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

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

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

- ACRPC assisted nearly half of its member municipalities adopt plans within FY2018 (10 of 21). Our Local Government Committee was busy traveling each month to conduct reviews, meet with the planning commissions and recommend votes for the full Commission. Highlights from each of these efforts follow:
  - **Goshen:** ACRPC approved the Goshen Town Plan at its September 13, 2017 meeting. ACRPC consulted with Goshen throughout its planning process providing ideas, editing and mapping services.
Weybridge: ACRPC approved Weybridge’s Town Plan on October 11, 2017. In the prior year, ACRPC helped Weybridge with a comprehensive plan update.

Ferrisburgh: ACRPC approved the Ferrisburgh Town Plan on November 8, 2017. ACRPC supplied technical and mapping assistance to the Town of Ferrisburgh in support of its plan re-write.

Panton: ACRPC approved the Panton Town Plan at its February 14, 2018 meeting. ACRPC assisted Panton with the Town Plan update, which included a community wide survey, statistical update, flood resiliency and energy siting standards updates.

Bridport: ACRPC approved Bridport’s Town Plan at its February 14, 2018 meeting. The Bridport plan update included improvements to all sections and a new focus on enabling village center designation.

Lincoln: ACRPC approved the Lincoln Town Plan on April 11, 2018. ACRPC supplied technical and mapping assistance to the Town of Lincoln in support of its plan re-write the previous year.

Shoreham: ACRPC approved the Shoreham Town Plan on April 11, 2018. Prior to approval, ACRPC provided technical and mapping assistance to the Town of Shoreham, specifically focusing on its village and the Farnham property.

Middlebury: ACRPC approved Middlebury’s Town Plan at its April 11, 2018 meeting. The new plan updated the housing section and included an improved implementation section.

Leicester: ACRPC approved the Leicester Town Plan on May 9, 2018. ACRPC helped Leicester with enhancing the energy section and updating mapping in its new plan.

Whiting: ACRPC approved the Whiting Town Plan at its June 13, 2018 meeting. ACRPC assisted Whiting to complete its town plan update, including incorporation of flood resiliency, energy, and economic development sections.

- ACRPC helped the Towns of Cornwall, Leicester, Waltham, Shoreham and Ripton draft new zoning regulations to implement their plan.
- ACRPC provided technical support to all Zoning Administrators within the Region and held two Zoning Administrator Roundtables.
- In addition to the Consultations ACRPC performed in drafting and approving plans as noted above, ACRPC also conducted municipal consultations in Middlebury and Monkton.

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

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

**BROWNFIELDS**

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

- ACRPC does not have any Brownfields funding of its own at this time. However, ACRPC continued to work with the Town of Whiting to remediate a contaminated property in its village, near its school and fire station, which will open that property for redevelopment potential. This project is funded through the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission’s Brownfield’s program.

**ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

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

- ACRPC continued to work with the Town of Bristol to support increased development within its Village Planning Area by supporting implementation of the Stoney Hill Master Plan 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 its infrastructure. This business park is being designed within the Village Planning Area to create new spaces for growing businesses within Bristol’s village, supporting the economic growth of this area.
- ACRPC worked for the City of Vergennes to help implement the City Master Plan funded by a Better Connections Strong Communities Grant it previously helped write. The Master plan prioritized transportation and infrastructure projects within the City to help promote economic development. ACRPC assisted the City of Vergennes assess and plan for improvements to its stormwater and wastewater systems, one of the community’s highest priority projects using funding from a Lake Champlain Basin Program grant it had helped Vergennes write in the previous year.
• ACRPC worked with the Addison County Economic Development Corporation to support several grant applications for local businesses.
• ACRPC helped eight municipalities (Listed under municipal technical assistance) include individualized economic development sections in each of the town plans it created.
• ACRPC worked with the Town of Shoreham to begin to plan for the redevelopment of the Farnham Parcel, a 300-acre town owned property bordering its village to the north.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING
Through contracts with the Vermont Agency of Transportation (“VTrans”), RPCs coordinate the federally funded Transportation Planning Initiative (TPI). This effort provides a statewide framework for public involvement in planning the improvements to Vermont’s transportation system, with local communities represented through regional Transportation Advisory Committees (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**
  o **TAC activity**
    ▪ ACRPC’s TAC held 8 meetings with 20 of its 21 towns having appointed representation to the TAC
    ▪ ACRPC facilitated 7 different meetings coordinating VTrans and municipal interests, including a meeting with the City of Vergennes, its neighbors and VTrans, which resulted in the joint Route 22A Truck Alternatives Study noted below.
  o **TAC Outcomes**
    ▪ The TAC funded two new planning studies during FY2018 and completed two others from the previous year
      • The Middlebury Rail Platform Study
      • The 22A Truck Alternatives Study
      • Lincoln Gap Winter closure study
      • Salisbury Village Study
  o **Other Outreach**
    ▪ 8 road foreman meetings held (September – April, including meeting with foremen and local legislators)
    ▪ Public Transit E&D meetings: 4
    ▪ Go! Vermont meetings: 2

• **Objective #2 Better Connect Federal Regional and Statewide Transportation Planning**
  o Regional Transportation Plan adopted April 11, 2018
  o Participation in Act 250 Transportation 1
• Objective #3 Provide Technical Assistance to Municipalities
  o 16 Communities participating in Road foremen meeting
  o 19 municipalities assisted with transportation related grants
  o 15% of budget spent on municipal technical assistance
  o 2 culvert inventories conducted
  o 2 municipal transportation studies undertaken
  o Helped write 10 transportation elements of municipal plans
  o 5 Municipal Road inventories undertaken with App developed by ACRPC

• Objective #4 Deliver Results that Advance VTrans Strategic and Long-Range Transportation Plan
  o 7 Data collection activities for VTrans including roadway, park and ride, and bike and ped.

Objective #5: Provide a mechanism for Improved Public Outreach and Education
  o See TAC, Road Foremen, Transit meetings in Objectives 1, 2 and 3 above.

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

• Fourteen of the twenty-one municipalities in the Region (67%) currently have a hazard mitigation plan either adopted or under review.
• Nineteen of twenty-one of municipalities in the Region (90%) currently have an updated local emergency plan.
• ACRPC developed, participated in, and/or hosted 2 emergency management exercises this fiscal year. They included a functional exercise with Middlebury College, Porter Medical Center and the Town of Middlebury as players. Each exercise helped improve the community’s preparation for disaster management.
• Staff attended the Vermont Emergency Preparedness Conference and the Resilient Vermont workshops to learn and bring local perspective to the discussions.
• ACRPC hosted and/or developed trainings for local officials in hazardous materials reporting, water/wastewater operators’ emergency training, cyber-security training for local businesses, active shooter training for schools, emergency response training for museums, and floodplain field trips for state floodplain managers. Each workshop improved local communities and agencies ability to respond to disasters.

• Staff assisted in the coordination of a regional School Safety Group for Addison Northwest Supervisory Union and an Addison County Business Safety Group. Staff attended regular Regional Safety meetings, regional museum staff emergency planning meetings, and meetings of the Addison County Emergency Planning Committee. At such meetings, ACRPC helped local groups prepare for and coordinate a regional response to disasters.

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

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

• ACRPC provided mitigation planning maps and data for the towns of Bristol, Goshen, New Haven, Orwell, Panton, Salisbury and Shoreham.

• ACRPC created an app to support the data gathering efforts that its transportation planner is undertaking to map hydrologically connected roadways within the Region and improved a similar app previously developed that collects and provides culvert data. The apps, built on an existing software platform, allow for the quick and efficient collection, storage and transmittal of road and culvert data collected to improve water quality.

• ACRPC maintained all regional databases.

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

• ACRPC completed work on the Energy Section of its Regional Plan, including creating maps and land use projects regarding the region’s ability to host local energy generation resources sufficient to meet its share of generation necessary to support the State of Vermont’s goal of producing 90% of its energy from renewable sources by 2050. ACRPC adopted its Regional Energy plan just after the end of the fiscal year on July 17, 2018.

• ACRPC worked with six municipalities within its Region to help them revise their local energy plans and control their own energy future. Each new plan includes all data necessary to satisfy state requirements for enhanced energy plans. Plans meeting these goals will receive a higher level of deference from the Public Utilities Commission.
• ACRPC organized a consortium of towns adjacent to Lake Champlain to determine whether electrical infrastructure located under Lake Champlain is subject to municipal property tax. This effort could yield over $1,500,000 annually to municipalities bordering Lake Champlain and over $9,000,000 annually to the State Education Fund.

• ACRPC represented the Town of Whiting in the Vermont Supreme Court to help it defeat a poorly sited 500 kW solar array after the applicant appealed the decision of the Public Utility Commission. A decision has not yet been issued.

• ACRPC supported many other solar arrays in the Region that met the criteria it created for siting solar facilities.

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

• ACRPC continued its support of and participation as part of the Addison County River Watch Collaborative (ACRWC). ACRWC provides water quality sampling in 6 watersheds and submits samples to a state lab. ACRPC hosts the ACRWC meetings and sampling events, maintains the website with current sampling data for the public, and supports presentations to targeted community boards and “kitchen water chats.”

• ACRPC staff participates in the Lake Champlain Basin Program’s Technical Advisory Committee.

• ACRPC works regularly with its municipal members to improve water quality data for their local road systems. See Transportation Planning.

• ACRPC worked as project administrator for a project to map and identify improvements to the stormwater system in the city of Vergennes.

• ACRPC helped the Town of Bristol write an ERP grant to create a master stormwater plan for Bristol Village. It is administering that grant.

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

• ACRPC serves as the municipal project manager on two sidewalk/shared use path improvement projects within the Towns of Middlebury and Weybridge. These projects enhance a popular walking route that connects Middlebury’s downtown with other portions of town, including its industrial area, and neighborhoods in Middlebury and Weybridge. One project is in the process of procuring rights of way. The second will go to bid in the fall.

• This year ACRPC continued its partnership with Local Motion of Burlington to support the Addison County Walk-Bike Council it created last year. 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. The Council completed its workplan and began to implement program activities, like creating Safe Routes to School Programs in Vergennes and Bristol and making educational information concerning biking available on its website.

**ADMINISTRATION & FUNDING**

ACRPC receives most of its funding through grants, and through a performance-based contract with the state. Town assessments constitute a small but very important percentage of our funding. For the 2018 fiscal year, ACRPC’s total revenue of approximately $680,000 dollars was derived from 91 percent state and federal grants supporting regional projects, 3 percent municipal project grant funding, and 6 percent from town assessments. While percentages may vary slightly from year to year, the year was typical of ACRPC received revenue.

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

ACRPC has an audit on an annual basis. For FY 2017, its most recent audit, there were no significant findings, which is the same result found in audits conducted in past years. ACRPC’s audit for FY 2018 will be completed by December 2018.

**‘AT WORK’ MAP**

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

The BCRC maintains an office in an historic building in the center of Bennington’s downtown. The Commission is overseen by municipally appointed commissioners representing each of the member towns and villages as well as eight commissioners representing specific interests such as economic development, housing, transportation, and public health. The BCRC employs ten full-time staff, one part-time staff person, and supervises 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 & IMPLEMENTATION

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

- The BCRC helped draft a plan update for the Village of North Bennington and assisted Bennington and Sunderland in updating their plans with forest habitat data to comply with Act 171. All plans are reviewed for conformance with statutory requirements, and implementation projects are clearly delineated.
- BCRC staff helped the Town of Woodford draft revisions to various sections of their land use regulations. Important aspects of the work have included incorporating simplified subdivision regulations and ensuring consistency with statutory requirements and the Town Plan. Staff also assisted the Village of Old Bennington with regulations related to siting solar energy facilities and developed a revised land use plan and zoning map for the Town of Sunderland.
- The BCRC assisted with new applications for village center designations in Dorset and East Dorset, in Rupert and West Rupert, and drafted an application for the Village of Manchester.
Staff also supported the Town of Bennington in generating necessary documents for renewal of their Downtown Designation.

- Following completion of a planning study that examined a key block of underutilized and vacant properties in the center of downtown Bennington, the BCRC has continued to work with the town and with a private redevelopment group to complete market studies and actively pursue redevelopment opportunities.

- BCRC staff responded to requests for assistance with various planning and zoning issues in all 17 of its member municipalities and conducted training for municipal officials on a variety of planning and land use topics including: procedures for land use administrators, boards, and commissions, new water quality rules/stormwater management and funding; planning for affordable housing, parcel mapping, Act 174 and energy planning, public transit and rail connectivity, natural resource conservation, and economic development planning. Representatives from each municipality attended at least one of the training sessions.

- BCRC updated its website format and content to better serve its municipalities. An interactive events calendar, up-to-date meeting agendas and minutes, and centralized source for municipal and regional documents has helped keep commissioners engaged in the BCRC’s work.

**REGIONAL PLANNING**

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

The Bennington County Regional Plan, most recently updated in 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 one Act 250 and seven 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 and data for each town in the region), and solid waste (a variety of education, outreach, and regulatory actions designed to help meet waste reduction and recycling targets).

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

BROWNFIELDS

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

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

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

- **Bennington Sites** – Tuttle property has completed Phase II and no further action necessary, and the Bennington Brush lot is undertaking Phase II. Redevelopment potential for retail, residential uses. Ideal Fuels, the Benmont Mill lot, and the Johnson Controls lot were identified as potential future assessment sites.

- **Putnam Block (Bennington Downtown)** – corrective action plan being implemented to pursue mixed use redevelopment of historic downtown block.

- **Pownal Sites** – Pownal Transfer Station Phase II proposal under review, Barlow Gravel Pit is undertaking additional testing for PCBs following completion of a second Phase II, and Pownal hydro facility restored and recommissioned for power generation.

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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

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

- **Southern Vermont Economic Development Zone**: The BCRC built capacity for regional economic development work by establishing relationships with key businesses, institutions, and individuals. The BCRC facilitates a steering committee to integrate regional needs and opportunities into a Southern Vermont Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) in cooperation with the Windham Region. As part of this effort, the BCRC organized the second annual Southern Vermont Economic Development Summit attended by over 200 people. The Summit was recognized by the International Economic Development Council for Excellence in Economic Development with a Silver Award for rural region special event.

- **The BCRC has continued to work with the Bennington Redevelopment Group, the Town of Bennington, and BCIC to undertake a major development project involving historic buildings and vacant land in the center of Bennington’s downtown. An innovative funding strategy has leveraged a Community Development Block Grant and a Tax Increment Financing District to underpin the project, which begins construction in the fall of 2018.**

- **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 & Education Committee. Many of these programs are being operated from Bennington’s downtown co-working space, the Lightning Jar, including the Ice House Entrepreneurship Program, which BCRC staff implemented with private-sector grant funding to improve business outcomes for entrepreneurs in the region.**

- **The strong emphasis on state designation programs described above has been used to support economic development planning and initiatives in several communities, including Manchester and Bennington in the past year.**

- **BCRC staff have met with existing businesses to understand and support job retention and growth, and have facilitated communication between prospective new businesses (relocation and new start-ups) and local and state officials. This focus on state connections to local businesses led to over $630,000 in workforce development grants from the Vermont Training Program to support employee training initiatives at four of the region’s key employers.**

### TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

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

The past year’s accomplishments as they relate to the BCRC’s TPI work program include:
From FY 2018 TPI Report:

- **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 seven members; the full TAC consists of 12 members. Over the course of the year, all TAC members have attended at least one meeting. Principal functions of the TAC are to provide input on specific projects and to prioritize projects in several program areas.
  - The BCRC also conducted outreach and education through the following means:
    - Direct outreach to each town and village regarding codes and standards, hazard mitigation planning, stormwater management, and related funding and financial considerations.
    - Organized and participated in road foreman/commissioner meetings, focusing on the municipal roads general permit, pavement management, spring flooding, and VOSHA requirements.
    - Participation in projects involving bicycle and pedestrian system connectivity and streetscape improvements.
    - Review of transportation energy goals and roundtable discussions of possible ways to support alternative transportation modes, including extensive...
participation in public meetings about the new bus link to the intercity passenger rail network.

- Participation in road safety audit reviews – particular focus on the Kocher Rd/East Rd intersection.
- Outreach to encourage participation in the annual Way to Go commuter challenge.

- **Conformance with Act 200 and Facilitating Centralized Decision Making**
  - The BCRC has been actively involved in development activities for a wide range of transportation projects, including:
    - Working with VTrans, local officials, regional economic development organizations, and local businesses to ensure successful launch of the new “Shires Connector” bus link to Amtrak from Manchester and Bennington.
    - North Bennington: Project management for sidewalk design and construction; Project manager for a Transportation Alternative Program funded project that will affect needed repairs to the roof of the historic train depot.
    - Bennington: Ongoing planning and project management for the Willowbrook-Applegate Path in Bennington; Ongoing project management for the Ninja Trail scoping and design-build project in Bennington; Ongoing project management for the Benmont Streetscape improvements project in Bennington; Ongoing project management for the Kocher Drive-US 7 crossing and multi-use pathway project; Completed planning study with recommendations to improve the streetscape of North Street by enhancing pedestrian and bicycle safety.
    - Dorset: Project manager for scoping study to develop proposals for pedestrian improvements in Dorset and East Dorset villages.
    - Arlington: Working with a consultant to design a safe walking route to link the Arlington Recreation Park to the Arlington Public Schools.
  - The BCRC participated in the review of one major Act 250 project. Transportation issues including traffic access and safety at a commercial development near Bromley Mountain in Peru were reviewed.

- **Providing Transportation Planning Support for Municipalities**
  - Provided Better Roads Program assistance to Sunderland, Manchester, Pownal, and Rupert.
  - 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 provided assistance to the Town of Sunderland in the completion of a “Safe Roads” plan for the community, with targeted improvements. Several identified improvements already have been implemented by the town and obtained funding to improve road shoulders along a dangerous section of highway has been submitted.
  - Conducted site visits and coordinated planning work related to roads, bridge, and parking area improvements in the town of Glastenbury.
  - Applied for funding to complete a scoping study for a multi-use path along historic trolley line from Bennington, VT to Williamstown, MA.
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & DISASTER RESILIENCY
RPCs play key roles in the mitigation and preparedness phases of emergency management in partnership with Vermont Emergency Management, the Vermont Homeland Security Unit, VTrans and the Agency of Natural Resources. RPCs provide direct staff support to the State Emergency Operations Center, administrative support to the Local Emergency Planning Committees, and coordination among responders and planners throughout the State’s four Public Safety Districts. RPCs also help update floodplain bylaws and FEMA-required hazard mitigation plans, coordinate updates to municipal emergency plans, and assist as needed in special circumstances like Tropical Storm Irene and other declared disasters.

- The BCRC continued to support municipalities in developing and updating Local Emergency Operations Plans (LEOPs); all municipalities in the region except Glastenbury have updated and approved LEOPs (14) or are in the process of working with BCRC and DEMHS to finalize approval (2).
- The BCRC provides support for development and updates to municipal hazard mitigation plans. The BCRC assisted with the development of new HMPs for Bennington, Manchester Village, Arlington, and Glastenbury. As part of the planning process, flood resiliency and stormwater actions, assessments of threats from forest insect pests, and economic development planning relevant to hazard mitigation were considered.
- The BCRC provided assistance with revisions and updates to flood hazard area planning documents and regulations through plan and bylaw updates.
- Ongoing support for the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) is provided by BCRC staff; focus areas during the past year included: coordinating regular meetings, facilitating presentations on emergency planning and response, scheduling emergency management trainings, hosted an Emergency Management Director course, preparing one-page evacuation plans for assisted living facilities, collected damage reports following hazardous weather events.
- The BCRC completed the Hoosic River Corridor Plan in Pownal – a hazard mitigation plan addressing residential developments and municipal infrastructure in that community. A river corridor plan was also prepared for Tubbs and Ladd Brook in Pownal, and assistance was provided to the town to replace a culvert and install a check dam along the Hoosic River at Skiparee Rd.
- Lye Brook Study: The BCRC was project manager for a project along Lye Brook in Manchester developing plans for removal of a berm, possible reconnection of Lye Brook with adjacent wetlands, and needed improvements to Richville Road.

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:
- Municipal-level renewable energy resource maps showing locations with high potential for renewable energy development as well as areas with significant constraints to development.
• River corridor mapping to support resiliency planning for several towns in the region including depiction of new flood hazard areas, and maps to support watershed planning and development of river corridor regulations.
• New maps to support municipal plan updates in two municipalities; mapping of proposed adjustments to zoning bylaw revisions were completed for one town.
• Various maps and geographic analyses completed in support of the Bennington downtown redevelopment project, including maps required for TIF, recreational facilities development, and other funding applications.
• Ongoing planning of regional trails and supporting facilities, building on the Bennington town trail map completed previously.

