor Connector on rejuvenating RA-PAC and the development of its strategic plan.
Vermont Economic Resiliency Initiative (VERI) RRPC completed work on the VERI project in Brandon to help protect the town’s economic center from flooding and fluvial erosion.

MS4 with Rutland Town RRPC worked with Rutland Town to implement stormwater management measures for its MS4 permit for Moon Brook to reduce stormwater pollution. Public education and outreach work included a stormwater pollution webpage for the town’s home page and a brochure that was mailed to all town residents, as well as other educational materials. Public involvement and participation measures included organizing a Rutland County Stream Team and planning three events: rain barrel-making, storm drain marking, and a stream clean-up.

Administration and Funding
Administration of the RRPC’s programs, policies, and finances were managed effectively and efficiently. We completed the FY 2016 Financial and Final Reports as well as Quarterly Reports for the Agency of Commerce and Community Development that included the status of performance measures, budget expenses, and other information. The FY15 Audit was completed and distributed to requesting granting agencies.

RRPC leveraged ACCD funds to provide a match for grants from VTrans, DEMHS and EPA. This enabled the Commission to cover the indirect costs incurred to expand work into diverse areas of planning.

We focused on increasing RRPC’s visibility by serving on statewide committees, attending Legislative Breakfasts, newsletters, and increasing our presence on social media. We have also put effort into our brand identity, promotional materials and developing a new website which is set launch in this fall – it is sure to be an effective resource for our towns and beyond. Finally, we enhanced our presence in the Region with Boards such as WIB, REDC, Chamber, The Bus, and Southern Vermont Rutland Region Airport Committee

The RRPC continued to implement recommendations of the approved Strategic Plan for the organization, including the financial and management structure. The products resulting from this review included prioritization of work, improvements and efficiencies, developing a baseline needs assessment, training needs, branding, and promoting the RRPC.
RRPC at Work: FY 2016

Types of Projects Assistance
- Mapping
- Grant Writing
- Traffic Counts
- Planning and Zoning
- Emergency Planning
- Brownfield Assistance
- Water Quality Outreach
- Bridge and Culvert Inventory
- Designated Village
- Designated Downtown

Zoning Bylaw Status
- Adopted
- Flood Only
- None

Town Plan Status
- Current
- Expired
- No Plan
The Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission (SWRPC) 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 SWRPC’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 SWRPC.

The primary intent of the SWRPC and its advisory committees has always been to assist with and advocate for the planning and development activities of its member towns. The SWRPC 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 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 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 Baltimore, Chester, Springfield and Weathersfield.
♦ Helped planning commissions to prepare zoning bylaw updates in Reading, Weathersfield, West Windsor and Windsor, and provided guidance on bylaw updates to Ludlow. Assisted Springfield with updates to their zoning district map.
♦ Assisted the Town of Springfield, Springfield on the Move and Springfield Chamber to complete a Downtown Master Plan, and supported an effort to implement aspects of the plan through both infrastructure projects and applying for Strong Communities, Better Connections funding.
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 last updated in 2014; no updates were necessary this year.
♦ Efforts this year to implement the Regional Plan included the following activities:
  ◊ Organized a presentation on water and wastewater infrastructure funding opportunities for our communities. Followed up with municipalities and Terisa Thomas (DEC) regarding water, stormwater or wastewater system projects that are included in the Regional Plan implementation matrix.
  ◊ Reviewed all Act 250 applications and Section 248 petitions as each relates to goals and policies in the Regional Plan.
  ◊ Provided assistance to the Town of Springfield to assist with Valley Street infrastructure improvements.
  ◊ Assisted Windsor with efforts to repair the Ascutney Mill Dam.
  ◊ Provided assistance to West Windsor with efforts to purchase the ski resort property and make wastewater improvements in Brownsville.

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 redeveloped in ways that benefit the local and state economy, create or protect jobs and increase housing opportunities.

♦ Provided Brownfields assistance for 8 properties in 3 towns, including several Phase II Environmental Site Assessments and the development of Corrective Action Plans.
♦ Participated in the BERA process to assist with a complex brownfield cleanup effort for the Jones and Lamson site on Clinton Street in Springfield.
♦ Developed an Area-Wide Planning application for the Clinton Street Corridor in Springfield.

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.

♦ The SWCRPC and Springfield Regional Development Corporation collaborated to facilitate an economic forum in the Town of Chester.
♦ Assisted the towns of Chester and Springfield with successful applications for the Strong Communities, Better Connections program. Both projects involved initiatives to revitalize community centers.
♦ Assisted with the environmental review for a CDBG-DR project that involves redevelopment of the Jones and Lamson site in Springfield.
♦ Assisted the Springfield Selectboard to develop a Strategic Plan, an effort which included prioritizing future economic development projects.
The SWCRPC assessed the region’s resilience via available data and completed an economic health report card. Completed an action plan to improve the major issues identified by the report card.

Created a comprehensive picture/visualization (map) of the existing status of infrastructure in Windsor and Springfield to better understand the potential land and buildings for development and redevelopment in appropriate areas of town.

Created a fact sheet on business funding and technical support fact for distribution.

**Transportation Planning**

Through 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.

**Objective #1 - Cooperation and Coordination between VTrans, Regions and Municipalities**

- **TAC activity**
  - Total # of meetings held: 7 TAC meetings held.
  - Average member participation rate (expressed as a % of total TAC membership): 72% average member participation rate.

- **TAC Outcomes**
  - Developed a vision for what they want to accomplish as the Southern Windsor County TAC.
  - Met with the emergency planner to learn about what the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) is currently working on and to discuss evacuation routes for the region.
  - Heard a presentation on and discussed the draft findings of The Current bus route evaluation project.

- **Other Outreach**
  - Held 4 regional road foreman meetings.
  - Participated in 1 Road Safety Audit for the Weathersfield Center Road and VT Route 131 intersection.
  - Hosted 2 meetings regarding Municipal Roads General Permits.
  - Conducted 2 field visits for Municipal Roads General Permits – one in Chester and another in Weathersfield.
  - Facilitated 7 public transportation E&D meetings.

- **Data collection RPCs do for VTrans**
  - Completed 2 municipal road condition inventories (Chester, Reading).
  - Developed or updated 3 municipal bridge and culvert inventories (Chester, Reading, West Windsor).
  - Con ducted 2 road drainage and erosion inventories (Chester, Baltimore).
  - Performed 32 traffic counts, including speed studies.
  - Completed 1 intersection turning movement count.
Objective #2 - Conformance with Act 200 and Facilitating Decentralized Decision Making

- **Status of Regional Transportation Plan**
  - The Southern Windsor County Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) was adopted in 2014.
  - The plan is adopted as Volume 2 of the Regional Plan.
  - The plan is reasonably current, we have no immediate plans to update the RTP.

- **Participation in Project Development Activities**
  - Participated in 5 project scoping efforts (US 5 Paving in Springfield, Ludlow Bridge 99 deck replacement, Chester Bridge 62 project, Springfield I-91 Bridges 26N&S, Chester State Culvert 52).
  - Attended 1 accelerated bridge project meeting for the Ludlow Bridge 99 deck replacement.
  - Attended 1 preconstruction meeting for the Class 1 town highway paving project.
  - Participated in 2 NHDOT bridge projects that impact our region (Charlestown/Springfield and Cornish/Windsor).

- **Participation in Act 250 review related to transportation issues**
  - Reviewed all Act 250 applications received; none had noteworthy transportation issues this year.
  - Continued multi-year participation in an ongoing appeal to an Act 250 permit issued for the Killington Village Master Plan, as it impacts our regional transportation system.
  - Reviewed 2 Section 248 petitions and requested screening for both projects as it relates, in part, to the Connecticut River Scenic Byway.

Objective #3 - Providing Transportation Planning Support to Municipalities

- **% of TPI budget (Task # 4 Short Range Transportation Planning) that supports municipal planning?**
  - A significant amount of our TPI activities is for local technical assistance with transportation planning, but this level of effort is difficult to quantify. Task 4 represents 29.4% of our FFY 2016 TPI contract amount. Examples of work performed under Task 4 include:
    - Chester Transportation Capital Improvements Plan;
    - Springfield Downtown Capital Improvements Plan; and,
    - West Windsor Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

- Completed 2 road erosion inventories (Baltimore and Chester).

- We assisted municipalities with Better Road applications, including 3 applications for Category B, C or D work for Baltimore, Reading and Windsor, as well as 3 Category A applications for Cavendish, Ludlow and Windsor.

- Special studies completed include:
  - 2016 Bus Route Evaluation Study; and,
  - West Windsor Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

- Participation in public transit efforts:
  - Facilitated regular meetings for the transportation program for elders and persons with disabilities in southern Windsor County and Windham County, in coordination with WRC.
  - Regularly attended Southeast Vermont Transit Board meetings.
◊ Attended Springfield Hospital Community Health Team Transportation Committee meetings.
◊ Completed the 2016 Bus Route Evaluation Study.