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

• In the past year, the BCRC took a lead role working with the Public Service Department, Vermont Energy Investment Corporation, Energy Action Network, and other regional planning commissions to develop new regional and municipal energy plans that focus specifically on energy conservation, efficiency, and renewable generation targets tied to Vermont’s energy goals and new comprehensive energy plan. The BCRC was one of the first RPCs to issue an affirmative Determination of Energy Compliance to a municipality (Bennington) for being consistent with Act 174 planning standards.
• In FY 2018, the BCRC supported development and adoption of Act 174-compliant municipal energy plans in nine municipalities, namely Bennington, North Bennington Village, Old Bennington Village, Dorset, Sunderland, Pownal, Manchester, Peru, and Stamford. This work has involved providing energy use and future energy demand projections to towns, identifying local strategies to reduce total energy use and improve energy efficiency, and mapping possible sites for renewable energy development in each municipality. Adopted and approved plans will be used to represent municipalities’ positions on applications for new generation projects before the Public Service Board.
• The BCRC presented on the progress of Act 174 regional and municipal energy planning at various meetings and conferences throughout the state and region.
• The BCRC worked closely with NeighborWorks of Western Vermont to promote and extend that organization’s “Heat Squad” building weatherization and alternative energy program throughout the region.
• The BCRC worked with a hydroelectric developer and town officials in Bennington and Pownal to bring two hydroelectric projects with a combined capacity of approximately 1 MW online.
• The BCRC reviews and comments on proposals for new renewable energy development in the region and participates in most Section 248 proceedings. The BCRC also has actively engaged with large energy users such as the regional medical center in planning for energy projects; after working with the BCRC, for example, the regional medical center agreed to install a new boiler that can be converted to use biomass instead of compressed natural gas.
• The BCRC’s Energy Committee has reviewed and issued comments on enhanced energy plans and prominent proposals for new commercial solar energy projects proposed in the region. The BCRC Energy and Development Review Committees have met with developers and invite local officials to participate in those meetings and technical reviews.

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

• Assisted VT ANR with completion and associated outreach on the Basin 1 Tactical Plan and integrated recommendations into local hazard mitigation plans and projects.
• Identify actions related to river protection outlined in adopted Hazard Mitigation Plans and integrate in ANR’s projects database for future funding allocation.
• The BCRC prepared tables characterizing flood and fluvial erosion hazard mitigation projects and draft language for use of the tables in resiliency elements of municipal plans – for North Bennington Village.
• The BCRC prepared river corridor maps by incorporating updates and administrative revisions to the Statewide River Corridor Base Map consistent with the VT DEC Procedure for Flood Hazard Area and River Corridor Protection Procedure in Sunderland and Stamford.
• BCRC staff attends monthly meetings of the Batten Kill Watershed Alliance and assisted with their education and water quality improvement projects.
• The BCRC worked with the Batten Kill Watershed Cooperative Invasive Species Management Association (CISMA) to identify and treat invasive species in selected areas of the watershed. Work was supported by an Eco Americorps volunteer.
• The BCRC coordinated stormwater master planning projects in Arlington and Shaftsbury and supported adoption of plans in Sandgate and Sunderland. Arlington’s plan incorporated a road erosion survey component.

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

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

• Two household hazardous waste collection events in the Alliance service area.
• Education and outreach to schools, municipalities, solid waste service providers, and the general public to increase recycling and organics management/composting and reduce levels of trash sent to landfills. BCRC contracts with the Northeast Recycling Council for this work. BCRC organized residential composting workshops and sold over eighty-five compost bins and receptacles.
• Outreach to forty businesses and two schools to assess current solid waste management and provide recommendations for improving recycling and organics management.
• Study and document current sludge disposal operations and future options.
• Expand available information and services related to construction and demolition debris, focusing especially on clean wood and asphalt shingles.

• Production and distribution of a regular newsletter on solid waste issues and maintenance of a web page and Facebook page dedicated to solid waste information.

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

• Working to improve regional food systems. Specific activities have included work with a regional nonprofit organization to complete a USDA-funded project assessing the regional food system with particular emphasis on food security issues in Bennington, participation in Bennington College’s CAPA Food Clinic, attendance of regular Hunger Council meetings, and support for a Harvest for Kids campaign and other events in partnership with local food pantries.

• Administration of a 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.

• Supporting the towns of Bennington and Manchester as well as regional business groups and arts organizations in Bennington in development of a “Cultural Plan” for the entire region. Initiated regional cooperation in cultural planning activities throughout the “Shires” region and helped secure project funding through the Municipal Planning Grants program.

• BCRC staff provided assistance to Pownal in securing recreational trails grant to design and develop a community pathway along the Hoosic River.

ADMINISTRATION & 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 $1.557 million in FY 2018 and total expenditures of approximately $1.492 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 2018 audit has confirmed the accuracy of the BCRC’s financial records and reports no significant findings.

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

‘AT WORK’ MAP
The map depicting the range of services provided by the BCRC to member municipalities is included on the next page.
BCRC Projects FY 2018

Assistance
- Bridge and Culvert Inventory
- Brownfield Assistance
- Clean Water Activities
- Economic Development
- Enhance Energy Planning
- Emergency Planning
- Grant Writing
- Mapping
- Planning and Zoning
- Transportation Planning

Municipal Designation Programs
- Designated Downtown
- Designated Village
- Growth Center

Zoning and Bylaw Status
- Adopted

Town Plan Status
- Current Town Plan
- Expired Town Plan
Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission  
FY 2018 Annual Report

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

MUNICIPAL PLANNING & 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:

- Assisted with two successful municipal planning grant applications - East Montpelier’s zoning bylaw rewrite and Northfield’s Town Plan update.
- Consulted with Barre City, Barre Town, Duxbury, Fayston, Northfield, Plainfield, and Roxbury on local planning and confirmed their planning efforts to retain eligibility for municipal planning grants. Used the consultation results to target FY19 planning assistance.
- Assisted Orange with a Town Plan update. Community engagement was identified as a critical action item to address the community’s development and conservation future.
- Supported Town Plan updates for Berlin, East Montpelier, Marshfield, Waitsfield, Waterbury, Woodbury, and Worcester by providing feedback on draft documents, providing information on flood resiliency and forest integrity, and/or mapping forest blocks and wildlife corridors.
- Substantially assisted East Montpelier’s efforts to develop a Village Master Plan.
- Provided feedback to Duxbury, Fayston, and Plainfield on proposed bylaw changes. Towns are modernizing 1980s bylaws to strengthen consistency with municipal plans.
- Hosted municipal trainings, including Essentials of Land Use Planning and Regulation, Municipal Housing Policies, three planning and zoning roundtables, and energy standards.

REGIONAL PLANNING

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

In 2018, CVRPC completed an enhanced regional energy plan to meet Act 174 Standards. Seventeen (17) individuals, representing utilities, private business, municipalities, state agencies, public transit, and regional non-profits, worked cooperatively to develop draft policies and actions. The plan includes a conflict resolution process in recognition that municipal and regional enhanced energy planning is
relatively new, an evolving process, and has not been completed by all municipalities. The Department of Public Service identified this aspect of CVRPC’s plan as a unique regional approach.

CVRPC amended the 2016 Central Vermont Regional Plan to incorporate the regional energy plan and address forest integrity. In addition, Commissioners set priorities for implementation actions which direct CVRPC’s annual work plan and budget.

As part of Plan Central Vermont, a substantial rewrite of the Central Vermont Regional Plan currently in progress, CVRPC completed a draft update to its Substantial Regional Impact definition and criteria and its project review process. These items guide CVRPC’s participation in Act 250 and Section 248.

CVRPC fostered regional and intermunicipal activities, a high priority implementation action of the Regional Plan. CVRPC invested more than $76,000 to support joint stormwater planning for eight towns in the Mad River and Kingsbury Branch watersheds and Barre City, Barre Town, and Plainfield. It also initiated Water Wise Woodlands, a joint effort among Cabot, Marshfield, and Plainfield linking forest integrity, private forest stewardship, and watershed resilience. CVRPC assisted the Wrightsville Beach Recreation District with financial management and strengthening internal controls, and acted as payroll administrator for the Cross Vermont Trail Association.

CVRPC reviews state permit applications to ensure proposed projects conform with the Regional Plan. The Project Review Committee reviewed one major Act 250 application and determined it conformed to the plan. The Committee also reviewed three, pre-Section 248 application requests for preferred site designation under Public Utility Commission Rule 5.1 pertaining to construction and operation of net-metering systems. The Commission supported designation for two sites.

CVRPC surveyed regional partners and municipalities about Act 250 to strengthen its understanding of local and regional concerns and to frame discussion for the Board of Commissioners. Staff facilitated sessions at the Vermont Planners Association workshop on Act 250.

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.

CVRPC has an active brownfields assessment grant. In 2018, the Commission worked with owners and prospective developers at eight (8) properties to sample sites or plan for contaminant remediation.

- **Bonacorsi-Capital Candy, Barre City:** CVRPC invested in a Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessment to assist Capital Candy understand its environmental obligations prior to acquiring the Bonacorsi property, which it leases. Impacts from historic dry cleaning operations will require installation of an air quality system in the building, similar to a radon mitigation system. The project facilitates Capital Candy’s business expansion, allowing it to add jobs.

- **Woodbury Country Store, Woodbury:** CVRPC assisted Woodbury to guide a multiagency effort to buy out a former general store and gas station in the village center. When completed, the
project will reduce flooding and flood damages to other properties. CVRPC completed Phase II assessment activities and invested staff time to help ensure multiple funding sources are coordinated and used efficiently. VEM, DEC, and VTrans have partnered with the Town.

- **12 Keith Avenue, Barre City:** To implement its North Main to Summer Street Master Plan, the City of Barre committed to building a parking area to support Downstreet’s redevelopment of 22 Keith Avenue into housing and office space. CVRPC completed a Partial Corrective Action Plan for the parking area to help insure sealing the site with pavement does not exacerbate contaminant movement to other properties.

- **Former Ernie’s Garage, Barre City:** Ayer’s Autobody previously participated in CVRPC’s program to develop a brownfield property. Based on that success, the company purchased a second property to expand its operations. CVRPC invested $34,600 in Phase II assessment work and Corrective Action Planning to investigate potential challenges at the new site.

- **Fire and Recycling Station, Whiting:** The statutory relationship of Vermont’s regional planning commissions allows RPCs to maximize federal brownfield investments by sharing resources across boundaries. CVRPC supported a Phase II assessment at a Town-owned property in Whiting (Addison County) to leverage the property's redevelopment into a municipal facility.

- **Former Clark’s Feed, Barre City:** CVRPC supported Barre City’s Merchants Row redevelopment through site characterization at the former Clark’s Feed Store property. The site has been redeveloped as parking, which allows for full use of the Blanchard Block, a former brownfield property where use by large tenants was hindered by a lack of dedicated parking.

- **Union Elementary School, Montpelier:** Modernization of the playground at the school was challenged by urban soils. CVRPC invested $66,800 to determine the breadth and depth of the issue and to develop a Corrective Action Plan. Construction of the new playground is underway.

- **Former Granite Works, Montpelier:** When historic manufacturing processes threatened to halt this property’s sale, CVRPC completed a Phase II assessment and an Evaluation of Corrective Action Alternatives to help insure redevelopment could occur. CVRPC’s investment of $74,500 supports conversion of this large granite shed site into housing, a critical need in Montpelier.

**ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

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

- Provided maps for Montpelier’s successful application for Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District designation. Granite Works, a CVRPC brownfield program property, is included in the district.
- Supported the Cabot Community Association with its efforts to develop and begin implementing a revitalization plan for the Village of Cabot.
- Coached the East Montpelier Revolving Loan Fund Advisory Committee on strategies to meet closeout agreement terms for the Fund’s Community Development Block Grant.
- Assisted Cabot to resolve an undischarged mortgage lien related to a 1986 Community Development Block Grant for a housing rehabilitation loan fund.
- Assisted Warren to update its capital budget.
- Finished a flood study of several streams in the Mad River watershed and the Thatcher Brook/Graves Brook watershed and began project implementation.
- Assisted the Mad River Valley Planning District with strategic planning by compiling priority projects identified in various MRVPD documents and summarizing implementation activities.
- Trained Vermont Housing and Conservation Board staff on Vermont’s permit process.

**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.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Performance Measure</th>
<th>Objective 1</th>
<th>CVRPC</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Enhance Cooperation and Coordination between VTrans, RPC Regions and Municipalities</td>
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<tr>
<td># of TAC meetings held</td>
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<td># of non-municipal TAC members actively engaged in transportation planning</td>
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<td># of municipalities actively engaged in transportation planning</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td># of RPC coordination activities with municipalities and VTrans</td>
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<th>Better Connect Federal, Regional and Statewide Transportation Planning</th>
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<tr>
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<td># of regional transportation plans that are current (within 8 years)</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td># of Act 250 applications with RPC comments relating to transportation</td>
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<td>G</td>
<td># of Section 248 applications with RPC comments relating to transportation</td>
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<td>H</td>
<td># of coordination activities in support of regional public transit providers</td>
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<td># of VTrans committees that involves RPC staff participation</td>
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<td># of regions participating in Project Prioritization</td>
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<th>Provide Technical Assistance to Municipalities</th>
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<td># of municipalities assisted with transportation related grants</td>
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<td>% of budget spent on municipal technical assistance</td>
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<td># of municipal transportation inventories conducted</td>
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<td>completed/undertaken</td>
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<td>P</td>
<td># of municipalities assisted with transportation element of municipal/town plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q</td>
<td># of road erosion inventories in support of the MRGP completed using TPI dollars and using other funding sources</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Objective 4
Deliver Results that Advance VTrans Strategic and Long Range Transportation Plans

| R | # of data collection activities conducted specifically for VTrans | 29 |

Objective 5
Provide a Mechanism for Improved Public Outreach and Education
Hosted and facilitated two public meetings on the expansion of the existing Berlin Exit 7 Park and Ride facility. This expansion was opposed by the adjacent landowner due to concerns over invasion of privacy and light pollution. CVRPC worked with VTrans and the landowner on a compromise all parties could support.

Outcomes

- Completed studies for the Gallison Hill/Brazier/Towne Hill Roads intersection in East Montpelier and the Reservoir and Lords Roads intersection in Orange.
- The Transportation Advisory Committee ranked 7 State roadway projects, recommended functional reclassification of 19 roadways by VTrans, reviewed 2 park and ride facility designs to improve capacity, and toured construction projects in East Montpelier.
- Convened four public meetings as part of Green Mountain Transit’s Comprehensive System Analysis, the NetGen Plan. Project will enhance service through route adjustments or reconfigurations and elimination or addition of service. Regional partners requested CVRPC lead a grant to foster paratransit rider engagement in Barre-Montpelier service transitions.
- Participated in the development of the VT 100/108 Corridor Plan Meeting.
- Collected data to support local and state transportation decision making, including 5 local bridge and culvert inventories, 23 traffic counts, 3 park and ride surveys, 6 road erosion inventories, and 3 pedestrian counts.
- Participated in 3 accelerated bridge meetings and 1 park and ride meeting.
- Participated in redesign of VTrans’ project prioritization process.
- Managed the Vermont Online Bridge and Culvert Inventory Tool for RPCs and towns, participated in its upgrade, and coached users on the tool’s use.
- Worked with Warren, Middlesex, Duxbury, and Moretown to identify and prioritize road erosion locations for inclusion in capital plans.
- Worked with the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps to identify towns for Class IV road inventories and installation of best management practices to address gully erosion.
- Wrote or provided significant assistance for 10 transportation-related grant applications, including Better Roads, Municipal Roads Stormwater Mitigation, and Bicycle and Pedestrian.

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

- Assisted 23 municipalities with development of 2018 Local Emergency Operation Plan (LEOP). 100% of the region’s municipalities have adopted 2018 LEOPs. Supported Annex developments for Animal Disaster Response Plans, Debris Management Plans, Emergency Contact by support functions, mutual aid lists, Delegation of Authority lists, and maps.
- Assisted 16 towns with aspects of Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) development. 16 of the region’s 23 municipalities (70%) have a FEMA-approved LHMP.
- Assisted 7 municipalities with mitigation grant applications for a bridge replacement, a home buyout, critical facility generators, slope stabilization, and LHMP development.
- Supported LEPC 5 through administrative assistance, fiscal agent services, fostering a Memorandum of Understanding for four grants, and developing a draft Emergency Management Plan.
- Assisted with planning and/or coordination of 3 Table Top Exercises to test emergency plans.
- Collaborated with State and Federal agencies to bring 10 preparedness trainings to Central Vermont. Acted as pilot RPC for new Emergency Management Director course.
- Facilitated a 3-town meeting with Green Mountain Power to continue the dialogue about local concerns for the safety of Marshfield Dam #6 (Molly’s Falls dam).
- Supported the State Emergency Operation Center for two events by gathering local damage information and providing staff for SEOC operations.
- Participated in State Hazard Mitigation Plan development through input meetings, providing local and regional data and information, and offering Commission comments.
- Represented regional planning commissions on the State Hazard Mitigation Grant Program application review team.

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

- Assisted Waterbury with a Story Map related to road construction and improvements.
- Prepared maps for Northfield Falls village center designation application.
- Updated zoning maps for Marshfield and Duxbury.
- Provided assistance to Worcester for parcel map amendments and printed parcel maps.
- Completed sewer manhole mapping and provided assistance for road erosion and culvert inventories for Barre Town.
- Created floodplain and road right of way maps for Cabot’s zoning regulations.
- Developed a regional trail connections and recreation map.
- Completed road maps for all 23 municipalities in the region.
- Developed a watershed wide map of the Winooski River for educational outreach for the Friends of the Winooski River.
- Created Winooski River floodplain maps for a Vermont Emergency Management exercise.
- Worked with Montpelier to establish mapping of slopes for city parcels.
• Created flood vulnerability maps for Plainfield for rainstorms and dam releases.
• Mapped Tier II facilities by town to assist municipalities with planning and response.

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

• Participated in Green Mountain Transit’s Comprehensive System Analysis, the NextGen Transit Plan, to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the region’s transit services.
• Developed a regional energy plan to position the region for its energy future and support the State’s goal of 90% renewable energy by 2050. The project included energy demand and generation modeling, maps depicting renewable generation potential, and regional strategies.
• Conducted three municipal trainings about Act 174’s requirements and presented the regional energy planning effort at a community sponsored workshop in Northfield.
• Assisted Barre City, Calais, Marshfield, and Warren with local energy planning and worked with Waterbury to finalize its energy planning consistent with Act 174.
• Initiated development of criteria to evaluate requests for “preferred siting” under the Public Utility Commission’s Net Metering Rules.

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

• Worked with ANR, partners, and municipalities to develop the Draft Winooski River and White River Tactical Basin Plans. Provided substantial assistance with municipal engagement and project development for the Winooski River basin.
• Completed a GIS analysis of gaps in riparian buffer along the Mad River and tributaries. The Friends of the Mad River will use the analysis to target outreach for buffer plantings and conservation easements.
• Completed a Stream Geomorphic Assessment for the Mad River in Moretown. The assessment found that Jones Brook is unstable and undergoing major geomorphic changes.
• Managed joint stormwater master plans for 8 towns in the Kingsbury Branch and Mad River watersheds.
• Completed two stormwater master plan projects, a 3-town effort for Barre City, Barre Town, and Plainfield and a local effort in Berlin. The plans position projects for implementation.
• Initiated planning for Northfield’s Water Street stormwater mitigation project. The project will improve water quality by treating runoff from 48 acres of residential development.
• Administered Clean Water Block Grants for stormwater mitigation projects in Barre City and Berlin.
• Continued work with Waterbury on administrative changes to its river corridor, positioning the Town to implement a future river corridor bylaw.
- Supported 20 municipalities with implementation of the Municipal Grant in Aid Pilot Program.
- Assisted 4 municipalities with road erosion inventories and capital plans.
- Worked with VT DEC to develop a data standard and update the inventory tool used by towns to comply with Municipal Roads General Permit requirements and organized a training.
- Fostered *Water Wise Woodlands*, an intermunicipal project among Cabot, Marshfield, and Plainfield to explore how forest integrity can support watershed resiliency. Friends of the Winooski River and Vermont Woodlands Association are co-leaders with CVRPC.
- Assisted the Departments of Forests, Parks and Recreation and Fish and Wildlife to develop web-based tools to help municipalities and regions meet Act 171 forest integrity requirements.

**SPECIAL PROJECTS**

*Class IV Roads Demonstration Project* - CVRPC lead a demonstration project with Calais, Worcester, and Moretown to remediate gully erosion on Class 4 roads. Gully erosion is erosion measuring 12 inches or more deep. The towns reduced sediment and phosphorus runoff by implementing Best Management Practices (BMP) on 26 hydrologically-connected municipal road segments. Hydrologically-connected road segments are sections of road at high risk to impact adjacent surface waters, lakes, ponds, perennial and intermittent streams, and wetlands. BMPs implemented included drainage culvert upgrades, turn out installations, culvert outlet stabilizations, culvert headwall stabilizations, grass and stone-lined drainage ditch installations, roadside berm removal, and road resurfacing. These practices promote road stormwater disconnection, infiltration, and conveyance stability. Secondary benefits are improved flood resiliency and road safety. The project exposed the hidden cost of tree removal when implementing road BMPs. Calais reported that work completed on Apple Hill has reduced maintenance costs caused by road washouts significantly. The project was funded by the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation, the Lake Champlain Basin Program, and the US Environmental Protection Agency.

*Increasing Data Accessibility* - Data helps municipalities, private property owners, and organizations make better decisions faster. Increasing data accessibility saves resources. CVRPC fostered data accessibility with three projects in 2018.

- Initiated development of an online data library. The library will host common municipal plan data sets in an easy-to-use format. Data for 10 municipalities is complete.
- Uploaded zoning data for all member municipalities into the Vermont Center for Geographic Information’s (VCGI) website to make it available statewide.
- Created web maps for Calais and Berlin to enhance public accessibility to parcel, zoning, flooding, and natural resource data. The project builds on web maps previously developed for East Montpelier and Middlesex. East Montpelier’s Zoning Administrator commented that the web map provides easy-to-access visuals for development conversations with landowners.

**ADMINISTRATION & FUNDING**

The FY 18 CVRPC budget was approximately $1.7 million. Revenue sources included state and federal performance contracts, grants, and local assessments. Virtually all of the CVRPC’s revenue sources are tied to contracts with scopes of work, guidelines, and/or performance measures. This means CVRPC has limited flexibility in how it chooses to use the vast majority of its funding. Funding received through town assessments is the exception, which makes this funding stream particularly
important. It gives us the greatest latitude to respond to the region’s needs. The grants we receive enable us to work with our towns on areas such as transportation, emergency planning, community development, brownfields redevelopment, energy, and natural resources. Revenue from virtually all federal and state grantors requires non-federal matching funds ranging from 10 percent (Transportation Planning Initiative) to 50 percent (Emergency Management Planning Grant). Town assessments and regional planning funds passed through to CVRPC under a performance contract with the Department of Housing and Community Development provide matching funds.

CVRPC maintained a line of credit in 2018 due to a prevalence of product-based and construction contracts. CVRPC maintains Board designated reserve funds to cover operating shortfalls, accrued leave time, and equipment replacement. The Commission maintains a four-year plan for equipment and software upgrades and replacement.

CVRPC’s annual audit will be completed in October 2018. CVRPC has had no audit findings in recent years. It is considered a ‘low risk’ grantee by federal agencies. Staffing in 2018 included 8 employees: Executive Director, Program Manager, Senior Planners (3), Planners (2), and an Office Manager. CVRPC supports workforce development through use of planning technicians for transportation and planning services.

In 2018, CVRPC developed Rules of Procedure for many of its committees, initiated updates to its Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy, and drafted a Commissioner Handbook to orient Board members to the Commission and its work.

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

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

The CCRPC appreciates the continued opportunity to work with its municipal members to plan appropriately for the region’s future to protect and improve the special quality of life that is shared throughout Chittenden County. In FY18, the CCRPC invested more than $5.7 million in regional land use, transportation, emergency management, energy, natural resources, public engagement, training, and technical assistance. The program leverages more than $5.3 million in Federal and State investment with $245,000 in municipal dues and another $132,000 in local match for specific projects—a **14:1 return on local investment**.

**MUNICIPAL PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION**

RPCs act as a cost-effective professional planning staff for many of Vermont’s municipalities. Work in recent years has been focused on improving town plans and local permitting through education and enhanced consultations (on-site training), bylaw modernization, facilitating transition to Development Review Boards and implementing new requirements for economic development and flood resiliency planning. Current and clear plans and bylaws are essential in smooth state and local permitting. This work is supported through local and regional planning funds, municipal dues, and other grants. All technical assistance provided this year is shown on the At Work map; highlights include:
• **Town Plan Assistance**: Began work on the Winooski Master Plan update. Other Town Plan update assistance includes: an initial review of Essex Junction, Huntington, Westford and Underhill’s existing plans; and reviewed Richmond’s draft chapters as they developed them. Created Town Plan maps for Bolton, Buel’s Gore, Charlotte, and Richmond.

• **Town Plan Approvals**: Approved the Comprehensive Plans and confirmed the planning process for Williston, Hinesburg, Milton and Charlotte.

• **Zoning**: Continued to assist Huntington with an overhaul of their zoning regulations, by helping to prepare responses to questions from the public on the draft regulations. Conducted a Zoning Audit in Essex to identify impediments and barriers to affordable housing. Conducted a zoning review for Bolton to identify statutory inconsistencies and recommendations.

• **CIP**: Began Capital Improvement Plan development assistance in Shelburne, Underhill and Williston.

• **Development Review Services**: CCRPC staff provided interim assistance to the Town of Charlotte by handling resident inquiries, researching questions, managing zoning and water/wastewater permitting, conducting site visits as needed, and upon request, offering suggestions for changes or improvements in software systems and information flow.

• **Training**: The CCRPC held an Economics of Housing Workshop – 47 people from 11 of our municipalities participated; & Land Use Essentials training – 8 people from 2 of our municipalities participated. We continued hosting meetings and online webinars open to municipalities and regional partners covering topics such as: Regional Housing Convening, Emergency Management Director/Public Information Officer Workshops and continued to host the 12-webinar series from the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycling Professionals.

**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.

• **Plan Updates**: CCRPC adopted the [2018 Chittenden County ECOS Plan](#) which combines the regional plan, comprehensive economic development strategy, and metropolitan transportation plan. Updates were made to the energy, transportation and economic sections; forest integrity was addressed; and the plan was reorganized to bring the implementation section to the front. A [summary document](#) was also prepared.

• **ECOS Plan Annual Report and Indicators**: The [2017 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 and indicator system that monitors how well Chittenden County is doing relative to achieving our shared ECOS goals. ([https://app.resultsscorecard.com/Scorecard/Embed/8502](#))

• **Plan Implementation**: CCRPC implements the Plan through collective impact relationships and projects with the GBIC, Department of Health, United Way, UVM-
Medical Center, UVM, our member municipalities and many other partners. As an example, we’ve implemented Strategy #2 (Strive for 80% of new development in areas planned for growth, which amounts to 15% of our land area) through the zoning projects mentioned above, permit reviews, and planned transportation investments in those places resulting in 86% of residential growth in these areas (2016 5-year average). CCRPC used the ECOS Plan to evaluate applications and participate in Act 250 and Section 248 hearings.

- **Legislative Forum** – CCRPC hosted our annual Legislative Breakfast in December to discuss priority issues of housing, water quality, and municipal shared services. ([http://www.ccrpcvt.org/about-us/commission/policies-positions/](http://www.ccrpcvt.org/about-us/commission/policies-positions/)).

### ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Economic growth is supported best when development efforts are partnered with solid planning functions. RPCs work with towns and in strong partnership with Regional Development Corporations (RDCs) to this end in 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 continued to maintain the Byway website and finalized the Byway’s Corridor Management Plan available at: [https://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-work/economic-development/lake-champlain-byway/](https://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-work/economic-development/lake-champlain-byway/).

- Continued our strong partnership with GBIC/LCRCC working together to advance plans, policies, and projects that improve our economy such as the Brownfields program below.

### BROWNFIELDS

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

- CCRPC obtained a $400,000 EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant in FY16; and a $300,000 EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant in FY18. Since the fall of 2016, using these two grants the program has provided $307,132 to assess perceived or real contamination issues. In Burlington at the following locations: 316 Flynn Avenue (Redstone Apartments); 400 Pine Street/20 Howard Street (Unsworth Properties); 339 Pine Street (Railyard Enterprise Project); 56 and 58 North Avenue (Sarah Holbrook Center); Lake Street (Waterfront Park); 314 North Winooski (Champlain Transmission); 75 Briggs Street (Petra Cliffs); 207 Flynn Avenue (City Market); and 453 Pine Street (near Barge Canal); in Winooski at the following locations: 4 & 12 Winooski Falls Way (Winooski Hotel); 62-70 Main Street (Strand Theater) and 42 Pine Street (Myers Pool); in Colchester at the following location: in Colchester at 2031 Roosevelt Highway (Champlain Chiropractic); in Milton at 7 River Street (Milton Grange) and 204-210 & 214-218 U.S. Route 7 (Town-VAOT “Hourglass” Roads project) and in Williston at the Jacob parcel (Stirrup Circle).
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

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

The CCRPC serves as the only metropolitan planning organization (MPO) operating within Vermont. MPOs are federally mandated and funded transportation planning organizations governed by representatives from local municipalities and state transportation agencies /departments. Federal funding for transportation projects and programs 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 - Enhance Cooperation and Coordination between VTrans, RPC Regions and Municipalities

TAC Activity - The TAC met 11 times in FY18. Attendance varied from 15 to 19 members, from 45% to nearly 60% of total membership. Seven (7) non-municipal TAC members were actively engaged in transportation planning in the county.

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

- Planning, Engineering and Environmental Services
- 2018 Transportation Survey

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

- Green Mountain Transit’s NextGEN Transit Plan
- Transportation Performance Measures and Targets
- Project prioritization & Town Highway Bridge Pre-Candidate List Priorities
- Real Time Travel Data Bluetooth project
- Systemic Local Roads Safety Program
- Green Ride Bikeshare
- ADA Transition Plans
- The FY19 Transportation Improvement Program
- The FY19 Unified Planning Work Program
- Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP)
- Road Erosion Inventories & Conceptual Plans for High Priority Sites
- Metropolitan Transportation Plan Updates and Board Recommendations
- FY 19 Better Roads Grant Applications
• National Highway System (NHS) Evaluation and Updates

**Transportation Coordination Activities with Municipalities and VTrans Provided by CCRPC:**

- Coordination with VTrans and FHWA on Safety, Pavement, Bridge, NHS Travel Reliability and Freight measures
- Functional Class update
- NHS review and update
- Shelburne Road AID grant application
- Amtrak Overnight Study
- Bike & Ped Program – Selection committee participation; launch of Greenride Bikeshare in Burlington, South Burlington and Winooski
- VTrans Prioritization Methodology (VPSP2) effort: participation in the Core Group and workshops
- VTrans and Richmond coordination and outreach on various transportation issues; evaluated traffic signal operations and safety at the US2/Bridge Street and Jericho Road intersection in Richmond
- South Burlington Road Safety Audit
- Codes & Standards – solicited updated forms via email.
- Facilitated municipal participation in numerous MRGP meetings and updates.
- North Avenue Pilot Project (Burlington) benefit cost analysis and presentation.
- Promoted participation in the Way to Go! School Challenge, Sept. 26-Oct 7, 2018; TDM outreach to businesses and partners countywide through CATMA
- Provided Annual Traffic Alert! Communications outreach program

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


**Municipal Transportation Plans** – 16 municipalities have current municipal plans that include an updated transportation component.

**Act-250 and Section 248 Reviews** – CCRPC staff reviewed all applications in Chittenden County but participated only in major applications and a small number of minor ones with potentially significant impacts. In FY18, the CCRPC provided transportation related comments for 15 Act-250 applications. The CCRPC also commented on 9 Section 248 applications but none had transportation issues that required staff review.

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

- The Elderly & Disabled program advisory committee
- GMT’s ADA Advisory Committee
- United Way’s Neighbor Rides volunteer driver program Advisory Committee
- GMT’s NextGEN Transit Plan Advisory Committee
RPC participation in VTrans committees – A list of committees that the CCRPC staff participated in is provided below:

- Public Transit Advisory Council
- Rail Council
- VTrans Project Prioritization (VPSP2) Core Group workshop participation
- Federal Rulemaking for : NHS Travel Reliability and Freight; and Bridge and Pavement Conditions
- Bike/Ped Grant Committee
- Freight Working Group
- Vermont Highway Safety Alliance
- Way to Go! Challenge

Project Prioritization – The CCRPC prioritizes Capital Projects on the state’s Transportation Program once a year and also provides priorities for District Paving projects. In addition, the CCRPC has a representative on the Core Team for the VPSP2/Prioritization effort.

Objective #3 - Providing Technical Assistance to Municipalities

During FY 18, the CCRPC hosted regional transportation meetings; initiated, managed and was involved in major regional and local transportation plans, studies and initiatives; provided technical assistance and support to municipalities and partners on transportation issues. Please see below for more information on these activities.

Road Foreman Meetings – hosted a meeting on April 4, 2018 with participation by 10 Chittenden County municipalities. Also shared events and funding opportunities as appropriate.

Assistance with Transportation Grants – Staff assisted 10 municipalities with Bike & Ped Grants; drafted 19 support letters for Better Roads Grants and assisted Bolton to prepare 2 Better Roads applications; drafted 8 support letters for Transportation Municipal Highway Stormwater Mitigation Grants

Budget Spent on Municipal Assistance – the CCRPC invests approximately 55% of MPO funding for municipal assistance.

CCRPC Data Collection in FY 18:

- Seven (7) Pavement Inventories for Burlington, Charlotte, Hinesburg, Huntington, Milton, Underhill, and Winooski
- Three (3) Culvert Inventories for Charlotte, St. George, and Underhill
- Two (2) Guardrail Inventories for Burlington and Colchester

Participation in Transportation Planning and Project Development Activities – Below is the list of Planning Assistance, Project Definition (Scoping) and Municipal Construction Projects (Local Project Management: LPM) that the CCRPC managed in FY 18:

- Update of South Burlington Traffic Impact Fee Ordinance
- Blair Park Traffic Calming Study (Williston)
- Chamberlain Lane/Brennan Woods Traffic Calming Study (Williston)
- Update of Williston’s Transportation Impact Fee
• Winooski River Bridge Scoping (Burlington/Winooski)
• I-89 Exit 14 Bike& Pedestrian Scoping (South Burlington)
• South Burlington Sidewalk/Path Connecting-the-Gaps Scoping
• ADA Study of Sidewalks/Paths/Ped Crossings in Essex and Essex Junction
• Amtrak Overnight Storing and Servicing Study (Burlington)
• Exit 14 Area Traffic Signal Management Plan (South Burlington)
• Shelburne Street Signal Evaluation (Burlington)
• Colchester Ave/Riverside Ave/Barrett St/Mill St Intersection Scoping (Burlington)
• Railyard Enterprise Supplemental Scoping Project (Burlington)
• North Williston Rd Multimodal Scoping Study (Williston)
• Intervalle Rd Pedestrian and Bicycle Access Feasibility
• Sidewalk/Path Scoping for VT 15 from Athens Dr. to VT 289 (Essex)
• VT 15 Scoping Study from Ethan Allen Ave to West St. Extension (Essex/Essex Junction)
• Skunk Hollow Rd/VT 117 Intersection Scoping (Jericho)
• Maple Rd. Multimodal/Sidewalk Study (Williston)
• Winooski Main Street Revitalization Scoping (Winooski)
• Swift Street and Spear Street Intersection traffic signal analysis (South Burlington)
• Evaluation of bicycle and pedestrian safety issues (crosswalk locations and sight distance) in the Shelburne village area
• 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
• LPM services for Hinesburg Village South VT 116 sidewalk design and construction

The CCRPC Initiated and managed the following multimodal Corridor and Area-wide Studies:
• Kimball Ave/Kennedy Dr/Old Farm Rd/Tilley Drive/VT 116 Transportation Needs Analysis (South Burlington)
• Riverside Future Street Network Study (Jericho)
• Essex Junction Village Transportation Plan Update
• Winooski Avenue Corridor Study (Burlington)
• Malletts Bay Stormwater and Transportation Management Plan (Colchester)

The CCRPC was also involved in the following Transportation Demand Management (TDM) initiatives and studies:
• Travel Smarter, an online trip planner providing directions and displaying the impacts -- time, cost, calories -- of walking, biking, busing, or driving; became statewide resource through VTrans in FY18. www.TravelSmarterVT.org
• Annual Way to Go! Challenge to encourage non-single occupant vehicle travel and demonstrate the environmental and financial benefits, with a focus on schools in FY18. www.WayToGoVT.org
• Provided funding to CATMA, CarShare Vermont, and Local Motion for TDM projects.
Since 2013, the CCRPC has been investing in United Way’s Neighbor Rides program to integrate volunteer drivers into human services transportation in order to increase access to transportation for seniors and persons with disabilities by offering a lower-cost option.

Road Erosion Inventories in Support of Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP) – Completed road erosion inventories for 10 municipalities: Bolton, Burlington, Charlotte, Colchester, Essex, Hinesburg, Jericho, Milton, St. George, and Winooski. A total of 4,881 hydrologically connected segments were inventoried.

Objective 4: Advance VTrans Strategic and Long Range Transportation Plans

CCRPC Data collection Activities Conducted Specifically for VTrans – CCRC staff conducted the following activities in support of VTrans’ Plans:

- Seventeen Park & Ride inventories at facilities in Richmond, Colchester, Huntington, Essex Landfill Rd., Essex Green, Westford Green, and Hinesburg.
- 78 Traffic (ATR) and Turning Movement counts.
- Three (3) Bridge/Culvert inventories for Charlotte, St. George & Underhill.
- Two (2) Bike/Ped Counts: 2 Continuous Traffic Counters at Riverside bike path & Waterfront bike path & 8 video bike/ped counts for Burlington and Williston.
- Requested complete streets info from all towns and received information from 12.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & DISASTER RESILIENCY

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

- **FEMA Pre-Disaster Mitigation**: CCRPC staff worked in early 2018 with municipal staff to prepare a 2017 Progress Report on the implementation of the actions recommended in the County and Municipal All-Hazard Mitigation Plans. Implementation included roadway and stormwater projects to mitigate the impacts of future severe rainstorms.
- **Local Emergency Operations Plans**: 18 out of 19 (95%) municipalities in the CCRPC region currently have an updated local emergency operations plan.
- **Local Emergency Planning Committee**: CCRPC, in collaboration with the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC 1, http://www.ccrpcvt.org/about-us/committees/local-emergency-planning-committee/), hosted and participated in a variety of emergency management-related workshops and exercises to enhance resilience to disasters in our region. CCRPC also served as a key coordinator between municipalities and the state to collect damage assessment information after significant storm events, helped with
emergency preparedness for hazardous materials incidents, worked with municipalities to complete Local Emergency Operations Plans, and facilitated Incident Command System training.

- **Hazardous Materials**: Began working on mapping “Tier II” hazardous materials information to make this information more easily accessible and usable by first responders.

**GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM SERVICES**

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

- **Town Plan Maps**: Created for Bolton, Buel’s Gore, Charlotte, and Richmond.
- **GIS Data**: Developed or updated numerous GIS datasets (zoning, bridges, culverts, housing points, signs, sidewalks, pavement, parking lots, scenic resources, state designations, groundwater source protection areas, trails, conserved land, utilities, etc.) for Bolton, Burlington, Charlotte, Colchester, Essex, Essex Junction, Huntington, Jericho, Milton, Richmond, Shelburne, South Burlington, Underhill, Westford, 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.
- **Winooski Map Service**: Providing an interactive digital map service for Winooski’s NexGen Asset Management system.
- **Data available via Vermont Open Data Portal**: Uploaded housing points, zoning and overlay data for all municipalities to the portal to allow public access to the GIS data.
- **VOBCIT**: CCRPC continues to work with partners to improve, enhance and support the VOBCIT website (https://vtculverts.org).

**ENERGY CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT**

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

- **Regional Energy Plan**: The CCRPC adopted the enhanced energy plan as part of the 2018 Chittenden County ECOS Plan in June, 2018. The CCRPC conducted significant outreach and incorporated feedback into the Plan from the following: municipal Energy Committee/Planning Commissions; municipal legislative bodies; members of the public; State agencies, including the Vermont Department of Public Service; and CCRPC’s Long
Range Planning Committee, Energy Sub-committee, Executive Committee and the Board of Directors. The final plan was granted an Affirmative Determination of Energy Compliance by the Department of Public Service on August 9, 2018 (FY19). CCRPC has increased participation in PUC proceedings to ensure that local and regional policies are recognized.

- **Municipal Energy Plans:** The CCRPC also developed Municipal Energy Data Guides for each municipality to support local planning and to assist municipalities with understanding their role in meeting their State’s energy goals ([http://www.ccrrpcvt.org/our-work/our-plans/regional-energy-plan/](http://www.ccrrpcvt.org/our-work/our-plans/regional-energy-plan/)). CCRPC provided specific technical assistance to Charlotte, Huntington, Richmond, Underhill and Westford to help them develop their local energy plans; and also provided an initial review of the existing Essex Junction energy plan elements to ensure content meets state statute.

**WATERSHED PLANNING & PROJECT DEVELOPMENT**

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

- **Clean Water** – The CCRPC is committed to supporting water quality initiatives throughout our region to ensure that all residents have access to clean drinking water; to strengthen our region’s recreation and tourism industry; and to become more resilient to flood events. To assist our member municipalities and the state in working together to achieve these goals, the CCRPC has facilitated the Clean Water Advisory Committee and the MS-4 Sub-Committee ([https://www.ccrrpcvt.org/about-us/committees/clean-water-advisory-committee/](https://www.ccrrpcvt.org/about-us/committees/clean-water-advisory-committee/)), provided guidance for the Vermont Clean Water Fund, assisted municipalities with Better Roads grants and stormwater master plans, and managed water quality-focused advocacy and education programs such as Rethink Runoff ([www.rethinkrunoff.org](http://www.rethinkrunoff.org)).