**Emergency Preparedness and 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. RPCs 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 a hazard mitigation plan either adopted or under review. Ten municipalities in the region (100%) currently have an updated local emergency plan.
◊ Assisted all 10 towns to update Local Emergency Operations Plans this year.
◊ Worked with 6 towns to update Local Hazard Mitigation Plans, including Andover, Cavendish, Chester, Reading, West Windsor and Windsor.
◊ Provided support with the buyout of 7 flood-damaged properties.
◊ Assisted the Town of Ludlow with their ongoing industrial park resiliency planning effort.
◊ 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, RPCs provide municipalities, state agencies and regional groups with mapping and data analysis in support of their projects.

◊ Highlights of activities
  ◊ Creation of a new online GIS portal: [http://swcrpc.maps.arcgis.com](http://swcrpc.maps.arcgis.com).
  ◊ Developed online maps showing data from the UAV (drone) flight by UVM for the Popple Dungeon Road relocation in Chester.
  ◊ Created an interactive online map to support the Reading zoning map update process.
  ◊ Finalized maps for the Springfield Downtown Master Plan.
  ◊ Developed an inventory and maps of commercial and industrial lands in Windsor and Springfield.
  ◊ Developed maps to support applications for Village Center and Downtown Designation.
  ◊ Gave two GIS/mapping presentations for classes at a local school.
  ◊ Developed maps for West Windsor’s Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

**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, and work with municipalities to assist with project imple-
RPCs participate in Section 248 proceedings and support comprehensive planning at the local and regional level to inform the permitting process.

- Reviewed documents and participated in Section 248 proceedings, including TDI New England Clean Power Link (Ludlow), VELCO Connecticut River Valley Project (Cavendish and Weathersfield), Mountain Funds (West Windsor), and Ranger Solar (Ludlow).
- Provided towns with information and guidance regarding Act 174 and the related implications for municipal plans.
- Assisted the Town of Baltimore to update the Energy Chapter of their Town Plan.

**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 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.
- Assisted municipalities to better understand flood resiliency and to consider adoption of model ANR river corridor bylaws, including Reading, Springfield, Weathersfield, West Windsor and Windsor.
- Coordinated with ANR and the Town and Village of Ludlow regarding stream reclassifications.
- Assisted Springfield to complete the Meadow Drive bank stabilization project.

**Special Projects**

- The SWCRPC worked collaboratively with TRORC and prevention partnership organizations on healthy community initiatives, including the development of guidance materials to assist local planning efforts to promote public health.

**Administration and Funding**

- The SWCRPC is funded by performance and project contracts with federal, state and locals levels of government, foundation support, and contributions from member municipalities. SWCRPC’s FY 2016 budget was approximately $861,825.00 Core funding provided by the Agency of Commerce and Community Development of $197,225.00 leveraged about $317,000 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 8.
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 and Implementation**

TRORC has a staff with more than 50 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. Regional Planning Commissions (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:

- **Hancock Capital Budget and Program** - With a Municipal Planning Grant and our Property Tax Receipts funding, TRORC staff worked with the Town of Hancock to develop its first official Capital Budget and Program. The final project included an inventory of existing facilities and equipment, a prioritization of future projects, a wish list of future projects and a customized building maintenance template for local officials.

- **Bethel Unified Bylaw** – As a follow-up to the Bethel Town Plan (written with assistance from TRORC), TRORC helped the Bethel Planning Commission develop a unified bylaw which included new restrictions on development within the Flood Hazard and River Corridor areas. The draft Unified Bylaw is currently under consideration by the Selectboard.

- **Village Center Designations** – TRORC Staff worked closely with the towns of Bradford, Woodstock, Newbury (including Wells River Village), Royalton and Woodstock to renew or apply for Village Center designation. This included guiding communities who were in the process of updating their municipal plans through the process of including material required by the Village Center Program as part of their revisions.

- **NewVista** – TRORC responded to community concerns regarding the NewVista Foundation’s plan to develop 5,000 acres in the towns of Tunbridge, Sharon, Royalton and Strafford into a high-density, mixed-use community with 10,000-20,000 people. We facilitated a large community meeting on the project that was very effective at laying out the existing planning and regulatory processes as well as giving residents a change to share their concerns. In addition,
TRORC staff has been meeting with several communities to provide guidance on how their plans could be modified to better address high-density, mixed-use development in rural areas.

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: All required regional plan updates were completed in FY15. However, the Regional Commission has been developing a chapter entitled “Fostering Healthier Communities.” Its purpose is to facilitate and encourage municipalities to plan for and create vibrant, active places through their built environments that encourage healthy lifestyles with the goal of improving overall health across our communities.