- **Block Grants** – Through funding provided by the DEC and administered by the Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission, the CCRPC supported securing Clean Water Block Grants to begin work in FY2018 on the following stormwater projects: in Burlington, Route 127 Culvert Outfall Upgrade; in South Burlington, upgrades to two large stormwater ponds in the Pinnacle @ Spear neighborhood and in Williston, repair and upgrades to two stormwater ponds in the Old Stage Estates neighborhood. All four projects are anticipated to be fully constructed in FY19.

- **Water Quality Outreach:** CCRPC is managing, with all RPCs as sub-grantees, a grant provided from the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to conduct a multi-pronged outreach effort focused on improving water quality in compliance with the Vermont Clean Water Act (VCWA). CCRPC continues work with municipal staff and boards to provide information about the requirements for municipalities triggered by the VCWA and also work with them on options such as stronger municipal protections against flood hazards and river corridor erosion, stormwater master planning, and other town...
plan or zoning changes to improve water quality. CCRPC continued assistance on development of the Winooski Tactical Basin Plan.

- **Stormwater Master Plans**: Completed the Stormwater Master Plans for Underhill and Richmond. The Winooski NRCD and Friends of the Winooski assisted with outreach on the Richmond stormwater master plan. Secured a grant for a Stormwater Master Plan for Milton.

- **Municipal Road General Permit**: CCRPC staff continued to provide assistance to all member municipalities to address policy, data, and reporting issues to meet the MRGP requirements. See the Transportation section for road erosion inventories.

**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.ccrpct.org/our-work/our-plans/public-participation-plan/](http://www.ccrpct.org/our-work/our-plans/public-participation-plan/))

- **Chittenden County Opioid Alliance**: The CCRPC supports and serves the Chittenden County Opioid Alliance (CCOA, [http://www.ecosproject.com/chittenden-county-opioid-alliance](http://www.ecosproject.com/chittenden-county-opioid-alliance)) together with numerous other regional stakeholders. The CCOA is made up of many dedicated stakeholders who come from different sectors of the community and have partnered together: local non-profit agencies, state and local government; UVM Medical Center; Health Department; business leaders and community members in Chittenden County.

- **Building Homes Together** – The CCRPC, Champlain Housing Trust and Housing Vermont continue to lead a coordinated campaign to strengthen Chittenden County communities and our economy by building 3,500 homes by 2021 for people of all incomes, including 700 affordable homes. CCRPC staff developed a series of housing indicators with the first-year data for a press conference that was held in September 2017. CCRPC also began to host a meeting of municipal Housing Committees to facilitate peer learning. ([http://www.ecosproject.com/building-homes-together](http://www.ecosproject.com/building-homes-together))

- **Prevention Network**: CCRPC served as the lead agency for the Regional Prevention Partnership ([http://www.healthvermont.gov/alcohol-drug-abuse/programs-services/prevention-programs](http://www.healthvermont.gov/alcohol-drug-abuse/programs-services/prevention-programs)). Accomplishments included expansion of drug take back locations, promoting drug take-back days, fake ID enforcement, and community education about substance use prevention.

- **Regional Dispatch Implementation Study** – The CCRPC continues to work in partnership with Chittenden County municipalities to implement a plan for a consolidated regional dispatch environment for law enforcement, fire and rescue agencies. CCRPC staff facilitated discussions with municipal legislative bodies, participated in hearings with the Vermont Legislature’s Government Operations Committees and provided support to the Joint Survey Committee. Following strong support from voters in Burlington, Colchester, Milton, South Burlington, Williston and Winooski on Town Meeting Day 2018, the Chittenden County Public Safety Authority (CCPSA) was approved as a new union municipal district tasked with delivering regional emergency dispatch services to
improve public safety operations. (http://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-work/emergency-management/regional-dispatch/)

ADMINISTRATION & FUNDING
The CCRPC receives most of its funding through performance-based grants and contracts with the state. Town assessments constitute a small but very important percentage of our funding. For the 2018 fiscal year, the CCRPC’s total revenue of about $4.7 million dollars was derived from about 74% federally funded grants, 17% state funding, 7% from municipalities, and about 2% from state and regional charitable and non-profit organizations to fund the Chittenden County Opiate Alliance. Just under $2.6 million, or 54% of the total funding, was passed through to consultants or sub-grantees.

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

The CCRPC conducts a single audit on an annual basis. The federal single audit field work will be conducted in September of 2018, with the full report to be completed before December 2018.

‘AT WORK’ MAP
The map depicting the range of services provided by the CCRPC to member municipalities is included on the next page.
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 home-grown, nationally-renowned businesses, such as Concept 2, MSI, and Butternut Mountain Farm. LCPC’s mission is to ensure the protection of the region’s environment and conservation of natural resources, and to facilitate sustainable economic development for the benefit of all residents and visitors through a coordinated and cooperative planning process at the local level.

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

MUNICIPAL PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION

RPCs act as a cost-effective professional planning staff for many of Vermont’s municipalities. Work in recent years has been focused on improving municipal plans and local permitting through education and consultations, bylaw modernization, facilitating transition to Development Review Boards and implementing statutory requirements for flood resiliency planning. Current and clear plans and bylaws are essential 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:

- 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 Federal (HMGP, CDBG,) and State (ERP) funds, and, once implemented, will reduce flood levels in the Village core by up to 1.5 feet. Had such measures been in place during the flood of 2011, evacuation of the Village’s Senior Housing would not have been needed.
- LCPC recently completed construction of a new bridge in Jeffersonville which should reduce flooding in the Village as the abutments and low profile of the old bridge caused flood waters to back up into the Village.
- With assistance from LCPC, the Village of Jeffersonville updated the Village’s Flood Hazard Bylaws to reflect recommendations from the Lamoille Flood Modeling Study.
- With LCPC’s assistance, the Town of Waterville drafted a Flood Resilience and Water Quality plan element, and updated the following chapters of the Waterville Town Plan: Natural
Resources and Land Use, Local Services and Facilities, Energy, and Transportation. The LCPC assisted Waterville in developing an Enhanced Energy Plan per act 174 standards and continues to work with the Waterville Planning Board on updating remaining chapters of the 2014 Town plan.

- The LCPC provided ongoing assistance to Belvidere for transportation project planning and management including project management services for replacement of the culvert on Bog Road as well as project management services for the Better Back Roads Florence Road project.
- With LCPC’s assistance, the Town and the Village of Cambridge, and the Town of Elmore revised their municipal development plans.
- The Commission was active in water quality issues including, implementing water quality projects and programs to protect water resources, ensuring safe water supplies, enhancing recreational opportunities, and addressing known sources of pollution. Staff provided Vermont Clean Water Fund Outreach and assisted in the development of the Winooski River Tactical Basin Plan.
- LCPC provided help identifying appropriate funding sources, defining project scope, and writing applications for numerous municipalities which among other grants resulted in municipal planning grants for Jeffersonville, Cambridge, and Waterville.

The Commission provided application development and mapping services to assist Hyde Park Village with Village Center Designation renewal, and North Hyde Park in establishing Village Center Designation.

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 Regional Plan was adopted in 2015. LCPC has updated their Act 250 review process, making the process more transparent, understandable and accessible to both developers and municipalities. The Commission has engaged in extensive outreach to increase regional understanding of the Commission’s role in the Act 250 process. In FY 18, LCPC reviewed one major Act 250 application and six Section 248 applications with hearings.

In FY 2018, LCPC’s Board of Directors adopted two amendments to the Regional Plan. The first amendment redefines Substantial Regional Impact (SRI) criteria. 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. The second amendment incorporates into the Lamoille County Regional Plan an Enhanced Energy component designed as a guide for the Region to help meet the statewide goal of 90% renewable energy production by 2050.

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). In FY 18, the LCPC’s brownfields Grant Funds advanced environmental assessments in the Village of Jeffersonville, the Town of Hyde Park, and the Village of Johnson. 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 received an area-wide planning grant to prepare an economic revitalization plan for the Railroad Street Corridor connecting the former Talc Mill plant, the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail and downtown Johnson. Johnson Village is also undertaking an assessment to better understand their options for the Old Village Power House located on the Banks of the Gihon River. In addition to making the assessments funds available in Lamoille County, LCPC worked with the Rutland Planning Commission and the Northeast Vermont Development Corporation to assist with property assessments in Rutland and Albany.

**ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

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

In FY 18, LCPC developed a grant proposal to commission a feasibility study to locate an anaerobic digester in Lamoille County. USDA Rural Development’s Rural Business Development Grant program awarded the proposal in July 2018. The proposal for the feasibility study originated in response to a concern articulated by area breweries regarding brewery waste management challenges. The breweries identified high waste hauling costs and limited capacity of waste management plants to process brewery waste as factors limiting business growth. The intent of the feasibility study is to help LCPC determine whether Lamoille County is suited for an anaerobic digester project, whether the digester can provide an economical waste management option for area beverage and food processing businesses, and whether such a project can be economically and technically viable. Lamoille Economic Development Corporation is LCPC’s primary partner in this project and provided the needed matching funds for the study.

Lack of critical infrastructure such as water, wastewater, and broadband is an impediment to economic development in much of rural Vermont. LCPC continues to work with municipalities to identify new funding sources for this infrastructure, and to seek creative means to maximize use of existing but limited capacity, such as encouraging mixed use development, relaxed setbacks and frontage standards so that more users can be accommodated within existing service areas, and flexible parking standards.

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 2018, the Executive Director of LCPC, Tasha Wallis, served as Co-Chair of the Northern Vermont Economic Development District (NVEDD). The NVEDD completed work on a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and is poised to further contribute to economic development throughout the Lamoille County region.

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

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

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

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

In this reporting period, the Lamoille County Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) met nine times, with an average member participation rate of 41.4%. Three outcomes of this year’s TAC activities include:

1. Multiple engaging discussions about the Municipal Road General Permit and development of formal comments on the draft permit.
2. Three discussions about public transit and public transit planning.
3. Fostered communication and coordination between municipalities and various agencies and State technical support staff including Vermont Agency of Transportation and VLCT to discuss access permitting on state and town roads, and DMV enforcement to discuss enforcing and setting weight limits on town roads and bridges.

The Lamoille County Road Foremen Network has met three times during this reporting period (Nov 1, Mar 14, May 10). 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, six meetings about road and bridge codes and standards and thirty-five coordination activities with municipalities and Vermont Agency of Transportation.

LCPC Transportation planning staff facilitated the Green Mountain Byway Committee in partnership with CVRPC. This grassroots committee is working to update the current Byway Plan and add seven new municipalities (three towns with 4 villages) to the Byway; the Byway expansion is anticipated to be official by the end of September of 2018.

LCPC staff continues to work with the Smugglers’ Notch Partnership; this year’s focus was preparing for the installation of ADA accessible wetland boardwalk The Boardwalk has become a major attraction for locals and visitors in the Notch. LCPC also continues to analyze parking and stormwater improvements for VT108 within Smugglers’ Notch State Park. LCPC also coordinated discussions between Vermont Agency of Transportation and Vermont Department of Forests Parks and Recreation on the most effective ways to mitigate flood and erosion threats to Route 108 and Park infrastructure.

LCPC staff participated in multiple meetings of three ongoing transportation planning focus groups: development of an “all-in-one” transportation survey with UVM and Vermont Agency of Transportation; VT100 and VT108 Corridor Planning with Vermont Agency of Transportation; project prioritization and selection process review with Vermont Agency of Transportation. Staff also attended the Vermont Municipal Highway Association annual meeting, which helps to build good relationships with municipal highway department staff. LCPC staff attended the annual Vermont Agency of Transportation Regional Construction meeting for the fourth year; attending this internal Vermont Agency of Transportation meeting as a guest fosters good communication between RPC staff and Vermont Agency of Transportation staff in both Montpelier offices and Maintenance Districts.

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

The Commission collaborated on a road safety audit in Stowe and another in Cambridge, participated in three elderly & disabled public transit meetings, attended one Vermont Aviation Council meeting, and attended one aviation planning public meeting.

LCPC staff regularly participates as voting members to Rural Community Transportation and Green Mountain Transit Boards and sub-committees.

Data collection activities by the LCPC for Vermont Agency of Transportation included at least 45 activities, including but not limited to: 2 bridge/culvert inventories (Belvidere and Wolcott), 26 traffic counts, 20 bike/ped counts, and 5 park-n-ride counts. The LCPC staff participated in four Vermont Agency of Transportation project public meetings.
The TPI workplan provides several task categories which support municipal planning and technical assistance, and approximately 54% of LCPC’s total TPI budget supports municipal technical assistance. Example projects that fall under municipal technical assistance are:

- Water Quality: provided coordination with ANR and facilitated group and individual discussions with municipal staff, boards, and other partners in all 10 towns.
- Road Erosion Inventories (REI): completed 1 REI and began 3 others; continued coordination and software development input with other RPC staff and ANR; combined other funds with TPI budget to optimize resources and outcomes.
- Planning Studies: facilitated a parking and stormwater analysis for Smugglers’ Notch area in partnership with VT FPR and Vermont Agency of Transportation; concluded a bicycle and pedestrian scoping study for the North Wolcott Road area; participated with Vermont Agency of Transportation, CVRPC, Waterbury, Stowe, and Morristown on the VT100 & VT108 Corridor Study pilot effort to improve the corridor planning process and outcomes; participated with Vermont Agency of Transportation and Stowe on the Mountain Road (VT108) Village area Master Plan to address vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian safety in this rural high-congestion area; participated in the Green Mountain Transit Comprehensive Planning Study (a.k.a. “Next-Gen” study); participated in the Transit Development Plan for Rural Community Transportation; participated in the “all in one” transportation survey planning working group with Vermont Agency of Transportation, UVM and CCRPC;

**EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & DISASTER RESILIENCY**

RPCs play key roles in the mitigation and preparedness phases of emergency management in partnership with Vermont Emergency Management, the Vermont Homeland Security Unit, Vermont Agency of Transportation and the Agency of Natural Resources. RPCs provide direct staff to the State Emergency Operations Center, administrative support to the Local Emergency Planning Committees and coordination among responders and planners throughout the State’s four Public Safety Districts. 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.

- Nine of 10 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 operations plan.
- The LCPC continued to provide administrative and technical assistance to LEPC#11 (Local Emergency Planning Committee) to host trainings and emergency preparedness discussions. The LEPC conducted a Table Top Exercise in April at the Northern Vermont University, Johnson Campus, to test local emergency operation and hazardous material response plans in the event of a hazardous chemical release. The LEPC also hosted a training on the identification of clandestine drug labs with presenters from the State Police. Finally, The LEPC updated the Lamoille County Hazardous Materials Response Plan, facilitated a Tier II reporting training, and updated Tier II facility mapping and databases.
• LCPC Staff provided help updating the Hazard Mitigation Trust Plan and grant-writing assistance for HMGP grants in Wolcott, Jeffersonville, and Hyde Park.
• Aided with Home Elevation assistance and Wolcott Flood Model Planning.
• Assisted in drafting and finalizing five Local Hazard Mitigation Plans in (Johnson, Belvidere, Elmore, Eden and Waterville.
• Assisted Belvidere with administration and project development of Bog Road culvert replacement mitigation project.
• Assisted in developing a Flood Resilience Plan for the Town of Waterville.
• Developed Advanced Assistance Application for Mt. Mansfield Stream/Route 108 erosion.
• Coordinated Smugglers Notch Drainage Study to identify alternatives to mitigate flood and erosion damage to Route 108.
• Contributed updated E911 road maps to the Northern EMS District for each town in the district.
• Hosted ICS (Incident Command System) 200 and 402 training and new Emergency Management Director orientation.

Participated in 4 local liaison activations in response to State requests.

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.

• Developed Road Erosion Inventory (REI) applications to collect REI information and employed the application in data collection for the town of Elmore and Belvidere, hosted a training on the use of the State Municipal Roads General Permit Road Erosion Inventory Application and employed its use in the County.
• Updated available town parcel information and sent to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development for inclusion in the statewide parcel layer.
• Updated analysis of primary and secondary wind generation potential (acres) in Wolcott.
• Produced maps of the Winooski watershed in Stowe, and Morristown.
• Assisted with HMGP applications, producing a series of project readiness maps for Belvidere.
• Developed maps for the following:
  o Wolcott and Belvidere Hazard Mitigation Project Readiness Workbook series
  o Regional wind, solar, Hydro power and biomass energy potential maps
  o Town plan map updates for the municipalities of Eden, Waterville, Hyde Park, Cambridge, Jeffersonville, Elmore and Wolcott.
  o Flood hazard maps for Eden, Wolcott and Jeffersonville.
  o Village Center Designation maps for Hyde Park Village and North Hyde Park.
  o Elmore and Cambridge and Wolcott culvert inventory map updates.
  o Updated Johnson River Corridor and flood hazard area mapping.
  o Updated Renewable Energy potential mapping for Elmore, Wolcott, Eden, Hyde Park, Stowe, Waterville, and Johnson.
Updated road map for Morristown, Belvidere, Johnson, Waterville
Zoning map updates for the Town of Hyde Park
Updated maps for Smugglers Notch and Barnes Camp
Green Mountain Byway recreation map
Johnson Bike Park Map

ENERGY CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT

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

In FY 18, LCPC adopted an energy amendment to Regional Plan. The energy amendment focuses on accomplishing the goals of the State Comprehensive Energy Plan, most notably the goal of having renewable energy sources provide 90% of the state's total energy demand by 2050. The energy element contains an analysis of current energy use, targets for future energy use, and strategies for reaching future energy use targets. It also includes a mapping effort that will help guide the future siting of renewable energy facilities.

The new energy element was drafted to meet the Energy Planning Standards developed by the Vermont Department of Public Service (DPS). Following the adoption of the amendment, LCPC submitted the Regional Plan to DPS for a Determination of Compliance with state energy planning standards. DPS issued a Certificate of Energy Compliance in July 2018. With this accomplishment, LCPC will have greater say in the permitting process in front of the Public Utility Commission. This is due to the plan being given a higher legal standard (“substantial deference”) than a typical legal standard (“due consideration”).

In FY 18, LCPC continued to assist to municipalities in the Region with the drafting of municipal energy plans. New energy plans were drafted in Johnson, Waterville and Cambridge. Municipalities that incorporate their new energy plans into their overall municipal plans will be able to submit their requests for Determination of Energy Compliance to the Regional Planning Commission. With a positive determination, the municipality’s plan will also receive substantial deference in Public Utility Commission proceedings.

WATERSHED PLANNING & PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

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

• As part of the Clean Water Initiative, conducted outreach on Winooski River Tactical Basin Plan and assisted ANR with the development of the plan. Also conducted outreach on updates to water quality standards, river corridor planning, storm water master planning, and flood resiliency. LCPC assisted with outreach for the Winooski River Tactical Basin
Plan and has been attending regularly scheduled Winooski Tactical Basin Plan Steering Committee meetings regarding the development of the plan.

- Provided project management and assisted with fieldwork and public outreach for the Seymour River Geomorphic Assessment. The assessment and River Corridor Plan finalized by Bear Creek Environmental in late May of 2018, identifies restoration and protection projects in Cambridge to be included in later versions of the Lamoille Tactical Basin Plan and be eligible for upcoming grant opportunities.

- LCPC assisted the Cambridge Conservation Commission in applying for an FY 18 ERP grant and matching funds from the High Meadows Fund to implement the Cambridge Elementary School Stormwater Project design.

- Assisted the Cambridge Conservation Commission and Cambridge Elementary School with project management support, and hiring a contractor to install the stormwater infiltration system at Cambridge Elementary School. This system installed summer of 2018, will capture 90% of 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 a consultant to develop a 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. LCPC staff provided outreach regarding modeling results thus far to the Towns of Cambridge, Johnson and Wolcott.

- Provided outreach and field verification assistance regarding River Corridors in the Towns of Wolcott and Johnson.

- Provided grant writing technical assistance to Elmore, Cambridge, Belvidere, and Wolcott to apply for a Better Roads Grant (awarded) to conduct an updated road erosion inventory. LCPC staff developed a road erosion app to collect field data per the Municipal Roads General Permit Guidance, for the assessments in 2018 and 2019. Began outreach to the Town of Waterville regarding applying for a Better Roads grant to update the Waterville Road Erosion Inventory in 2019. This assessment will result in a toolkit to prioritize and repair erosion control issues along municipal roads or to apply for future grants to comply with the upcoming Municipal Roads General Permit. LCPC assisted the Towns of Stowe and Hyde Park in completing a Road Erosion Inventory in 2017 and began conducting fieldwork in 2018 for the Elmore Road Erosion Inventory.

- Worked with Village of Jeffersonville on updating flood hazard regulations for to mirror recommendations from the Lamoille River Flood Modeling Study.

- Assisted with outreach and field verification for the Town of Johnson to explore adopting River Corridor bylaws.

- Assisted the Belvidere Planning Commission in exploring reclassification of Belvidere Bog to a Class 1 wetland.

- Through a DEC Hazard Mitigation Grant, LCPC developed a Project Readiness Workbook for the towns of Wolcott and Belvidere to aid next steps and grant application development for priority hazard mitigation projects.
SPECIAL PROJECTS
The Lamoille County Planning Commission specializes in taking the planning process from concept through to implementation and construction. In Cambridge and Jeffersonville, ongoing severe flooding was addressed through analysis and then construction of a new bridge in Jeffersonville with a new culvert to be installed in the village in 2019. Modeling the Lamoille River was a key element of the path from planning to implementation.

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

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

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 Town of Cambridge utilized the model to evaluate solutions to flooding on Pumpkin Harbor Road. The Model was also provided critical data needed to complete a feasibility study of flood proofing the Johnson Public Library. Additional modeling is underway in the Town of Wolcott. In the future, the model will be another tool for communities working to become more flood resilient. The model is a public document available to any community, and was also recently used by a University of Vermont PhD candidate to test alternative “river friendly” abutment designs.

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 Cambridge Greenway Trail Bridge

The Cambridge Greenway Trail Bridge in Jeffersonville, VT crosses over the Brewster River, replaces an older bridge which had a low elevation and as a result was affected by flood waters on an almost annual basis. The new bridge is adequately sized and proportioned and will reduce the potential for flooding in Jeffersonville Village. The project included removing the existing abutments and restoring the floodplain in the vicinity of the abutments.
The Lamoille County Planning Commission served as project manager for the bridge. Caleb Magoon, Chair of the Board of Directors stated, “We are so pleased that our many partners came together to create a longer, higher bridge that will allow the passage of more water out of the Village.”

**The Boardwalk at Barnes Camp**

The Boardwalk at Barnes Camp opened for Vermonters and visitors on October 27, 2017. The Boardwalk was a collaborative project facilitated and managed by the Lamoille County Planning Commission and supported by many organizations.

The five-foot-wide walkway is constructed on helical piers - pretty much large screwdrivers - over a wetland and was designed and built with attention to the sensitive environment of Smugglers Notch. The piers were installed by drilling, rather than excavating soil. And during construction, an excavator with hydraulic attachment was moved about on cedar mats so it wouldn’t touch the wetland. Sawdust was bagged up and carried out by hand.

The elevated boardwalk allows wildlife to move through the wetland and accommodates natural water level variations. This attribute proved key when the beavers moved in, changing water courses and adding a beautiful pond right at the end of the walkway.

The Long Trail relocation to connect with the Boardwalk will be complete next spring and takes hikers into the woods and no longer down the side of Route 108 next to the traffic. Actually, a big part of the point of a Scenic highway is to get out of the car and away from the road.

“People tend to protect what they know, and one of the major goals of the boardwalk is introducing the general population to wetlands, the wildlife that lives in them, and the benefits wetlands provide us, like clean water,” said Seth Jensen, Principal Planner with Lamoille County Planning Commission.

The Boardwalk at Barnes Camp was recently awarded the 2018 Innovation Award from the National Association of Development Organizations.

**ADMINISTRATION & FUNDING**

In 2018, The Commission implemented all updated internal financial processes and procedures to ensure compliance with all federal, state and grant requirements. The LCPC also updated both the Personnel and Procurement Policies to be in conformance with all State and Federal statutory changes. The LCPC is audited on an annual basis. The Organization received a clean audit for 2017, conducted a fraud risk assessment and reviews all policies and practices on an ongoing basis.

The Commission continued to actively engage in Board recruitment resulting in more board seats being filled from a diversity of municipalities and a newly energized and engaged board. The Commission also updated the new Board Member Handbook and assisted in training new Board members.
The LCPC receives most of its funding through grants, and through performance-based contracts with the state. Town assessments constitute a small but very important percentage of our funding.

Revenue from virtually all federal and state grantors requires matching funds, and typically non-federal matching funds. Required match ranges from 10 percent (Transportation Planning Initiative) to 50 percent (Emergency Management Planning Grant & Northern Vermont Economic Development District).

For the 2018 fiscal year, the LCPC’s total projected revenue of approximately $980,000 dollars was derived from a mix of regional project grant funding, municipal project grant funding, EPA brownfields funding, state performance contract funding, non-profit organization grants and a small amount from town assessments.

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

‘AT WORK’ MAP
The map depicting the range of services provided by the LCPC to member municipalities is included on the next page.
LCPC at Work: FY 2018

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

Zoning Bylaw Status
- Flood Only
- None
- Zoning and Flood Bylaws

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

Designated Downtown or Village
- Designated Downtown
- Designated Village

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

MUNICIPAL PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION

Our region is the most rural in the state, and few of our communities have dedicated planning staff. Nevertheless, the planning needs of our region are varied and complex. The majority of our towns are actively planning: 33 of our towns have current plans, and at least a half-dozen have plans that are either proposed or in development. This fiscal year saw our staff assisting with a number of planning initiatives that went well beyond statutory interpretation and compliance. Here are some highlights:

**Three Rivers Path Extension and Trailhead Center**: This project will extend the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail into the heart of St. Johnsbury’s downtown and will transform a derelict commercial property on Bay Street into a Trailhead Center. Interest in this project, subject to over a decade of planning, was renewed with the *Riverfront Conceptual Access Study* (2017), a plan funded by a Municipal Planning Grant written and administered by NVDA. This plan laid the groundwork for a successful grant application to the Northern Border Regional Commission, written and administered by NVDA. Detailed engineering and architectural plans are being prepared under the NBRC grant, in conjunction with significant contributions by the Town of St. Johnsbury and in-kind hours by NVDA and local partners. NVDA is currently assisting the Town with securing additional funding for cleanup of contaminated materials on the site during the construction phase.

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

**Barnet Architectural Assessment**: NVDA staff helped the town secure architectural services for the 1853 McIndoe Falls Academy. Privately owned and maintained by the Board of Academy Trustees, the structure was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1975. Although the Academy closed a half-century ago, the Greek revival structure maintains an iconic presence in the Village. The Board of Trustees has considered donating the structure to the Town of Barnet – a measure that would benefit the Town, since its current municipal offices are significantly undersized. The move would also bring new vitality and reuse to the core of the Village of McIndoe Falls.
Moving the municipal functions to the Academy Building, however, has not been without its challenges. Relocation of town offices would need to balance the many needs of the community with archival storage for the Academy, the Barnet Historical Society, and the Town. Additional space would be needed for the McIndoe Academy Museum, and for the Barnet Historical Society, a small village library, the Post Office, and accessible community meeting space. Significant rehabilitation efforts will be required to locate the land records vault and make the building fully accessible with an elevator (basement, ground floor, first and second floors). The resulting plans and cost estimate provided an informed framework for the town as it continues to evaluate its options for its town offices.

**Danville “Village to Village” Master Planning:** As the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail continues to bring new opportunities for recreation and visitor tourism, the Town of Danville has sought ways to leverage its economic benefits. NVDA, along with VTrans, the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, and local officials, serve on the project steering committee for the “Village to Village” project, a master planning effort that will provide the town with a “road map” to enhance connections along the LVRT with the community’s many assets, including Joe’s Pond and Danville Village. The project, which was awarded to Dubois & King, is funded by a Better Connections Grant. Master plans – which will include visions for an appropriate adaptive reuse of the historic rail station – will be complete in September of 2019.

**Concord Recreation Planning:** NVDA assisted the Town of Concord in securing funding for a Strategic Plan for Recreational Tourism Development, completed in January of 2018. The Town of Concord is now partnering with adjacent towns to implement some of the strategies identified in that report, and NVDA is providing assistance with securing funding for this continued work.

**St. Johnsbury Housing Committee:** NVDA has been providing staff support to the St. Johnsbury Housing Committee, a group working to improve the condition and selection of quality housing in the town. In FY2018 NVDA helped formulate programs for intern housing and a homebuyer incentive, both of which were designed to provide better housing options while promoting re-investment in the designated downtown and compact historic neighborhoods. NVDA will continue to assist the Town in identifying and securing funding sources for these and other programs that help improve and increase the amount and variety of housing stock.

Other FY2018 highlights include:

- Our efforts to revitalize the region’s village centers continued in FY2018, as NVDA helped East Craftsbury, East Hardwick, and Albany Village earn Village Center designations, making tax credits available for important investment projects. We also assisted with the re-designation of Derby Line’s Village Center and the amendment of Lyndonville’s designation area to include the former Bag Balm building, now intended for a business incubator and co-working space. The Town of Albany was quick to capitalize on the benefits of Designation, when it received much needed tax credits to reopen its village general store. NVDA also assisted an Albany community group with the general store by procuring brownfield assessment funds.
from a partner RPC, and also by securing a grant for an on-site wastewater system.

- In FY2018, NVDA staff worked with eight communities to amend municipal plans: Brunswick, Coventry, Newport City, Peacham, Ryegate, Sutton, Westmore, and Westfield. Additional towns received technical assistance on developing energy plans that will meet Act 174 standards for receiving substantial deference.

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.

Energy Plan and Regional Plan Amendment: In June, NVDA became the fifth regional planning commission to receive a determination of energy compliance from the Department of Public Service. The determination allows NVDA to review and certify local plans in our region who wish to receive Substantial Deference in the Section 248 process. The determination concludes an intensive 18-month effort to amend the regional plan – economic development, housing, land use, and utilities & facilities chapters were updated as well – that will serve as a comprehensive planning resource for local commissions. The energy plan features a carefully crafted policy statement on unique siting challenges caused by grid constraint, which can better prepare and inform communities in the area known as the Sheffield-Highgate Export Interface (SHEI).

NEK Food Cycle Coalition: This group of NVDA staff, NEK Waste Management District, state and local officials, and community development organizers continue to meet monthly at NVDA offices to reduce the loss of edible food by redirecting it to those who need it. The group, which follows Vermont’s hierarchy for food wastes – reducing waste at the source, redirecting it to people, then to animals, compost and energy recovery – hosted a well-attended outreach event in late 2017. An education and outreach event directed at food service providers, retailers, and institutions is planned for later this fall.

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

Yellow Barn: NVDA is a key partner (with the Town of Hardwick, the Center for an Agricultural Economy, and local business leaders) in an effort to build a multi-tenant business accelerator that will strengthen Hardwick’s economic infrastructure by allowing multiple establishments to grow and expand with other entrepreneurs, develop new products, and improve export to external markets. The Yellow Barn The project entails construction of a 24,800 sq. foot facility on a commercial/industrial site along the Route 15 gateway to downtown Hardwick. The site currently houses the former Greensboro Garage facility, a well-known adaptive reuse of a mid-19th century barn. The iconic “Yellow Barn” as it is known throughout the greater Hardwick area, is on the State historic register and will be retained and restored. Adjacent use immediately to the south of the parcel is dedicated to the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail that, when completed, will
enhance opportunities for visitor tourism. The “Yellow Barn Business Accelerator” has the potential to add nearly $1 million in potential income to the local economy every year.

**Vt Quebec Enterprise Initiative:** NVDA continued to participate in this multi-year effort, which is focused on bilateral, value-added economic development, including the recruitment of Quebec businesses seeking a U.S. presence. In FY2018 NVDA also completed a survey of employers to identify workforce and training needs and we are now working with training providers like the VT Manufacturing Extension Center to implement skills training.

**Vermont Talent Pipeline:** Developing a skilled and ready workforce is a critical issue locally and statewide. In FY2018, NVDA committed to partner in the Vermont Talent Pipeline Management initiative. This effort convenes businesses from different industry sectors to identify their industry-specific issues and develop employer-led workforce solutions. The industries that convened during FY2018 were construction, health care, and advanced marketing. Education providers will be engaged in implementing the solutions identified by the industries.

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

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

**Burke Mountain:** NVDA is partnering with Northern Community Investment Corporation and other agencies to assist with a significant water infrastructure project that will assist Burke Mountain Resort and Burke Mountain Academy with their snow-making capacity to ensure more sustainable operations that will create dozens of new jobs and significantly increase visitor
tourism to the area. The Village of East Burke and the local fire district will also benefit from additional water supply.

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.

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

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

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

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

Objective 3: Provide Technical Assistance to Municipalities

- 43 municipalities participating in road foreman meetings annually
- 8 municipalities assisted with transportation related grants
- 30% of budget spent on municipal technical assistance
- 6 municipal transportation inventories conducted
- 1 municipal transportation related feasibility/project definition studies completed/undertaken
- 10 municipalities assisted with transportation element of municipal/town plan
- 7 road erosion inventories in support of the MRGP completed using TPI dollars and using other funding sources

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

- 20 data collection activities conducted specifically for VTrans
Objective #5: Provide a Mechanism for Improved Public Outreach and Education
NVDA facilitates a regional Rivers and Roads Working group made up of DEC Staff, County Conservation District Managers, VTrans Maintenance District Staff, and other regional partners. This year this group has developed outreach materials (adapted from WRC and other materials) for informing adjacent landowners about municipal requirements under Act 64. These materials will be provided to Town Clerks, Road Foreman and TAC members to hand out to residents when questions arise. As well as be a handout piece for NVDA staff in our own outreach.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & DISASTER RESILIENCY
RPCs play key roles in the mitigation and emergency preparedness through its work with Vermont Emergency Management, the Vermont Homeland Security Unit, VT Agency of Transportation, and the Agency of Natural Resources. NVDA provides staff assistance to the State Emergency Operations Center, administrative support to the Local Emergency Planning Committees, and coordination among responders and planners throughout the State’s four Public Safety Districts. NVDA also 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.

Local Emergency Operations Planning: Every community is required to have a Local Emergency Operations Plan. One of the requirements for this plan to be adopted and accepted by Vermont Emergency Management is for a select board member from each community to have completed either the Incident Command Course 100 or Incident Command Course 402. This has been a challenge to many communities due to select board member’s various schedules. In the past year I have worked with the communities that have had difficulty getting their LEOP adopted and accepted due to a select board member not completing one of the required ICS courses. I have been able to schedule ICS 402 courses in some communities and have worked with other communities to have a select board member take the ICS 100 course on-line. Every community that NVDA now serves has at least one select board member who has completed either the ICS 100 or ICS 402 course. As a result of this effort we have 49 communities with adopted Local Emergency Operations Plans for FY 2018.

Table Top Exercise: In FY 2018, NVDA’s Emergency Management Specialist participated (along with multiple agencies and first responders) in a table top exercise at Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital (NVRH). The objective of this exercise was to test the capability of our local hospitals, NVRH and North Country Hospital as well as our EMS, fire, and law enforcement personnel to handle a mass casualty incident. Although the actual exercise was only a few hours, it takes several meetings to plan for something like this to make sure all the agencies that should be involved are participating and to learn what each agency needs to accomplish in this exercise.

Local Hazard Management Plans: NVDA staff assisted with the development of hazard mitigation plans that can minimize losses, as well as out-of-pocket costs in federal disasters. This year, Barton, Canaan, Greensboro, Kirby, Holland, and Hardwick each adopted Local Hazard Mitigation
Plans, bringing the total number of towns with current plans to 19.

**GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM SERVICES**
A great amount of effort was applied to researching town zoning by-laws and securing zoning district maps. In some cases, there weren’t maps, only written descriptions that were sometimes difficult to translate into boundaries. Working with various town officials and historical map information we were able to define boundaries and create digital data. In the end, we were able to collect and digitize data for all towns that have zoning by-laws.

Other 2018 highlights include:

- GIS digitization of zoning data and making the data available to the State’s Open Data Portal
- Provided more detailed energy maps for the towns of Craftsbury, Greensboro, Irasburg, Morgan, and Westfield
- Village Center maps for Albany, Barton, Brighton, Craftsbury, Groton, Hardwick, Lyndon, and Wheelock.
- Plan maps for Brighton, Coventry, Glover, Greensboro, Hardwick, Irasburg, Morgan, Newport City, Peacham, Ryegate, St Johnsbury, Waterford, and Westmore
- Zoning maps for Barton, Lowell, Lyndon, Ryegate, and Waterford.

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

**Local Enhanced Energy Plans:** In FY2018, NVDA assisted the municipalities of Brighton, Morgan, and Westmore to develop their own enhanced energy plans, bringing the total number of communities assisted to nine. When adopted (and certified by NVDA), these plans will give each community a stronger voice in the sometimes-challenging review process for renewable energy projects.

**Local Energy Committees:** Three communities, inspired by the bold vision of a clean and efficient energy future, formed local energy committees this year. NVDA staff met with dedicated volunteers to identify strategies for local advocacy. Peacham, Ryegate, and Sutton, now join the towns of Glover, Hardwick, and Craftsbury in taking local action to reduce energy use and switch to cleaner burning fuel sources.

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

**Water Quality Advisory Committee:** NVDA’s vast region encompasses six basin plans, while a seventh (the Winooski) touches the region. This year, staff continued the efforts initiated in FY2017 when the Water Quality Advisory Committee was formed. In FY2018 staff collaborated with the committee as well as multiple stakeholders to develop strategic plans to protect or restore specific waters, and identify appropriate funding and resources to complete the work. The work on the Memphremagog Basin Plan was completed, and work began on updating the Passumpsic Basin Plan.

**Grants in Aid:** NVDA collaborated with the Department of Environmental Conservation, VAPDA, and VTrans to reach out to its member municipalities to participate in the Grants in Aid program, a pilot project which provides funding to municipalities to implement best management practices on municipal roads ahead of the upcoming Municipal Roads General Permit. In FY2018, NVDA directed grants to 34 municipalities in our region, totaling $343,800. Projects included creation of grand- and stone-lined drainage ditches, turnouts, and other disconnection and infiltration practices. Improvements also stabilized catch basin outlets, addressed gully erosion on Class 4 roads, improved and replaced culverts, removed grader berms and removed high road shoulders.

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

**SPECIAL PROJECTS**

- In FY2018 a coalition comprised of NVDA, the Town of St. Johnsbury and the City of Newport were awarded an EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant to facilitate redevelopment of aging, underutilized and potentially contaminated properties in the region. Key properties that will benefit from this assessment funding include the former Depot Square Apartments in St. Johnsbury, recently acquired by Housing Vermont. The redevelopment of this key historic property in the designated downtown will have a tremendous positive impact on the downtown streetscape. Other projects poised for redevelopment that will utilize these funds include: St. Jay Hardware (to become St. Johnsbury Distillery); a former Glove Factory (to become a multi-tenant business facility in downtown St. Johnsbury), and a multi-unit housing project in Lyndonville.

- Also, in FY2018, NVDA led an effort to assist community leaders and investors in St. Johnsbury with exploring the feasibility of developing an indoor recreation facility that could serve as a destination development for the community. Originally, the vision was for a multi-sheet ice arena that could serve local schools and the university. However, an industry consultant
worked with the group to modify their vision to one of a full-size ice arena with an adjacent indoor turf field that would better meet the needs of the communities.

**ADMINISTRATION & FUNDING**

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

NVDA also has two Nonprofit Community Development Organization (NCDO) relending funds capitalized by loan repayments from Community Development Block Grants.

Our FY2017 audit, like previous years, produced no significant findings. Our FY2018 audit will be available in December.

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

‘AT WORK’ MAP

The map depicting the range of services provided by the NVDA is included on the next page.
The Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) serves the 23 municipalities (19 towns, 3 incorporated villages, and 1 city) located in Franklin and Grand Isle Counties in northwestern Vermont.

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

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

MUNICIPAL PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION

RPCs act as a cost-effective professional planning staff for many of Vermont’s municipalities. Work in recent years has been focused on improving town plans and local permitting through education and 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 19 municipalities on the Essentials of Land Use Planning and developing housing in downtowns and village centers.
- Reviewed and provided regional approval to 3 municipal plans (Franklin, Richford, St. Albans City). Reviewed and provided a positive determination of energy compliance to 3 municipal plans (Highgate, Richford, Swanton)
- Completed a bylaw update for the Town of Berkshire with Municipal Planning Grant funding. This included a build out analysis, consideration of a new zoning district and a community survey. Completed updates to the municipal development regulations for the Town of Fletcher and Town of Montgomery. Assisted the Town of Alburgh in
creating development regulations that were voted on by town residents at Town Meeting.

- Finished an update of the Fairfax Town Plan through technical assistance and funding from the town. Helped the Town of St. Albans develop six chapters of its new plan. Assisted Richford and Franklin in basic updates to their municipal plans, including the addition of a new flood resiliency section as required by statute.
- Helped Alburgh, Franklin and Highgate complete their renewal applications for designated village centers.
- Began assisting the Town of Fairfield on updates to the Fairfield Subdivision and Zoning Bylaw. The project is funded through the Municipal Planning Grant program.
- Assisted the Richford Selectboard in amending the Richford Housing Code to ensure compliance with state statute.
- Began work on a Village Master Plan with the Town and Village of Alburgh. The project is funded through the Municipal Planning Grant program.
- Answered general planning and zoning technical assistance questions for Alburgh, Berkshire, Bakersfield, Enosburgh, Enosburg Falls, Fairfax, Fairfield, Fletcher, Franklin, Georgia, Grand Isle, Highgate, Montgomery, North Hero, Richford, Sheldon, St. Albans City, 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 amended by the Board of Commissioners in June 2017. The amended plan included a new energy element meant to comply with the new statutory requirements for regional “enhanced energy plans.” It also included adoption of the Regional Energy Plan by reference.

NRPC published an online indicator report with data to show progress on the goals of the regional plan.