♦ Plan Implementation: In FY 16, the Regional Plan was most clearly used as part of the Regional Commission’s appeal of the Quechee Highlands 120,000 square foot mixed-use development proposal at Exit 1. Despite a ruling by the Environmental Court overturning the denial of the Quechee Highlands Act 250 permit application, the Regional Commission continues to believe that the project violates clear, written standards in the Plan. Our appeal to the Vermont Supreme Court is currently under review.

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.

♦ TRORC was awarded $400,000 in EPA assessment funds in the fall 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. We now have a ranked list of sites, are currently finishing a corrective action plan on a site expected to have housing and a transit stop in Hartford, and are talking with other owners.

♦ We also assisted with a supplemental redevelopment study for work on the East End in Woodstock.

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 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 Worked with several organizations around the region to further develop support of the Creative Economy. This included holding a series of meetings and workgroups in the TRORC and Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission (SWCRPC) regions to collect public input. In addition, TRORC worked with a consultant to develop a report that acknowledges and supports the strength of creative economy in the region. This has resulted in an action plan to further develop support.
♦ TRORC continues to work with East Central Vermont Economic Development District in writing and supporting goals, strategies and actions of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

**Transportation Planning**
Through 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.

**Objective #1 - Cooperation and Coordination between VTrans, Regions and Municipalities**
♦ **TAC activity** - Total 6 of meetings held, average member participation rate 35%(expressed as a % of total TAC membership)
♦ **TAC Outcomes**
  ◊ Chelsea VT110 bridges BR9 and BR11, TAC continuing to stay abreast of the future plans and discussing Town’s concern over temporary pedestrian bridge access during construction for summer 2017.
  ◊ TRORC participated in numerous policy stakeholder meetings as requested by VTrans and other agencies:
    • VTrans LEAN process on Public Information Officer and how this helps communities and VTrans move projects forward.
    • Staff spearheaded RPC road erosion methodology discussion for road erosion inventory collection for summer 2016.
    • Staff participated in FHWA Vermont HSIP review committee.
  ◊ TAC continuing to be vigilant on paving projects through district leveling and project prioritization, also related with safety with rumble strips and tracking vehicle crashes to VTrans.
♦ **Other Outreach** - 3 road foreman/commissioner meetings held, 4 TMDL outreach meetings, 2 Road Safety Audits held, 2 Public Transit E&D meetings held, 5 municipal road surface management or sign inventories.
♦ **Data collection RPCs do for VTrans** – 4 bridge/culvert inventories completed, 11 traffic, 16 bike/ped and 3 Park & Ride counts conducted.

**Objective #2 - Conformance with Act 200 and Facilitating Decentralized Decision Making**
♦ **Status of Regional Transportation plan** – Adopted in September of 2015 as part of the TRORC Regional Plan.
♦ **Participation in Project Development Activities** - 4 project scoping efforts, 5 accelerated bridge meetings.
♦ **Participation in Act 250 review related to transportation issues** - 3 applications involving transportation issues.

**Objective #3 - Providing Transportation Planning Support to Municipalities**
♦ 34% of TPI budget (Task # 4 Short Range Transportation Planning) supports municipal planning.

♦ Other Better Roads (BR) - related work – assisted 12 towns with 17 BR grant applications for 2016 and completed 5 town 2015 BBR road surface management inventories.

♦ Participation in public transit efforts – TRORC staff participated in Advance Transit’s Strategic Planning Committee, conducted a Bus Stop Inventory Report and participating in the Transit Signal Priority Project with Upper Valley-Lake Sunapee RPC, NHDOT and VTrans. TRORC staff also participated in Stagecoach’s Strategic Planning Committee and Stagecoach’s 40th anniversary planning committee.

♦ Resiliency related work – In addition to spearheading RPC discussion on road erosion inventory methodology, staff were involved in project management of several town CDBG Disaster Recovery transportation projects (Rochester Bean’s Bridge Road Lowering and Bank Stabilization, Royalton Gilman Road Relocation, Woodstock Snow Dump Relocation and Construction, Barnard Mt Hunger Bank Stabilization, Stockbridge Taggart Hill Road Bank Stabilization and Hancock Churchville Culvert Replacement).

♦ Staff attended the Bethel Better Block initiative (the Town received a grant through AARP) to implement short term improvements on Main Street this coming Fall 2016.

Emergency Preparedness and 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. TRORC’s staff played a strong role in regional emergency response.

♦ We assisted the state in its Vigilant Guard exercise and have four staff trained in ICS and other aspects of emergency management. TRORC staff are often tasked by DEMHS 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 staff our regional LEPC #12.

♦ All of our municipalities have updated local emergency operations plans, and two-thirds have approved or final local hazard mitigation plans. The rest have mitigation plans in process. TRORC continues its leadership on flood recovery and effects of climate disruption.

♦ TRORC Staff presented in the last year at a Northeast conference on resilience as well as local and state conferences.

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.

♦ Updated E911 maps.
Fiscal Year 2016

VAPDA - Annual Report

TRORC

Completed field watershed

TRORC

Created TRORC

TRORC

TRORC

 Completed Hazard Mitigation Plan analysis and maps.

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, 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 Regional Commission reviewed and commented on twenty petitions for a Certificate of Public good within the region, the bulk of which were for solar generation facilities.

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 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 are active in the Basin 10 planning process and in proposed reclassification of waters to A1 and B1.

Special Projects
Use this to described any unique efforts, whether it is your HUD grant, a partnership with your local health department, MS-4 implementation, etc.

TRORC continued to administer CDBG-DR funding, have completed over 100 buyouts. Made grants to towns for design of access points/parks at some sites.

TRORC is continuing to develop a dashboard as part of the TRORC Strategic Plan. We are carrying forward metrics by creating a regional set of indicators and desired outcomes.

Administration and Funding
TRORC is funded by performance and project contracts with federal, state and locals levels of government, foundation support, and contributions from member municipalities and non-profits. TRORC’s FY 16 budget was approximately $1.2 million, plus a three-year effort of HUD home buyout funding of $3 million. Core 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 has an independent audit conducted by Certified Public Accountants 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.
Celebrating our 51st year, the Windham Regional Commission (WRC) is an important resource to the 23 towns of Windham County, the towns of Readsboro, Searsbury and Winhall in Bennington County, and the town of Weston in Windsor County. Our mission is to assist towns in Southeastern Vermont to provide effective local government and work cooperatively with them to address regional issues. Towns choose to be members of the WRC.

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 single 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 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 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 assistance to 22 towns with plans, zoning, updating flood hazard area regulations, and community revitalization. This included extensive work with 11 towns, in 12 different projects, on updating town plans, zoning bylaws, and subdivision regulations under municipal planning grants and municipal services contracts, as well providing general technical assistance with Chapter 117 processes and requirements. Work with towns on updating town plans included addressing the relatively recent Economic Development and the newer Flood Resilience Plan requirements.
- Conducted 6 municipal consultation meetings involving town Planning Commissions and Selectboards, and provided individualized town-level “planning 101” training for Planning Commissions and interested others (e.g., Selectboard and ZBA/DRB members) in 5 towns.
- Assisted 8 towns in developing and submitting Municipal Planning Grant applications (5 were
funded) for plan and zoning updates and a town-wide natural resources inventory.

- Coordinated a regional Zoning Administrators (ZA)/Floodplain Administrators (FA) brown bag lunch meeting; attendees included ZAs/FAs and Selectboard members from 8+ towns, all of whom enthusiastically endorsed a continuing meeting series on a quarterly or semi-annual basis.
- Continued discussion among towns about how they might share services or functions, and whether or not they felt the WRC could play a helpful role, with the goal of potentially reducing costs to towns, reducing administrative burdens, and obtaining more value and quality of service for public dollars spent. Created a list-serv to facilitate communications among towns about the topic.

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 WRC completed its two-year comprehensive regional plan update and adopted the new plan in September, 2014. This highly public process benefited from the use of a website dedicated to presenting plan drafts and collecting public comment, in addition to face to face public meetings throughout the region and other traditional public engagement methods. Comments were also solicited from multiple state agencies and subject area experts.
- During this reporting period the WRC reviewed 34 Act 250 applications and 13 Section 248 applications. The latter were mainly solar projects. Act 250 applications included those related to Haystack/Hermitage Resort, Mount Snow, an affordable housing project, a stone quarry, and a self-storage facility.

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 redeveloped in ways that benefit the local and state economy, create or protect jobs, and increase housing opportunities.