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

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

NRPC currently has 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 FY18, the following projects were either finished, ongoing or started:

Assessment Projects:

- **1, 3, 5 Canada Street and Municipal Lot at Merchants Row, Swanton Village.** The property owner of 1, 3, 5 Canada Street and the Village of Swanton have entered the Brownfields Program and NRPC has funded a phase 1 assessment, quality assurance project plan (QAPP), a phase 2 assessment, supplemental phase 2 assessment, a supplemental soil vapor assessment, an off-site soil vapor assessment, a corrective action plan and technical assistance with federal Section 106 requirements. The property is currently undergoing redevelopment as an Ace Hardware store with additional commercial space.

- **Former Machia Estate and Former Town Garage property, Highgate Center.** The Town of Highgate has entered the Brownfields Program and NRPC has funded a phase 1 assessment, QAPP and a phase 2 assessment for the Former Machia Estate and the adjacent former town garage property. The Town of Highgate is currently developing a master plan for these properties using Vermont Municipal Planning Grant funds.

- **14 Stebbins Street, St. Albans City.** The property owner of 14 Stebbins Street has entered the Brownfields program and NRPC has funded a phase 1, QAPP, phase 2 assessment and corrective action plan. The property is currently undergoing redevelopment and remediation and the brownfields program is funding oversight and completion reporting for the corrective action plan. The property owner is renovating the space into a ballet studio and apartments.

- **200 Bridge Street, Sheldon.** The Town of Sheldon in cooperation with the Sheldon Historical Society has entered the Brownfields Program and NRPC has funded a phase 1 assessment, ground penetrating radar assessment, QAPP and a phase 2 assessment. The historical society plans to restore the building for use as a museum and office space.

- **113 Main Street, Richford.** NRPC was hired by the Town of Richford in coordination with the Richford Economic Advancement Corporation to provide project management and coordination of vision and master plan development for 113 Main Street, funded by a Municipal Planning Grant.

**ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Economic growth is supported best when development efforts are partnered with solid planning functions. RPCs work with towns and in strong partnership with Regional Development Corporations (RDCs) to this end in a number of ways, including development of comprehensive strategies that will help to position Vermont for long term economic gain.
• Re-established the Northern Vermont Economic Development District (NVEDD) 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.
• Key partner and organizer of In Good Taste, an annual local food event.
• Contracted with Northern Borders Regional Commission grantees to provide grant administration assistance.
• Hosted the Healthy Roots gleaning position to capture unused local crops for distribution to food shelves and other regional groups.

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.

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Transportation Planning Highlights

- NRPC was awarded $59,187 in Northern Border Regional Commission grant funds to develop and implement a marketing and wayfinding plan for the Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail.
- NRPC successfully wrote a $54,000 Vermont Better Connections grant application for the Village of Enosburg Falls to develop a village master plan to promote economic development and community health, strengthen the tourist & recreation economy, revitalize Main Street and create a brand for the Village Center. NRPC will serve as the local project manager.
- NRPC was invited to give a talk on regional transportation issues/priorities to an advanced English Language Learners (ELL) class at VT Adult Learning. The students identified the lack of sidewalks and public transit service as two major transportation challenges.
- NRPC provided mapping assistance to the towns of Highgate and Swanton to support evacuations due to road flooding in January 2018.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & 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 and local disasters. Eighteen municipalities (81%) in the region currently have an updated local emergency operations plan. Fifteen municipalities (68%) of municipalities in the region currently have a local hazard mitigation plan either adopted or under review. During the last fiscal year, NRPC:

- Provided direct staff support to the Village of Swanton, Swanton Town and Highgate with Emergency Operations Center during the Missisquoi River Ice Jam Flood events in January and February. Served as Long Term Recovery Committee member on Swanton
Highgate Recovery Committee from January through July in support of local recovery efforts for victims of flooding.

- Provided direct GIS staff support to Alburgh Village Emergency Operations Center during hazmat incident in Village. GIS was used to support response efforts.
- 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.
- Served on the State Emergency Response Committee which oversees the states hazard materials program including carrying out the state and federal requirements of the committee.
- 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.

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

- Completed town plan & zoning maps for municipalities updating their plans and bylaws.
- Prepared and updated Village Designation Maps for communities seeking village designation and renewal.
- Completed E911 Community Maps for all municipalities for use by town officials, emergency responders and others. The maps include a community poster map, a bound atlas with individual pages for each roadway and basic road map.

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

- Drafted enhanced energy plans and provided technical assistance to Bakersfield, Fairfax, Fletcher, Franklin, Montgomery, North Hero, Swanton Town and Swanton Village. The
enhanced energy plans will allow the municipalities to meet the standards in Act 174 and receive a determination of energy compliance from NRPC.

- Coordinated statewide RPC efforts to provide custom technical assistance to municipalities seeking to meet the standards in Act 174.
- Actively participated in the Section 248 proceedings for the St. Albans Solar, LLC, Vermont Green Line Deveco, LLC transmission cable project, and 4 other renewable energy generation projects between 20 MW and 500 kW in size.

WATERSHED PLANNING & PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

RPCs work with the Agency of Natural Resources to assist with completion of the EPA required watershed plans and implementation of the Lake Champlain 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.
- Continued to work with towns developing water quality related language in town plans and bylaws related to shoreline, stream buffers and river corridor regulations.
- Presented a property owner training that focused on solutions to treat stormwater on private driveways with funding from EPA’s Healthy Communities Program. The project is providing training to landowners on actions for managing stormwater runoff and reducing erosion potential.
- Awarded funding from the Ecosystem Restoration Program for 2 town-wide Stormwater Master Planning efforts with the Towns of Fairfax and Richford that take a comprehensive approach to address all potential issues which contribute to water quality impairment or improvement.
- Received funding for 3 municipal stormwater projects with the Clean Water Block Grant program for the following municipalities: City of St. Albans, Town of St. Albans, Town of Franklin.
- Awarded funding from the Lake Champlain Basin Program to transform an in-person educational workshop on stormwater management into video format which expands access to the entire region.
- Wrote 2 grant applications to the Ecosystem Restoration Program for projects identified in municipal stormwater master plans for Highgate and Swanton and will assist both elementary schools in complying with future 3-acre permit requirements.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Grants in Aid Pilot Project

NRPC coordinate a new program sponsored by the VT Department of Environmental Conservation. The Municipal Grants in Aid Program provides funding for municipalities to bring segments of roadway into compliance with the municipal roads general permit. RPCs statewide provided technical assistance to 186 municipalities to advance $2 million in construction of new
best management practices. Approximately 45 miles of roadway were improved in FY 18. For FY 19, over 200 municipalities have signed up to participate in the program.

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

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

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

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 18 NRPC budget was $4.2 million. The Municipal Grants in Aid program accounted for $2.5 million of the budget, leaving an operating budget for NRPC of $1.7 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 municipal assessments is the exception, which makes this funding stream particularly important because it gives us the greatest latitude to respond to NRPC-identified needs in the region. The grants we receive enable us to work with our towns on areas such as transportation, emergency planning, community development, brownfields redevelopment, energy, and natural resources. Revenue from virtually all federal and state grantors requires non-federal matching funds ranging from 10 percent (Transportation Planning Initiative) to 50 percent (Emergency Management Planning Grant). Municipal assessments and regional planning funds passed through to NRPC under a performance contract with the Department of Housing and Community Development provide matching funds required by grantors.
An audit is currently underway and will be completed in the fall of 2018. NRPC has had no audit findings in ten years and as such is considered a ‘low risk’ grantee by federal agencies. Staffing in FY 18 included 8 employees: Executive Director, Assistant Director, Senior Planners (3), Regional Planner, GIS Technician, and Office Administrator; an AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer also joined NRPC in FY 18. Six of the eight employees have been with NRPC for fifteen years or more.

‘AT WORK’ MAP
The map depicting the range of services provided by the NRPC to member municipalities is included on the next page.
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 economy of the Region is diverse, with industries including GE, one University, three colleges, Killington/Pico Ski Resorts, renewable energy development and a wide variety of small, family-run businesses. The physiology of the Region varies dramatically as well, containing the peaks of Southern Green Mountains, which reach up to 4,000’ in elevation, the gently sloped farmland of the Vermont Valley, the steep Taconic Mountains and Lake Bomoseen, the largest lake within the borders of the state and part of the Champlain Valley.

MUNICIPAL PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION
RPCs act as a cost-effective professional planning staff for many of Vermont’s municipalities. Work in recent years has focused on improving town plans and local permitting through education and enhanced consultations (on-site training), bylaw modernization, facilitating transition to Development Review Boards and implementing new requirements for economic development and flood resiliency planning. This work is supported through local and regional planning funds, local contributions and other grants. Highlights include:

- Worked with Planning Commissions in the towns of Rutland Town, Sudbury, Brandon, Wallingford, West Haven, and Mendon to develop language for municipal plans and land use bylaws.
- Provided assistance to promote state land use goals, ensure consistency with Chapter 117 requirements and provide clear community standards regarding the siting of energy and telecommunications facilities. Significant effort went into flood resilience education.
- Updated the Town of Hubbardton’s Zoning Regulations.
- Created a Chittenden Building Registration Form.
- Provided VCDP Implementation Grant Administration for the Town of Proctor.
- Reviewed approximately 30 Act 250 and Section 248 applications.
- Conducted five Enhanced Consultations.
- Worked with the towns of Fair Haven, Clarendon, Castleton and Tinmouth on Village Center Designations (both new and renewals).
- Worked with West Haven and Mendon on new water quality protection language for draft municipal plans.

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.
• Updated the Energy chapter of the Rutland Regional Plan. These revisions reflect the required and recommended changes identified by statute and Rutland Region towns. The Energy Chapter was Certified by the Public Utilities Commission on September 10, 2018.

• Used the Rutland Regional Plan as a guide to review Act 250 and Section 248 applications, grant applications for transportation and water quality projects, municipal planning and village center designation applications.

• The Rutland Regional Plan was used to guide municipal plan land use chapters and serves as an education tool and guide for municipalities to create healthy and economically resilient communities.

• The RRPC offers three conference rooms for use by local, regional and state organizations at no charge. Frequent users include Castleton University, the Rutland Region Workforce Investment Board, VT DEC and a number of transportation-related groups. The ideas and information exchange resulting from the mix of various groups and participants is a valuable tool, making organizations and the region stronger.

• Provided regional presentations and workshops on topics such as economic development and the essentials of land use planning.

**ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

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

• The RRPC assisted local municipalities to plan projects aimed at revitalizing designated villages and downtowns. One example is the work the RRPC has undertaken with the Town of Proctor, using a brownfields site as key in the plan’s development.

• The RRPC continues to promote the Strong Communities Better Connections study funded by ACCD and VTrans that included the communities of West Rutland and Rutland Town and the Business Route 4 Corridor that connects the two towns. The two municipalities are currently working with the RRPC and VTrans to redesign the corridor, which will foster walkability and economic growth on adjacent properties.

• The RRPC assisted the Towns of Clarendon, Brandon, Poultney, Fair Haven, Castleton, Pittsford, and Tinmouth with their village center designations. The Town of Sudbury will work with the RRPC this year to explore the possibility of designation.

• The Executive Directors of the RRPC, Rutland Economic Development Corporation, Rutland Region Chamber of Commerce, Rutland Redevelopment Authority and Rutland Downtown Partnership meet monthly to discuss current and future projects with regional impacts.

• Economic Development Chapters were updated in the Wallingford West Haven, and Mendon municipal plans.
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & DISASTER RESILIENCY
RPCs play key roles in the mitigation and preparedness phases of emergency management in partnership with Vermont Emergency Management, the Vermont Homeland Security Unit, VTrans, and the Agency of Natural Resources. RPCs provide direct staff support to the State Emergency Operations Center, 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. Highlights include:

- Provided technical assistance and outreach to all towns in completing Local Emergency Operations Plans (LEOPs), including offering an LEOP training session.
- Provided extensive assistance to seven towns with preparing single jurisdictional hazard mitigation plans, through a Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant as well as an HMGP grant. Support for other municipality’s’ plans was provided upon request.
- Supported the Rutland Region LEPC #2 by organizing monthly meetings, coordinating special projects and keeping LEPC #2 members informed of training and grant opportunities.
- 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.
- Collected and communicated local damage information from towns after three significant storm events affected the region, in coordination with Vermont Division of Emergency Management, VTrans and Agency of Natural Recourses.
- Three RRPC staff continued training to serve in the State Emergency Operations Center.
- 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”
- All 27 municipalities (100%) in RRPC territory have adopted LEOPs.
- Participated on a state task force to design and create the new Local EMD training course and materials.
- Processed hazardous material reports from Tier II facilities in order to produce meaningful datasets that will aid firefighters and other first responders who are called to emergencies at the facilities.
- Assisted Rutland City with an on-going emergency management gap analysis.
Coordinated with state agencies and regional partners to provide training and information to the region’s daycare providers so that the providers could meet emergency planning requirements.

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

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

- Updated and adopted a new Energy Chapter for the Rutland Regional Plan to meet the standards of regional enhanced energy planning pursuant to Act 174.
- Assisted all 27 towns with municipal enhanced energy planning by providing energy data analysis and renewable energy maps. The RRPC provided specialized technical assistance to six towns – Sudbury, Rutland Town, Middletown Springs, Wallingford, Brandon and Mount Holly – so that these municipalities have all of the components needed to meet the standards for enhanced energy planning pursuant to Act 174.
- Two Rutland Region towns now have enhanced energy plans with Certificates of Energy Compliance from the Department of Public Service – Benson and Sudbury.
- Assisted the towns of Sudbury, Rutland Town, Brandon and Wallingford to create new energy chapters in their municipal plans. Clearer community standards were developed to guide the Public Utilities Commission (formerly the Public Service Board) during Section 248 project review.
- Worked with the RRPC Regional Committee and Board to review 15 Section 248 petitions and submitted comments to Public Utilities Commission (formerly the Public Service Board). A majority of the projects were for solar electric generation facilities and telecommunications towers.

WATERSHED PLANNING & PROJECT DEVELOPMENT
RPCs work with the Agency of Natural Resources to assist with completion of the EPA required watershed plans and tactical basin plans. RPCs also work with municipalities to implement river corridor assessments in local planning and regulations which result in better and safer growth management decisions.
• Assisted VT DEC Watershed Coordinators Ethan Swift, Danielle Owczarski and Angie Allen with review and outreach of the updated Tactical Basin Plans for the South Lake Champlain, White River and Otter Creek Watersheds. These tactical basin plans help address the Vermont Clean Water Initiative and the TMDL for Lake Champlain.

• Staff continues to train the region’s municipalities on the provisions of the Clean Water Initiative, including several upcoming mandatory permits and funding opportunities.

• As part of the Clean Water Initiative, RRPC staff is working directly with West Haven and Mendon on increased protection designations for area waterways. This work is being done through the towns’ Municipal Plans.

• Staff is working with the Town of Danby to include River Corridor protections and the latest state river corridor mapping data.

• Assisted 18 towns in the region with a new pilot grant program funded by VT DEC: The Grants-in-Aid Program. These funds help communities get an early start on some of the Best Management Practices that will be required for the upcoming Municipal General Roads Permit. In year two of the grant program, staff is working with 20 municipalities to implement BMPs.

• Creating a comprehensive Municipal Protectiveness list of policies and regulations in all 27 towns to highlight the accomplishments of and opportunities for additional water quality efforts.

• Under a EPA/VT DEC 604b grant, staff is assisting VT DEC with its data management of Clean Water Act projects.

• Partnered with the Poultnay Mettowee Natural Resources Conservation District (PMNRC) to promote flood resiliency in the Flower Brook watershed which includes Pawlet, Danby and Tinmouth. This watershed was greatly impacted in Tropical Storm Irene. This is funded by the High Meadows Fund.

• Partnered with PMNRC to administer a new VT DEC grant – CWBG – to install stormwater runoff infiltration structures at West Rutland School.

• Providing outreach assistance for two Ecosystem Restoration Program (ERP) grants awarded to the PMNRC. Both are for Stormwater Master Planning; one for Lake Champlain, the other for the Castleton River Headwaters.

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

The Rutland Region Brownfields Reuse Program (BRP) has existed for fourteen years and has received approximately $2.5 million in funding from the US EPA to conduct community-wide assessment activities and redevelopment planning. Funding for this work has been reinvested in the Region and leveraged other funding sources, making the program an essential land use and economic development tool for municipalities. Highlights include:
• Phase I and Phase II assessment work at the former Lynda Lee Fashions manufacturing facility in Rutland City, funded by the RRPC and LCPC, is setting the stage for a redevelopment of this historic building and site by the Housing Trust of Rutland County. The future residential, commercial and civic uses included in the development will further the revitalization of the City’s Northwest Neighborhood.

• Partnering with the Town of Proctor and Preservation Trust of Vermont, the historic Vermont Marble Company facility in Proctor has received two rounds of Phase II ESA work and Corrective Action planning. This work set the stage for a property transfer to the Vermont Marble Museum, a non-profit, which will continue to operate the museum and redevelop the site for other commercial and possible residential uses. Brownfields work at the site was also a driving factor in leveraging a $30,000 planning grant from the VCDP to create the Proctor Prosperity Plan, which expanded on work at this site to identify economic development opportunities and strategies in the village core.

• 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 add to the vibrancy of downtown Rutland.

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

Enhance cooperation and coordination between VTrans, RPC regions and municipalities

- Worked with municipalities actively engaged in regional transportation planning.
- Held 6 Transportation Advisory Council (TAC) meetings.
- Worked with 5 non-municipal representatives actively engaged in transportation planning via TAC meetings.

Better connect federal, regional and statewide transportation planning
• Began updating the transportation chapters of the Rutland Regional Plan
• Continued membership on Marble Valley Regional Transit District Board of Commissioners.
• Coordinated quarterly meetings of regional E&D Public Transit Advisory Committee.
• RRPC staff served on the VAPDA Transportation Committee.
• The TAC worked with VTrans in prioritizing regional paving and bridge projects.
• Provided transportation-related comments on 2 Act 250 and 1 Section 248 application.

Provide technical assistance to municipalities

• Held 3 road commissioner networking meetings, focusing on pertinent issues such as transportation/water quality legislation and regulatory framework, damage reporting in aftermath of storms and emergency protective measures. At least 17 municipalities were represented throughout the year.
• 54% of the transportation budget was spent on municipal technical assistance.
• Completed 6 bridge/culvert inventories, 8 road erosion inventories, two 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 on request.
• Worked with other RPCs and state officials in creating and editing a road erosion inventory field template. Participated in several trainings and hosted one training session in Brandon.
• Continued work on Better Roads Category A grants with eleven towns from FY17 application cycle, and assisted towns with applications for FY18 cycle.
• Assisted 3 municipalities with municipal plan transportation elements.

Advance VTrans Strategic and Long-Range Transportation Plans

• Conducted 6 data collection activities for VTrans
• Coordinated activities with municipalities and VTrans
• Assisted 16 municipalities with transportation related grants

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 eleven 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: Brandon, Fair Haven, Hubbardton, Ira, Mendon, Mount Holly, Pawlet, Pittsford, Proctor, Wells and west Rutland.
• **Transportation Mapping** – Provided mapping support for several transportation related town grants. Continue to work on identifying and inventorying town short 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.

• **Emergency Management** – RRPC participated in several training sessions at the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) including a general GIS meeting and a COOP meeting relating to the alternate SEOC at Camp Johnson in Colchester. The RRPC also mapped Tier II sites in the region with hazard buffers for each site.

• **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, Wallingford, Mendon, and West Haven, creating municipal plan maps to support their town plan or zoning documents.

• **Energy Plans** – continued to work on energy maps for the towns of: Benson, Brandon, Mount Holly, Rutland Town, Sudbury and Wallingford.

• **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 regional map of vulnerable sites and areas requiring mitigation, which can be used by all 27 towns

• **Vermont’s Use Value Appraisal Program** – RRPC worked with local land owners in several towns on this service.

• **Village Center and Downtown Designations** – RRPC updated the Village Center Designations for West Rutland and Pittsford.

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

• Successful completion of FY 2017 Financial and Final Reports as well as semi-annual reports for the Agency of Commerce and Community Development; that included the status of performance measures, budget expenses, and other information.

• Completion of the FY17 Audit which resulted in “No findings” and was distributed to requesting granting agencies.

• Enhanced presence in the Region by serving on local boards such as WIB, REDC, Chamber, The Bus and Southern Vermont Rutland Region Airport Committee.

• Leveraging of ACCD funds to provide match for grants from VTrans, VEM and EPA, which enabled the RRPC to cover the indirect costs incurred to expand work into diverse areas of planning.

• Increased RRPC visibility through serving on statewide committees, attending Legislative events, newsletters and increased presence on social media. Efforts have been channeled into our brand identity, promotional materials and website.
• Continued to implement recommendations of the Strategic Plan, including financial and management structure.

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

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

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

- Provided a range of services to assist with municipal plan updates for Andover, Chester, Ludlow, Springfield and Weathersfield.
- Helping planning commissions to prepare zoning bylaw updates in Reading, Springfield, Weathersfield, West Windsor and Windsor. Staff also provided guidance on bylaw updates in Ludlow.
- Assisted with municipal plan implement through the development of supporting plans, including Windsor’s ongoing Better Connections project.