- WRC was fortunate this year to receive from EPA an additional $400,000 for its Brownfield assessment program and $350,000 to recapitalize its Brownfields clean up revolving loan fund. From the program’s inception in 2000 it has brought in a total of $4.4 million dollars in federal Brownfields funds to the region for assessment and cleanup of Brownfields sites.
- Attended National Brownfields Conference in Chicago–August 31 to September 4th and accepted a Brownfield Phoenix Award on behalf of Algiers Village Redevelopment project. During the past year the WRC Brownfields program has worked on the following sites:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SITE</th>
<th>TOWN/ VILLAGE</th>
<th>BROWNFIELDS WORK</th>
<th>REUSE PLAN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roberston Papermill</td>
<td>Village of Bellows Falls</td>
<td>Continue to assist Town and BFADC on Brownfield issues related to redevelopment. Participated as part of the Vermont’s BERA team this site. Provided assessment funds for historic and archeological assessment (106).</td>
<td>Purchased by Bellows Falls Area Development Corp (BFADC) for Redevelopment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former Planet Gas</td>
<td>Brattleboro</td>
<td>WRC RLF Grant for cleanup of site.</td>
<td>Cleanup was completed for the Brattleboro Area Farmers Market owned site. The site was landscaped and developed for parking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estey Organ - Root</td>
<td>Brattleboro</td>
<td>Corrective Action Planning (CAP) and WRC Brownfields RLF Loan</td>
<td>Redeveloped by owner for light industrial/storage. Clean up will begin in FY 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estey Organ – 108-130 Birge Street</td>
<td>Brattleboro</td>
<td>WRC Brownfields RLF Loan</td>
<td>Redevelopment to improve parking. Clean up will begin in FY 17.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barnboard</td>
<td>Wilmington</td>
<td>WRC Brownfields RLF Grant and Loan</td>
<td>Cleanup completed for Deerfield Valley Transit Association new bus facility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tri-State Auto</td>
<td>Brattleboro</td>
<td>WRC Brownfields RLF Grant and Loan</td>
<td>A loan/grant to New England Youth Theater; partial cleanup of their site completed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemco/ Liberty Mill</td>
<td>Bellows Falls</td>
<td>Phase II ESA</td>
<td>When work began on this site BFADC was working with Windham County Sherriff Department for redevelopment as a Justice Center (dispatch, education, etc.). The Sherriff decided not to pursue the site; currently the site remains empty with additional Phase II testing needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arch Street</td>
<td>Brattleboro</td>
<td>Phase II and CAP</td>
<td>Brattleboro Museum and Art Center to redevelop the building with possible arts related business, housing, and education space.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Next Stage Theatre</td>
<td>Putney</td>
<td>Clean up grant</td>
<td>Asbestos cleanup complete for performing arts center.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twin Valley High School</td>
<td>Wilmington</td>
<td>Phase I ESA</td>
<td>Community considering purchasing the former High School for community center.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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.

- Participated on Southeastern Economic Development Strategies (SeVEDES) Board and the Windham Region 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.
- Participated in the work of the bi-regional (Windham and Bennington) Southern Vermont Economic Development Zone created by the legislature in its 2015 session and the production of its report and recommendations.
- Began 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.
- Provided data and analysis for the United Way of Windham County’s community indicators.
- Worked with Windham Region Working Forests Workgroup on ways to educate the public about the importance of forestry in the regional economy. As part of this work an Art exhibit of paintings called Shedding Light on the Working Forest at Brattleboro Museum & Art Center (BMAC) was held. Organized and participated as moderator in panel discussion at BMAC titled: Turing Local Wood into Local Good.
- Assisted the Town of Whitingham on an arts/infrastructure project for Jacksonville.
- Assisted the Vermont Department of Health and the Windham County Prevention Coalition to update A Primer on Planning for Prevention to make it relevant to the Windham Region.
- Continued to assist Windham Region communities with village center and downtown applications.
- Began working with Green Economy Innovation Hub on Living Communities Challenge program.
- Provided resource assistance to Vermont Council on Rural Development Community Visit in Vernon.

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 - Cooperation and Coordination between VTrans, Regions and Municipalities

- **TAC activity** – WRC held 10 TAC meetings. Attendance ranged from 4-8 TAC members per meeting, a 5-100% participation rate.

- **TAC Outcomes**
  - Continued to host the Aesthetic Evaluation Committee organized to advise VTrans and contractors on the aesthetic elements of new I-91 Bridge 9 over Vermont Route 30/West River.
  - Hosted Jim Ryan of ANR to discuss the provisions of the Vermont Clean Water Initiative and the Municipal Roads General Permit. This meeting was recorded for broadcast by Brattleboro Cable Television and posted to the WRC website for on-demand viewing.
  - Hosted Pam Thurber of VTrans to discuss the funding, inventory, maintenance and management of bridges.
  - Hosted a VTrans presentation on the Vermont Local Roads program.