REGIONAL PLANNING
RPCs coordinate planning at the regional level through the adoption and implementation of a comprehensive regional plan, and related studies. These plans guide local planning and the investment decisions of the public and private sectors.
The Regional Plan was amended on June 25, 2018. The following updates were worked on during this fiscal year:
- Amended the Regional Plan, replacing the previous Energy Chapter with a new Enhanced Energy Plan.
- Developed a revised draft Land Use Chapter with our consultant (Place Sense) and under the guidance of our Land Use Advisory Committee.

Efforts this year to implement the Regional Plan included the following activities:
- Reviewed all Act 250 applications and Section 248 petitions as each relates to goals and policies in the Regional Plan.
- Continued to assist Windsor with efforts to repair the Ascutney Mill Dam.

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.

- Provided brownfields assistance for 11 properties in 2 towns.
  - Springfield: Park Street School, 1620 Park Street, Woolson Block, Jones Center, Artisan Surfaces, 100 River Street, Jones and Lamson, and Bryant Grinder Buildings.
  - Windsor: Goodyear, Windsor Railyards, Windsor Armory.
- The SWCRPC continues to work with Springfield Regional Development Corporation on the clean-up of various properties.

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

- Supported downtown revitalization efforts in Springfield and Windsor, and village revitalization initiatives in Chester, Ludlow, Weathersfield and West Windsor.
- Continued to assist with the multi-year process to develop an environmental review for the redevelopment of the Jones and Lamson site in Springfield.
- Completed an analysis of the availability and access to primary aspects of health care for all populations.
- Organized a forum about the economics of outdoor recreation, and supported sub-regional cooperative efforts to maximize outdoor recreation initiatives.
- Supported efforts to redevelop the Park Street School building in Springfield.

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.

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<tbody>
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<td># of regional transportation plans that are current (within 8 years)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of Act 250 applications with RPC comments relating to transportation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of Section 248 applications with RPC comments relating to transportation</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of coordination activities in support of regional public transit providers</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of VTrans committees that involves RPC staff participation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of regions participating in Project Prioritization</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective 3</th>
<th>Provide Technical Assistance to Municipalities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of municipalities participating in road foreman meetings annually</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of municipalities assisted with transportation related grants</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of budget spent on municipal technical assistance</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of municipal transportation inventories conducted</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of municipal transportation related feasibility/project definition studies completed/undertaken</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of municipalities assisted with transportation element of municipal/town plan</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of road erosion inventories in support of the MRGP completed using TPI dollars and using other funding sources</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Objective 4**
Deliver Results that Advance VTrans Strategic and Long Range Transportation Plans

# of data collection activities conducted specifically for VTrans | 79 |

**Objective 5**
Provide a Mechanism for Improved Public Outreach and Education

- SWCRPC staff facilitated Regional E&D Committee Meetings during a transitional period for Medicaid trip providers in the region.
- Developing an Active Transportation Plan.

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**EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & DISASTER RESILIENCY**

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

- Ten municipalities in the region (100%) currently have a hazard mitigation plan either adopted or under review or development. Nine municipalities in the region (90%) currently have an updated local emergency plan.
- Assisted all 10 towns with updates to their Local Emergency Operations Plans this year.
- Worked with 6 towns to update Local Hazard Mitigation Plans, including Andover, Baltimore, Ludlow, Reading, Springfield, Weathersfield and West Windsor.
- Provided support with the buyout of a flood-damaged property.
- Assisted Ludlow with the Commonwealth Avenue stormwater project.
- Continued to provide guidance to the Town and Village of Ludlow with flood hazard review, as requested.

**GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM SERVICES**

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

- Highlights of activities
o Creation of interactive online map of health resources http://swcrpc.org/svm/.
o Prepared maps for municipal plans, zoning bylaws and other projects.
o Developed maps to support applications for Village Center and Downtown Designation.
o Uploaded all zoning district maps into the Vermont Open Geodata Portal.
o Integrated “Collector for ArcGIS” into regular fieldwork activities, including MRGP related erosion inventories.

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

- Participated in the review process for 13 energy projects (Section 248).
- Facilitated numerous educational sessions for local Planning Commissions and Energy Committees on Act 174 and enhanced local energy plans.
- Assisted the towns of Andover, Ludlow and Springfield to refine their enhanced energy plans.
- Assisted the towns of Chester, Reading and Windsor to develop draft enhanced energy plans.
- Adopted an Enhanced Regional Energy Plan and prepared to submit it to the Department of Public Service for an energy compliance determination.

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

- Worked with the towns of Reading, West Windsor and Windsor to implement recommendations from the Mill Brook Stream Geomorphic Assessment including, but not limited to, Mill Brook water quality monitoring and removal of the Volunteer Fire Department Dam in West Windsor.
- Supported the efforts of 6 towns to complete projects under the Grants In Aid program.
- Assisted the Town of Springfield to secure or seek funding for:
  o Purchasing a vacuum truck.
  o Completing designs for the Lincoln Street stormwater mitigation project.
  o Making stormwater improvements at the Transfer Station.
  o Completing a stormwater master plan.
  o Removal of the Valley Street Dam.
- Worked with the Town of Andover to prepare an RFP for the Horseshoe Acres mitigation project.
- Provided assistance to the Town of Weathersfield with managing the Baltimore Road culvert upgrade project.
- Continued to assist municipalities to better understand flood resiliency and to consider adoption of model ANR river corridor bylaws, including West Windsor and Windsor.
Participated in the development of the Tactical Basin Plan for the Black River Watershed (Basin 10).

SPECIAL PROJECTS

- Organized and supported the multi-jurisdictional outdoor recreation initiative. This involves a planning process to assess the economic impact of outdoor recreation, identify priority improvements, and develop an implementation plan for the towns of Weathersfield, West Windsor and Windsor.

ADMINISTRATION & FUNDING

The SWCRPC is funded by performance and project contracts with federal, state and local levels of government, foundation support, and contributions from member municipalities. SWCRPC’s FY 2018 budget was approximately $1,060,531. Core funding provided by the Agency of Commerce and Community Development of $199,576 leveraged approximately $340,000 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 10.

‘AT WORK’ MAP

The map depicting the range of services provided by the SWCRPC to member municipalities is included on the next page.
SWCRPC at Work: FY 2018

Designated Downtown or Village
- Designated Downtown
- Designated Village

Zoning Bylaw Status
- Adopted
- Flood Only
- None

Town Plan Status
- Current
- Expired
- No Town Plan

County Boundary
Town Boundary

Types of Projects 2018

Assistance
- Bridge and Culvert Inventory
- Brownfield Assistance
- Clean Water Activities
- Economic Development
- Emergency Planning
- Enhanced Energy Planning
- Grant Writing
- Mapping
- Planning and Zoning Assistance
- Road Erosion Inventory
- Transportation Planning Assistance/ Traffic Counts
The Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission (TRORC) provides technical assistance to a 30-town area in east central Vermont. Our primary goals are to advocate for the needs of our member towns, and to articulate a vision for building a thriving and sustainable regional economy while enhancing the region’s quality of life. TRORC staff provide technical services to local, state and federal levels of government and to the Region’s non-profits and businesses.

**MUNICIPAL PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION**

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

- **Downtown/Village Center Designations** - TRORC Staff worked closely with the towns of Chelsea, Hartland, Rochester, Strafford and Tunbridge to renew or apply for state designations.
- **TRORC staff worked on comprehensive town plan rewrites with Vershire, Thetford, and West Fairlee with a focus on protecting forest blocks and habitat connectors.**
- **In addition to the three extensive town plan rewrites above, TRORC provided technical assistance to fourteen towns related to plan language and bylaws changes.**
- **TRORC provided trainings on land use planning and affordable housing, partnering with the Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity to develop video resources to accompany the trainings.**

**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** - The TRORC Regional Plan was adopted in July 2017. TRORC is working on updating its entire Regional Plan between FY 18 and 19 with a focus on protecting forest blocks and habitat connectors, integration of current trends in economic development as well as creating a more user-friendly document overall.
• Regional Plan Implementation: TRORC used the Regional Plan to evaluate applications and participate in the Act 250 and Section 248 projects. In FY 18, eighteen applications were reviewed for Regional Plan conformance.

BROWNFIELDS
• Vermont RPCs have sought and have been awarded over 12 million dollars for this economic redevelopment initiative. Environmental site assessments remove concerns about contamination and allow properties to be sold and redeveloped in ways that benefit the local and state economy, create or protect jobs, provide greenspace, and increase housing opportunities.
• TRORC was awarded $400,000 in EPA assessment funds in FY 16 and has reviewed all known sites in the region with VTDEC, as well as met with our regional development corporation and larger towns to identify their priority sites.
  o Assisted a hardware store expansion in Bethel.
  o Facilitated a purchase and assessment of a commercial site in Hartford.
  o Assessed a former dry cleaners in Hartford.
  o Advanced further assessment at the Jones and Lamson site in Springfield.
  o Conducted an area wide planning project with Hartford for a downtown block.

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

• TRORC continues to support the Cornerstone Creative Community of Vermont (3CVT) as the zone agent to help implement projects related to the creative economy. In FY 18 TRORC held three community meetings around the creative economy bringing together over 150 artists and arts organizations from around the region. Through this effort, TRORC also serves on the statewide Vermont Creative Network as the RPC representative. To help further implementation strategies from the regions creative economy report from 2016, TRORC wrote and was awarded a $30,000 USDA Rural Development grant to build the narrative for promotion of the east central Vermont region.
• TRORC continues to work with East Central Vermont Economic Development District in writing and supporting goals, strategies and actions of our federally approved Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

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

• TRORC participated in numerous policy stakeholder meetings as requested by VTrans and other agencies:
  o VTrans VSPS2 (project prioritization revamping methodology) – 12 meetings.
  o Staff continued RPC road erosion methodology discussion for road erosion inventory collection for summer 2017 and 2018.
  o Staff continued wrap up of Methods and Tools Resiliency Application pilot and provide guidance to new RPC task.

• Other Outreach - Three road foreman/commissioner meetings held, 3 TMDL outreach meetings, 1 Road Safety Audit held, 2 Public Transit Elderly and Disabled meetings held, 3 Vermont Local Road Stakeholder meetings.

• Data collection RPCs do for VTrans – 8 bridge/culvert inventories completed, 10 traffic studies, 14 sidewalk inventories, 13 bike/pedestrian and 4 Park & Ride counts conducted, 1 municipal road surface management inventory.

Objective #2 - Conformance with state land use goals and Facilitating Decentralized Decision Making

• Status of Regional Transportation Plan – Adopted in September, 2015 as part of the TRORC Regional Plan.
• Participation in Project Development Activities - Two project scoping efforts, 2 accelerated bridge meetings.
• Participation in Act 250 review related to transportation issues - One application involving transportation issues.

Objective #3 - Providing Transportation Planning Support to Municipalities

• Fifty percent (50%) of TPI budget (Task # 4 Short Range Transportation Planning) supports municipal planning.
• Other Better Roads (BR) - related work – assisted 30 towns with 37 BR grant applications for 2017 and completed 8 town 2016-2017 BR road erosion and culvert inventories.
• Participation in public transit efforts – TRORC staff continued to participate in Advance Transit’s Strategic Planning Committee and participated in Stagecoach’s changed service routes reflected by mapping technical assistance. TRORC also provided a letter of support for VTrans in applying for a FTA grant for Stagecoach’s future bus barn facility in Bradford.
• Staff continued working with downtown Bethel for the Bethel Better Block Initiative (the Town received a grant through AARP) to implement short term improvements on Main Street by conducting pedestrian and traffic counts to review the impacts after installation of temporary bulb outs at 2 crosswalks.
• Staff provided technical assistance and coordination efforts during the July 1 flood disaster with VTrans Districts, FEMA and VEM. Staff participated in FEMA town kick off meetings invited by towns.

• TRORC co-hosted the 2018 VT Walk Bike Summit in WRJ with over 200 attendees statewide.

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

• TRORC staff are often tasked by VEM to poll towns for disaster damage in the wake of incidents. TRORC also has a very good working relationship with our VTrans Districts and coordinates with them in times when road damages are expected. We do outreach with our road foremen on disaster recovery and we staff our regional LEPC #12.

• TRORC staff were involved in the working group of the new Local Emergency Management Plan.

• Most (27) of our municipalities have updated local emergency operations plans.

• Writing Hazard Mitigation Plans for our towns.
  o Overall in TRORC Region: 29 Towns with Final Approval by FEMA for Local Hazard Mitigation Plans.
  o In this past year, 4 new Towns that have received Final Approval by FEMA, and 1 additional Towns have received FEMA approval pending formal Town adoption

• TRORC Staff presented at the Vermont Emergency Preparedness Conference.

• TRORC has worked with Woodstock on a tabletop exercsize to coordinate town and area departments.

• TRORC continued its lead role in providing HUD and VHCB funds from the Agency of Commerce and Community Development for buying out flood damaged properties.

• TRORC led a statewide hazardous materials commodity flow study.

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

• Produced custom maps for town requests (EAB, road name, corridor etc.).

• Updated town plan maps and zoning maps.

• Supported town asset inventories (culvert, road erosion).
Completed regional future land use draft maps.
Created river corridor and flood resilience project maps and online atlas.
Completed Hazard Mitigation Plan analysis and maps.
Act 174 renewable energy generation maps and online atlas.

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

- TRORC continues to play an integral role in regional energy planning implementation through participation with Efficiency Vermont, Vital Communities Energy Advisory Committee, and Green Mountain Power programing.
- TRORC has continued to update and maintain town energy data reports that align with the data needed for Act 174 compliant plans.
- TRORC reviewed or commented on eleven petitions for a Certificate of Public Good within the region, the bulk of which were for solar projects.
- TRORC provided technical assistance to five municipalities with draft enhanced energy plans: Bradford, Norwich, Strafford, Sharon, Thetford.

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

- TRORC continues to play an active role in commenting on water quality initiatives by the state, as well as promoting high quality waters through basin planning processes. We have remained active in both the Basin 9 and 10 planning process and in proposed reclassification of waters to A1 and B1.
- TRORC continues to coordinate with our Clean Water Advisory Council (CWAC) which plays an active role in advising TRORC activities. The CWAC provides local and regional input regarding storm water, groundwater, wetlands, stream stability, project priorities, and other water quality issues.
- Developed Flood Resilience Elements for Town Plans that identify streams, rivers, infrastructure and properties in town that vulnerable to flooding and/or fluvial erosion and designates these areas for future protection.
- TRORC is working to promote clean water and increase the visibility and accessibility of the Ottauquechee River through a grant from the High Meadows Fund. This educational initiative provides outreach to riparian landowners, has led to the development of a
watershed curriculum with teachers and students within the region, and has arranged outreach events that include the presence of the River Flume Table.

**SPECIAL PROJECTS**

- TRORC continues in its role as the statewide coordinator of CDBG-DR funding for the buyout of flood damaged structures, having completed over 120 buyouts statewide. TRORC has also managed 12 buyouts that have been redesigned as river access points or parks.
- TRORC has continued to partner with the Mt. Ascutney Prevention Partnership (MAPP) in working with communities on policies that focus on healthy communities. In FY 18, TRORC assisted in the development of a region wide inventory of town plans and ordinances related to healthy community policies. TRORC also developed a health chapter template for towns to use as part of a larger health and wellness toolkit for communities.

**ADMINISTRATION & FUNDING**

TRORC is funded by performance and project contracts with federal, state and local levels of government, foundation support, and contributions from member municipalities and non-profits. TRORC’s FY 18 budget was approximately $3.1 million. Property Transfer Tax funding passed through by the Agency of Commerce and Community Development of $280,000 leveraged about $950,000 in additional federal sources that addressed the needs of citizens and communities in the TRORC region.

TRORC 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 9. The Board systematically updates all accounting practices and safeguards and organizational policies on an ongoing basis.

‘AT WORK’ MAP

The map depicting the range of services provided by the TRORC to member municipalities is included on the next page.
Celebrating our 53rd year, the Windham Regional Commission (WRC) is an important resource to 27 towns of southeast Vermont, including all of the towns of Windham County, the towns of Readsboro, Searsbury and Winhall in Bennington County, and Weston in Windsor County. In the absence of county government we are an essential link between local, state and federal government. Our mission is to assist towns in Southeastern Vermont to provide effective local government and work cooperatively with them to address regional issues.

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

MUNICIPAL PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION

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

- Provided assistance to 24 towns in updating town plans and land use regulations. This included extensive work with 15 towns on town plans and nine towns on zoning bylaws, flood hazard area regulations, and subdivision regulations. Work updating town plans included assisting six towns in addressing new Act 174 energy planning standards and associated requirements. Work updating bylaws included assisting six towns with updating flood hazard area regulations to address protection of river corridors, as well as with administration and enforcement of such regulations.
- Provided general technical assistance to 17 towns on topics including Chapter 117 processes and requirements, and administration/enforcement of land use regulations.
- Worked with two towns on new Village Center designation applications (four centers) and two towns on Village Center designation renewal applications (five centers).
• Presented a regional training session on Basics of Land Use Planning and Regulation; participants included 13 people representing 10 towns and two service organizations. Also provided customized Basics of Land Use Planning and Regulation training for Planning Commission members and interested others, e.g., Selectboard and Zoning Board of Adjustment or Development Review Board members, in five towns.

• Presented a regional training session on Housing to 21 people representing 13 towns.

• Conducted 11 municipal consultations, involving town Planning Commissions and Selectboards, to discuss town plan approval and the towns’ planning processes.

• Assisted six towns in developing and submitting Municipal Planning Grant applications for town plan updates, zoning updates, and flood resilience planning.

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

• The WRC completed its two-year comprehensive regional plan update and adopted the new plan in September, 2014. This year the WRC adopted a regional energy plan as an amendment to this plan. We are now in the process of developing the scope of a regional plan update and regional transportation plan update.

• During this reporting period the WRC reviewed 25 Act 250 applications and 16 Section 248 applications. The latter were mainly solar projects. Act 250 applications included those related to Mount Snow Resort, a Londonderry gravel pit expansion, redevelopment of the Magic Mountain ski area, plans for a Wilmington brew pub, increasing activities at a Dummerston events space, and the Retreat Farm redevelopment.

• WRC is engaged in the Public Service Board docket for Entergy Vermont Yankee’s petition to sell the station to NorthStar for the purpose of decommissioning and site restoration. We are following but not directly engaging in the Nuclear Regulatory Commission deliberations about the same.

• Active in the deliberations over the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission relicensing of dams on the Connecticut River in Vermont and Massachusetts.

BROWNFIELDS
• WRC brownfields program since its inception in 2000 has brought a total of $4.9 million dollars in federal brownfields funds to the region for assessment and cleanup of brownfields sites.

• Attended statewide brownfield roundtable meetings with other planners, Vermont Agencies and the U.S. EPA.

• Attended Region National Brownfields Conference and gave a presentation titled “Unlikely Developer-Turning Stage Fright into Success.”
- Held a workshop – Environmental Due Diligence in Property Transactions with over 30 attendees from municipalities, design firms, developers, law firms and banks.
- During this past year 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>Twin Valley High School</td>
<td>Wilmington</td>
<td>Phase I ESA</td>
<td>Nonprofit purchasing high school for community center.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estey Organ</td>
<td>Brattleboro</td>
<td>WRC Brownfields Clean Up Loan</td>
<td>Redeveloped by owner for light industrial/storage and improved parking. Clean up completed September 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pownal Hydro Dam</td>
<td>Pownal</td>
<td>WRC Brownfields Clean Up Loan</td>
<td>To private developer of hydro dam. Clean up completed November 2017.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37 Main Street</td>
<td>Saxtons River</td>
<td>Phase II Environmental Site Assessments (ESA).</td>
<td>Purchased by Main Street Arts for reuse for storage, workshop and eventual expansion of programs. After Phase II no further testing was needed and certificate of completion was received.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saxtons River Park</td>
<td>Saxtons River</td>
<td>Project Management assistance for EPA Clean Up Grant. WRC Brownfields Cleanup Grant.</td>
<td>Redevelopment of former mill and gas station parcels into a community park. Project will begin September 2018.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robertson Paper Mill</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. WRC Brownfields Cleanup Grant.</td>
<td>Purchased by Bellows Falls Area Development Corp (BFADC) for Redevelopment. Cleanup will begin December 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vermont Graphics</td>
<td>Village of Bellows Falls</td>
<td>Phase I and II ESA</td>
<td>Redevelopment by owner of industrial building for light industrial use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site</td>
<td>Town/Village</td>
<td>Brownfields Work</td>
<td>Reuse plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
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<td>------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unified Data</td>
<td>Grafton</td>
<td>Phase I and II ESA</td>
<td>Redevelopment of industrial site for solar panels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TLR</td>
<td>Village of Bellows Falls</td>
<td>Phase I and II ESA</td>
<td>Redevelopment by historical society for museum and part of historical park.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green River Floodplain</td>
<td>Guilford</td>
<td>Phase I and II ESA</td>
<td>The site will be conserved through a conservation easement held by Vermont River Conservancy. The easement will restrict future development of the parcel and provide for public access to the property and the adjacent Green River.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rawsonville Roost</td>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>Phase I and II ESA</td>
<td>Redevelopment by owner for commercial use. After Phase II no further work is needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livery Building/NEYT Arts Campus</td>
<td>Brattleboro</td>
<td>WRC Brownfields Cleanup Grant.</td>
<td>Redevelopment by New England Youth Theatre for outdoor amphitheater and classroom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putnam Block</td>
<td>Bennington</td>
<td>WRC Brownfields Clean Up Loan (in process)</td>
<td>Major mix used redevelopment in the heart of downtown Bennington.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

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

- Participated on Southeastern Economic Development Strategies (SeVEDS) Board and the 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.