- **Outreach**
  - Hosted a November 2015 Transportation Board Forum in Brattleboro; organized September 2015 Hearing on the inclusion of Readsboro in Route 100 Scenic Byway
  - Participated in 5 Connecticut River Transit/Deerfield Valley Transit Association Board Meetings.
  - Participated in 2 Elderly & Disabled Meetings
  - Met with the U.S. Department of Energy and the Vermont Public Service Department to discuss the movement of spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste from Vermont Yankee.

- **Data collection**
  - 7 bridge and culvert inventories (Halifax, Newfane, Putney, Rockingham, Townshend, Wardsboro, Weston).
  - 27 pedestrian counts.
  - 20 traffic counts.
  - 5 sign inventories
  - 2 parking inventories

Objective #2 - Conformance with Act 200 and Facilitating Decentralized Decision Making

- The Regional Transportation Plan was adopted in June 2013 and is integrated into the Regional Plan.
- WRC attended public meeting for Rockingham I-91 bridge reconstruction project.
- Through our Project Review Committee, WRC reviewed and/or provided comments on 4 Act 250 applications with substantial transportation elements: Denison Quarry, Mount Snow Resort, Hermitage Resort, and Snow Vidda helipad.
- Serving on the Municipal Roads General Permit Core Team.

Objective #3 - Providing Transportation Planning Support to Municipalities

Short-range providing direct assistance to municipalities is 42% of NRPC’s transportation budget. A large portion of the coordination activities include municipal assistance. Municipal projects included:
Wrote or provided significant technical assistance for 10 transportation-related grant applications for municipalities, including Better Roads Program, Transportation Alternatives, Strong Communities/Better Connections, and Bicycle and Pedestrian grant applications. Completed the Route 30 Transit Feasibility Study.

Developed the scope of work for and kicked off the Route 30 Gateway Mini Corridor Study for the Town of Brattleboro which is examining the evolving land uses in the vicinity of the I-91 bridge over Route 30 and the West River, and opportunities for improved bicycle and pedestrian use.

Other examples include facilitating discussion among the Town of Rockingham, New England Central Railroad and VTrans about subsidence concerns above railroad tunnel; reducing the speed limit on Route 9 in the vicinity of Marlboro Elementary School; and assisting multiple towns with development and review of requests for proposals related to transportation infrastructure work.

Emergency Preparedness and 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 assist as needed in special circumstances like Tropical Storm Irene and other declared disasters.

The WRC develops local hazard mitigation plans for our towns, with the exception of Brattleboro which created its own. Of our 27 towns, 19 (70%) have hazard mitigation plans either adopted or under review. Twenty-five of the 27 (93%) currently have updated local emergency operations plans in place.

WRC worked with FEMA and the Vermont Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) on the development of a Vermont Local Hazard Mitigation Plan template outline to expedite the review of the towns’ plans.

The WRC staffs the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC-6). This year it made a big push to improve the collection and organization of Tier II hazardous materials reports from local businesses and other entities, as well as improving access to this information by dispatch and fire departments. LEPC membership increased as a result. Other LEPC-6 topics covered included US Army Corps of Engineers dam failure response and evacuation planning; U.S. EPA Tier II training workshop; Northeast K9 Search and Rescue demonstration; a U.S. Department of Homeland Security Critical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards presentation; and a site visit with Green Mountain Railroad. WRC staff and the LEPC-6 chair together attended the New Hampshire Hazmat Conference.

In conjunction with partners from the University of Massachusetts, WRC developed a Municipal Guidance for Flood Emergencies document specific for Vermont towns. This document details important steps and considerations to be made before a flooding event, during response, and in recovery. It will soon be available electronically and in hard copy.

The WRC serves as the local liaison to communicate damage to and 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, created a damage reporting/situational awareness protocol that will expedite the gathering of accurate information from towns with the goal of minimizing duplicate requests for information.

- WRC developed revised model floodplain bylaws which incorporate the new state river corridor requirements for our towns with or without zoning.
- WRC developed an Evacuation Plan template for use by our towns. DEMHS will be adding this as a new appendix in the 2017 LEOP.
- Two WRC staff participated in the Vigilant Guard state-wide exercise. They assumed roles within 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.