- Participation in the USDA-funded Rural Community Development Initiative being led by the BDCC to develop regional capacity to support economic development across Windham and Bennington counties. The goal of the effort is to improve coordination by and between public and private sector partners concerning economic development initiatives such as workforce training, retention, recruitment, and sustainable business investment.

- Continue to assist Windham Region communities with village center and downtown designation applications.

- The Windham Regional Commission and BuildingGreen, Inc. partnered to explore certifying a Living Communities Challenge (LCC) project in the Windham region. A Living Community Challenge Vision Plan was completed and the 4 non-profits are currently working on next steps to implement the plan.

- Worked to establish a Sister City/Region relationship for the Windham Region with a community in Sweden.

- Completed work on Windham County Indicators project for United Way.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

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

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

Enhance Cooperation and Coordination between VTrans, RPC Regions and Municipalities

- Held 11 TAC meetings. Engaged 12 non-municipal TAC members actively in transportation planning.
- Actively engaged 20 municipalities in transportation planning.
- Coordinated 13 RPC activities with municipalities and VTrans.

Better Connect Federal, Regional and Statewide Transportation Planning

- Regional transportation plan is current (within 8 years).
- Reviewed 4 Act 250 applications with RPC comments relating to transportation.
- Coordinated 3 activities in support of regional public transit providers.
- Staff participated on 11 VTrans committees.
- Participated in Project Prioritization.
Provide Technical Assistance to Municipalities
- 19 municipalities participated in road foreman meetings.
- Assisted 14 municipalities with transportation-related grants.
- Spent 45% of budget on municipal technical assistance.
- Conducted 11 municipal transportation inventories.
- Assisted 6 municipalities with transportation element of municipal/town plan.
- Conducted 3 road erosion inventories in support of the MRGP completed using TPI dollars and other funding sources.

Deliver Results that Advance VTrans Strategic and Long Range Transportation Plans
- Performed 5 data collection activities specifically for VTrans.

Provide a Mechanism for Improved Public Outreach and Education
- Public transit education and information tabling at the Brattleboro Co-op. This activity provided both survey outreach for the Brattleboro Bus Route update and direct public education and outreach.
- Westminster I-91 Bridge Deck Replacement public meeting. Worked with VTrans and coordinated a public meeting to support this VTrans infrastructure project.

FY 2017 Highlights
- Hinsdale Brattleboro Bridge Infrastructure Planning - Currently undertaking the Hinsdale/Brattleboro Bridge project that calls for replacing the existing Route 119 bridges crossing the Connecticut River between Downtown Brattleboro, Vermont and Hinsdale, New Hampshire. Planning for the Hinsdale/Brattleboro Bridge project began in the early 1990's. The new bridge is to be a steel I-beam girder bridge with aesthetic enhancements and a sidewalk on the upstream side. The existing Route 119 bridges will remain open at all times during project construction. After construction, the existing Route 119 bridges are planned for rehabilitation as a recreational, pedestrian, and bicycle resource. At this time the Hinsdale/ Brattleboro Bridge project is in the Final Design phase.

- Hinsdale Brattleboro Bridge Scenario Planning - Recently formed the Hinsdale/Brattleboro Existing Bridge Subcommittee with the task of identifying a vision for the reuse of the existing Hinsdale/Brattleboro Bridges. The purpose of the Existing Bridges Subcommittee "is to develop a vision for the Charles Dana and Anna Hunt Marsh Bridges and Hinsdale Island, including the envisioned activities and uses of the bridges and island, physical changes, management and maintenance considerations, and expected impacts on economic development, tourism, transportation/access, and recreational opportunities." The committee decided to pursue a scenario planning approach to arrive at a recommended vision. The subcommittee will be able to explore how different investment options and constraints might impact alternate plans for the bridges. The subcommittee visioning process is planned as an approximately two-year process and will enable the committee to
develop a publicly supported and feasible alternative to recommend to the Hinsdale-Brattleboro Bridge Project Advisory Committee.

- Local Input into the Hinsdale Brattleboro Bridge BUILD Grant Application - Recently convened a meeting of local and state stakeholders to discuss the downtown and regional development plans and opportunities within the vicinity of the planned and existing Hinsdale-Brattleboro Bridges in support of the NH DOT’s Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development, or “BUILD” Grant application. This meeting was the first of its kind to incorporate information about local project opportunities into a large scale bi-state infrastructure grant application.

- Brattleboro Bus Route Study - Recently completed an effort supporting Southeast Vermont Transit (SEVT) to improve schedules and service level on their Brattleboro routes. As part of this effort, SEVT sought public input to ensure the redesigned system will facilitate increased ridership, improve service quality, and better serve the public.

- Route 30 Infrastructure Study - Currently undertaking this corridor planning project in coordination with VTrans serving as the project lead. The first Route 30 Management Plan was developed in 1999. The process will be about coordination of interests, plans, and needs along the corridor and will include community needs such as traffic calming. The extent of this project is from Brattleboro to the intersection of Route 30 and Route 9 in Winhall.

- Transportation System Resiliency Planning - Recently participated in two pilot Transportation Flood Resilience Planning efforts in the Whetstone Brook and North Branch of the Deerfield River watersheds to identify bridges, culverts and road embankments that are vulnerable to damage from floods, to predict impediments to travel, and to develop mitigation measures.

- Studying Connections to Increased Rail Service to Greenfield, MA - The WRC is working with the VTrans Pubic Transit department to explore the feasibility of a bus connection between Greenfield and Brattleboro to capitalize upon increased rail service scheduled to begin in June, 2018. This spring Connecticut increased the number of trains to Springfield, MA to approximately 25 round trips per day. Massachusetts plans to add two additional round trips per day from Springfield to Greenfield, and one round trip on the weekends, as part of a 3-year pilot. This would allow for one-seat trips to New York City departing from Greenfield including round trip day trips. We are also contemplating the feasibility of commuter rail service into southeastern Vermont within 10 years.

- Route 30 Bus Study - The WRC is working with VTrans on analysis of potential Route 30 fixed-route bus service from Brattleboro to Dummerston, Newfane, Townshend, and Jamaica. The analysis will also explore the additional transportation needs along Route 100.
into Londonderry and Weston, and along Route 11. This is a follow-up to a study performed in 2015.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & DISASTER RESILIENCY

RPCs play key roles in the mitigation and preparedness phases of emergency management in partnership with Vermont Emergency Management, the Vermont Homeland Security Unit, VTrans and the Agency of Natural Resources. RPC’s also help update floodplain bylaws and FEMA-required hazard mitigation plans, coordinate updates to municipal emergency plans, and serve as local liaisons between towns and the State Emergency Operations Center in special circumstances like Tropical Storm Irene and other 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, 22 (81%) have hazard mitigation plans either adopted or under review by the state and FEMA.
* Twenty-five of the 27 towns (93%) currently have updated local emergency operations plans in place.
* WRC staffed the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC-6), which included arranging meetings and Tier II hazardous materials data collection, organization and reporting. LEPC-6 topics covered included a presentation from the Vermont Spill Team, a tour of a VT Hazmat Team spill response vehicle, a tour of the Windham Solid Waste facility, training from a State Fire Marshall, tourniquet application training from Rescue Inc., a presentation about hospital emergency planning and a tour of the Brattleboro Memorial Hospital emergency communications room, State Police presentation about the opioid epidemic in the region and the state, and a meeting about the transition of LEPC-6. June was the final LEPC-6 meeting organized by the WRC, as the decision was made that due to federal requirements around Tier II information, this work required more effort than the LEPC-6 currently could provide. WRC transitioned away from the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC-6), which will now operate independently.
* WRC is in the planning stages for the new WRC Emergency Planning Network. The hope is that this group will engage more town emergency management directors (EMDs) and others in the regional emergency planning community, thereby forming a stronger peer to peer network and providing these local emergency planners with training and information they want and need.
* A series of brownbag lunches was held for Floodplain Administrators in the region to learn about topics related to floodplain regulation, as well as to serve as a roundtable discussion opportunity about the responsibilities of the role.
* The WRC serves as the local liaison to communicate 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, have in place a damage reporting/situational awareness protocol that expedites the gathering of accurate information from towns with the goal of minimizing duplicate requests for information.
• WRC worked with two towns on developing updated flood hazard bylaws, which incorporate state-designated river corridors. Both towns utilized the WRC model bylaw for their update.
• WRC developed and submitted a grant application for a buyout and demolition located in a floodway in Wardsboro.
• WRC staff participated in a tabletop exercise held by the town of Londonderry to exercise its Local Emergency Operations Plan.
• Staff attended the Rhode Island Floodplain Managers Association Conference.
• WRC’s executive director was elected to serve as the vice chair of the Vermont Disaster Relief Fund.

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.

• GIS staff provided support to the Transportation Planning Initiative for all data collection activities under Objective #1, which includes culvert inventories, sign inventories, parking inventories, traffic counts, park and ride counts, and bike/ped counts.
• Town plan maps were updated for Brattleboro, Brookline, Dummerston, Londonderry, Newfane, Vernon, and Whitingham. Zoning map updates were done for Marlboro, Wilmington, and Winhall.
• We helped in the Village Center renewal process for three towns (Rockingham, Vernon, and Whitingham) by creating new or updated village center maps. In addition, we created updated downtown district maps for Brattleboro and Wilmington.
• All RPCs, including WRC, participated in a state-wide project to provide access to all town zoning district GIS data through VCGI’s Open Geodata Portal (18 towns in the Windham Region have zoning bylaws).
• WRC continues to further efforts to improve the status of digital parcel data in the region. We worked with one town (Dover) to assess the accuracy of their parcel data, and gathered updated data from 3 towns to process to match state guidelines, provided the data to VCGI for public distribution, and posted KML files on WRC’s web site for those with no GIS capabilities. We also hosted a Statewide Parcel Mapping Program meeting, which representatives from 12 of the region’s 27 towns attended.
• WRC continues to support towns in their efforts to update their flood regulations and incorporate river corridor protection. GIS staff provided maps and analysis of the impacts of such protection to Guilford, Putney, and Wilmington.
• WRC continues to provide mapping assistance to numerous agencies and organizations in the region, including this year the West Brattleboro Association and Windham Solid Waste Management District.
• GIS staff continue to provide support for transportation-related inventory and mapping work. We updated culvert inventories and/or maps for Grafton, Halifax, Stratton, and Townshend, and worked on a sign inventories for Wilmington. Support for towns as they prepare for Vermont’s Municipal Roads General Permit has been extensive. One
aspect of this support is conducting road erosion inventories; we worked on inventories for Dover, Dummerston, Grafton, Halifax, Jamaica, Putney, Stratton, Townshend, Vernon, and Westminster.

- WRC continues efforts to provide support for our communities regarding trails and recreation paths. We have been working with the Brattleboro District Office of the Vermont Department of Health to provide mapping support and trail information for two Department efforts: placing snowshoes in six region libraries; and the “Windham on the Move” initiative. We began work with Vernon to create a map of their revived town forest trail system, and updated maps of the Retreat Farm trail system. We also attended the Vermont Walk-Bike Summit.

- WRC provided mapping support to a Vermont Land Trust project to further climate-resistant biodiversity conservation planning in the region. This effort allowed GIS staff to become familiar with many conservation planning data sets, including those that are part of the Vermont Conservation Design. This work also helps to support WRC’s efforts to address Act 171: Land Use Planning to Address Forest Fragmentation.

- WRC continues its robust pedestrian counting program on sidewalks, recreation paths, and trails. We undertook 39 counts in eight towns. GIS staff created an on-line interactive map that makes available to the public all our pedestrian count data from 2014-2017.

- Staff provided E911 data and mapping support to Guilford, Marlboro, Somerset, and Weston.

**ENERGY CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT**

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

- The WRC developed a comprehensive regional energy plan that meets the standards of Act 174. The WRC hosted several public meetings, hearings, and adopted the Regional Energy Plan at the April 24th Full Commission meeting. Following a review and hearing process by the Department of Public Service, the Plan was determined to be compliant with state standards and given a certificate of compliance. This determination has enabled WRC to review the municipal plans seeking determination of energy compliance.

- The WRC has continued to manage the Windham Wood Heat Initiative. The program has assisted 6 institutions (4 schools and 2 public serving institutions) in switching to modern wood heating systems through technical and financial assistance in the past year, and has funded 7 comprehensive energy audit reports in the past year. The program is also working with 2 modern wood heating systems that are in need of upgrades or fixes and has allocated funding to an installation taking place this fall. Several more projects are being considered or are getting underway with the
conversion. The program continues to be advised by strong local partner organizations. The funding for this $1.6 million project is through the Clean Energy Development Fund (CEDF), which was made possible through the state’s settlement agreement with Entergy Vermont Yankee.

- WRC was granted $300,000 in additional funds through the CEDF to administer another round of the Windham County Renewable Energy Program. This program awards grants towards the development renewable energy generation projects. The projects awarded went to 2 rooftop solar installations, 2 ground-mounted net-metered solar projects, and a large-scale anaerobic digester. The Windham County Renewable Energy Program has awarded $693,523 to date and has displaced or avoided over 6,800 tons of CO2 emissions.
- The WRC worked with 6 towns (Grafton, Jamaica, Rockingham, Wardsboro, Weston, and Windham) on the development of their Act 174-compliant town plan energy elements. This was the second round of towns to receive this technical assistance. The draft plans were completed by July. The towns that participated in the pilot round (Londonderry, Westminster and Vernon) worked towards adopting their energy plans as part of their town plans. WRC worked with Bennington County Regional Commission and Northwest Regional Planning Commission to create a “best practices” document to assist with ongoing town energy planning. It includes the experience of regional commissions and municipalities in developing compliant plans, example policy language, and approaches to the identification of preferred solar energy generation sites within a municipality. The document also added a module on town participation in the Section 248 process.

**WATERSHED PLANNING & PROJECT DEVELOPMENT**

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

- Developed, proposed, and finalized a charge for the Clean Water Advisory Committee (CWAC) to the Windham Regional Commission’s Executive Board. The CWAC’s role includes providing local and regional input regarding project priorities and water quality issues important to the Windham Region, and serves in an advisory capacity to the WRC Executive Board and Full Commission.
- Additionally, the CWAC began to help the VT DEC’s Watershed Coordinator develop the draft of the Tactical Basin Plan for the Deerfield River Watershed (Basin 12-13) and provide appropriate outreach or assistance to towns.
- With support from 2017 High Meadows Fund Watershed Resilience grant funds, helped to staff the Green River Watershed Alliance (GRWA) project, as well as The Confluence Project, an experiment in creative placemaking around watershed study between Vermont
Performance Lab and the Windham Regional Commission. This collaboration resulted in 15 public events in the Windham Region from March-May 2018, that involved over 550 participants and attendees. These public events intersected environmental art, creative placemaking, watershed study, place-based education, and ecological restoration, all of which highlighted the importance of watershed awareness in our communities for water quality and flood resilience.

- Coordinated with other RPCs to develop a method to prioritize and score water quality projects in DEC Tactical Basin plans. This was a continuation of worked started in FY17.
- Successfully assisted with the enrollment of 20 towns in the FY18 Municipal Roads Grants in Aid Program to proactively reimburse towns for road drainage improvements that bring hydrologically-connected road segments up to fully-meeting the Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP) standards. For the previous FY17 program, facilitated the reimbursement of $218,000 to 18 Windham Region towns that had completed work on these road segments.
- Participated in various collaborative watershed efforts, including:
  - Continued work with and support of the Saxtons River Watershed Collaborative, especially with the October 2017 Landowner Workshop addressing headwater conservation and flood dynamics.
  - Helped create grant materials for the Connecticut River Conservancy’s application to provide watershed outreach within the Beaver Brook watershed in Wilmington.
  - Worked with the Vermont Rivers Conservancy on pursuing river conservation easements on the Green River and Whetstone Brooks.
  - Worked with the Connecticut River Conservancy to fund an engineering plan for the removal of a defunct dam on the Crosby Brook in Dummerston, with a grant secured through the Ecosystem Restoration Program (ERP).
  - Worked with the Connecticut River Joint Commission’s Wantastiquet Local River Subcommittee to link and represent Connecticut River towns to relevant planning issues along the River.
  - Joined the Steering Committee of the 2019 Leahy Summit at the ECHO Center to link watershed science and placemaking statewide, as a result of the WRC’s expertise and experience with The Confluence Project partnership.
  - Attended the Watershed United Vermont Spring Meeting at VT Law School in April. Discussed and collaborated on issues relevant to water quality planning, watershed groups, and conservation districts.
- Developed a position for, and created plans to host, an ECO AmeriCorps Service Member in the role of “Wastewater Planning Associate” for 2018. This position is designed to support the Village Sanitation Pilot Study, wastewater planning in affected Windham Region municipalities, and clean water efforts overall.
- Worked with the Deerfield River Watershed Association and the VT DEC to host an ECO AmeriCorps Service Member to assist with water quality monitoring sampling throughout the Windham Region, and especially the Deerfield Basin. This member organized volunteers and assisted with sampling day logistics.
- In the culmination of five + years of assessment and planning, the WRC managed the implementation (construction) of the Adams Brook restoration project to repair the damage
caused by excessive bed armoring applied after Tropical Storm Irene. The project restored surface water stream flow and aquatic organism passage for over 200 feet of stream, reconnecting 16 miles of stream and habitat. In work with a local contractor, a stream geomorphic assessment consultant, the town, and state Agency of Natural Resources’ Fisheries Biologist, Watershed Coordinator, and River Engineers, the completed construction of the project removed 300 cubic yards of Type IV stone (3-foot minimum dimension), repositioned 200 cubic yards of stone, constructed low flow and bankfull stream channels, placed logs with rootwads in the edges of low flow channel, installed a 6-foot high 75-foot long stacked stone wall bank stabilization, and restored the machinery access to pre-construction condition.

- Launched the Village Sanitation Pilot Study, an innovative partnership project that provides a feasibility study to two Windham Region communities that are challenged by septic or wastewater limitations in historic community centers, and will provide a pathway for innovative wastewater solutions which can help address aging septic systems. On May 25th, community representatives from both West Dummerston and Westminster West submitted, on behalf of participating homeowners in each of their respective neighborhoods, a Letter of Interest to the Windham Regional Commission and the Rich Earth Institute, and were both selected for the study.
- Submitted a grant funding request to the High Meadows Fund to launch the VSPS (see above). Project was awarded $10,000, and feasibility study will begin in September 2018. Participating neighbors will receive free consultation regarding viable alternatives to conventional septic systems and human waste management, access to professional and scientific resources related to wastewater management, and an ability to participate in scientific research about our wastewater systems on a neighborhood scale.
- Submitted a project screening request to the Clean Water Block Grant program to fund the river encroachment project in the Winhall River in Winhall. Coordinated with the Winhall Road Foreman and Selectboard to move the project forward.

SPECIAL PROJECTS
- Continued collaboration with the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation, and our counterparts in NH and MA, to address the economic impacts of the closure of Vermont Yankee.
- WRC continues to make the case at the Federal level for the substantive inclusion of host communities in the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission’s policymaking process that is creating nuclear power plant decommissioning policy, as well as the U.S. Department of Energy’s consideration of a consent-based spent fuel and high-level radioactive waste siting initiative.
- Actively engaged with the Vermont Nuclear Decommissioning Citizens Advisory Panel, which was created by the legislature to advise state agencies, the Governor, the Legislature and others about matters related to the decommissioning of Vermont Yankee.
ADMINISTRATION & FUNDING
Virtually all of the WRC’s revenue sources are tied to contracts with scopes of work, guidelines and/or performance measures. This means that the WRC has limited control over how it chooses to use the vast majority of its funding. Funding received through town assessments is the exception, which makes this funding stream particularly important because it gives us the greatest latitude to respond to WRC-identified needs in the region. Town assessments, and the funding received through the WRC’s performance contract with the state, are also necessary to provide matching funds required by grantors. The grants we receive enable us to work with our towns on areas such as transportation, emergency planning, community development, brownfields redevelopment, energy, and natural resources. Revenue from virtually all federal and state grantors requires matching funds, and typically non-federal matching funds. Required match ranges from 10 percent (Transportation Planning Initiative) to 50 percent (Emergency Management Planning Grant).

The WRC has a single audit on an annual basis. For FY 2017, as in past years, there were no 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.

‘AT WORK’ MAP
The map depicting the range of services provided by the WRC to member municipalities is included on the next page.
WRC at Work: FY 2018

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

Town Plan Status
- Current
- Expired
- No Town Plan

Zoning Bylaw Status
- Adopted
- Flood Only
- None

Designated Downtown
Designated Village
County Boundary
Town Boundary

September 2018: u:\GIS\projects\ACCD reporting\2018

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