- WRC GIS staff provided support to the Transportation Planning Initiative for all data collection activities under Objective #1, which included culvert inventories, sign inventories, parking inventories, traffic counts, park and ride counts, and bike/ped counts.
- Town plan maps were updated for Dover, Putney, Westminster, Whittingham, and Winhall. Zoning map updates were done for Dummerston and Stratton.
- Assisted the Village Center renewal process for six towns by updating village center maps of Jamaica, Algiers, Putney, Saxtons River, Readsboro, and Weston. In addition, the downtown district map for Bellows Falls was updated.
- WRC continues to further efforts to improve the status of digital parcel data in the region. We provided advice to two towns on their parcel data. We also gathered updated data from towns, processed the data to match state guidelines, provided the data to VCGI for public distribution, and posted KML files on WRC’s web site for access to those with no GIS capabilities.
- Began work with Vermont Land Trust on a Climate-Resilient Biodiversity Conservation Planning project for the West and Deerfield River Watersheds.
- Provided mapping assistance to the Guilford, Marlboro, Rockingham, and Westminster Conservation Commissions.
- Gave two presentations at the Vermont Geospatial Forum, one on Trail Mapping and one on using Collector for ArcGIS software.

**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, 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 partnered with local and regional organizations to create the Windham Wood Heat Initiative, a program designed to assist public schools and municipalities in Windham County transition their buildings to wood heat. The program is working with 12 public schools and 6 municipalities (on 12 town-owned buildings) to assess the feasibility of installing wood boilers in their buildings as well as providing assistance to two schools that have wood boilers installed. 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 was granted $400,000 through the CEDF to create the Windham County Renewable Energy Program, through which the WRC will provide grants for smaller scale renewable energy generation projects. The design of the program got underway in FY 2016 and grant applications will be solicited beginning November, 2016.
- WRC served as a communication conduit to the legislature and Governor’s administration for its 12 towns that contain TransCanada power generation facilities, lakes, lands, recreational facilities, and flowage rights. These holdings total more than 20,000 acres within the region, and the sale of the TransCanada facilities could have wide ranging fiscal, economic development, and ecological impacts on these 12 towns.
- WRC continued its engagement in the Public Service Board docket for Entergy Vermont Yankee’s application for a second spent fuel storage facility.

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 implement river corridor assessments in local planning and regulations which result in better and safer growth management decisions.

- Conducted several public outreach meetings throughout the region to explain the Vermont Clean Water Initiative with a particular emphasis on the responsibilities of towns. A video of a public forum is available.
- The Saxtons River Watershed Collaborative formed in the spring of 2015 as a partnership to creatively, collaboratively, and actively explore new ways of addressing flood resiliency. With funding and support from the High Meadows Fund, the 18-month project takes a watershed-scale approach to resiliency through a multi-faceted partnership that integrates conservation, education, and policy to protect public safety and infrastructure while helping to protect our water resources. The partners in the collaborative are the Windham Regional Commission (WRC), four towns (Windham, Grafton, Rockingham, and Westminster), the Windham County Natural Resources Conservation District (WCNCRD), the Vermont River Conservancy (VRC), the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, Grafton Elementary School and the Windham Foundation.
- Participated in Deerfield Headwaters Committee with ANR, Trout Unlimited, Franklin Regional Council of Governments (MA), Franklin Land Trust (MA), and others pursuing and supporting efforts to protect and restore water quality and habitat in Deerfield River headwaters.
- Secured 3 Ecosystem Restoration Program grants for: Stream Geomorphic Assessment and Corridor Plan for the North River in Halifax and Whitingham; Green River Floodplain Attenuation in Guilford; and Adams Brook Restoration (of post-Irene bed armoring) in Newfane.
- Participated in various collaborative efforts, including FERC relicensing of hydro projects on the Connecticut River, Creating Resilient Communities (focused on Deerfield River watershed in MA and VT, producing scalable, widely applicable products); Stratton Water Quality Remediation Plan; and Connecticut River Streambank Erosion Committee (VT, NH, and MA).
- Facilitated communication/collaboration among ANR, Windham County Natural Resources Conservation District, Connecticut River Watershed Council, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Ver-
Fiscal Year 2016

Windham Regional Commission

mont River Conservancy, landowners, town officials, and citizens to clean up, stabilize, and conserve the site of an Irene-damaged house on the Green River.

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. This included the development and release of a report prepared by the UMass Donahue Institute that explores the impacts that income lost from the closure of Vermont Yankee will have throughout the economy. We also brought together key economic development stakeholders from each of the three states to connect and generate discussion on how we could mitigate these losses and advance our shared economy. This convening was supported by the U.S. Economic Development Administration (U.S. EDA) and the National Association of Development Organizations. This group also made successful application to the U.S. EDA through a grant initiated by the BDCC to support its business incubator and accelerator projects, for support to explore common ground in our respective economic development strategies, opportunities for collaboration, and lessons learned from other nuclear host regions.

♦ Met with staff of Vermont’s federal delegation in D.C. to make the case 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.

♦ Actively engaged as a member of 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.

Administration and 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 a single audit on an annual basis. For FY 2015, as in past years, there were no significant findings.

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.