



Solicitation of Municipalities to Participate in Enhance Energy Planning

*Application must be received by **Monday, October 1, 2018***

The Central Vermont Regional Commission (CVRPC) will be receiving funding to assist 3-6 municipalities with the development of municipal plan energy elements that are consistent with the provisions of Act 174 (see links to background information below). This is a great opportunity for municipalities that want to complete comprehensive energy planning or want a stronger voice in the Certificate of Public Good (a.k.a. CPG or Section 248) process!

Developing a municipal plan energy element that is consistent with the provisions of Act 174 is not mandatory; it's a municipality's choice. Municipalities that complete this work must adopt the element into their municipal plans, and request *and receive a positive* Determination of Energy Compliance from CVRPC to achieve "substantial deference" in the CPG process. The Public Service Department issued a Determination of Energy Compliance for the Central Vermont Regional Plan on August 6, 2018. CVRPC is now the reviewing body for municipal plan determinations for Central Vermont communities.

Here's what we're looking for from municipalities that chose to express interest in assistance:

- 1) **Commitment to comprehensive energy planning.** While planning for the siting of renewable energy projects has garnered the most attention and interest, this planning process is broader and deeper than addressing only siting issues. The municipalities we assist must be committed to:
 - understanding how energy is consumed in the community across sectors and how this relates to the municipality's land use policies;
 - identifying and implementing steps the community will take to
 - reduce energy consumption,
 - transition away from non-renewable energy consumption, and
 - move towards the adoption of renewable energy;
 - defining what renewable energy development is appropriate within the community, and where and how it can best be developed; and
 - developing municipal policies and actions for all of the above.The goal is to amend your municipal plan within the next 18 months to incorporate the element.
- 2) **Act 174 energy planning has been discussed within the community, especially between the Planning Commission and Selectboard and, if applicable, the municipality's Energy Committee, and these bodies agree this process at this time would benefit the municipality.** The CVRPC plays

the role of facilitator and technical assistance provider; the hard work is up to the community. The community deliberates and makes the decisions, including having discussions with/among its residents and business community and identifying municipal policies and actions. Please consider whether the community is comfortable having a robust conversation about all aspects of energy, and whether this process will bring the community together rather than divide it.

- 3) **Willingness to collaborate with neighboring municipalities about energy issues.** CVRPC staff will meet with municipalities on a one-on-one basis in the development of individual energy elements. We expect the municipalities to work cooperatively with their neighbors about the substance and process of comprehensive energy planning.

CVRPC has assisted eight municipalities with local energy planning since 2017. These municipalities are a peer group who can share what they learned. RPCs also developed a Best Practices and Resource Guide based on the experience of regional and municipal planners. The Guide is a resource that municipalities can use to strengthen knowledge about preparing Act 174 energy elements and how to use municipal plans effectively in the Certificate of Public Good process.

We are seeking applications from municipalities that would like to participate in this effort. The brief application is available on CVRPC's website.

Applications must be received by **Monday, October 1, 2018**. They can be submitted via mail or emailed to wanager@cvregion.com. The application is attached. Visit our website - www.centralvtplanning.org – to download a digital copy. Questions? Contact Bonnie Wanager at 802-229-0389 or via email.

For Additional Information:

Act 174:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/assets/Documents/2016/Docs/ACTS/ACT174/ACT174%20As%20Enacted.pdf>

Act 174 Regional and Municipal Planning Standards Overview:

http://publicservice.vermont.gov/sites/dps/files/documents/Pubs_Plans_Reports/Act_174/Standards%20Overview.pdf

Energy Planning Standards for Municipal Plans:

http://publicservice.vermont.gov/sites/dps/files/documents/Pubs_Plans_Reports/Act_174/Municipal%20Determination%20Standards_Final.pdf

Public Service Department Energy Planning Page:

<http://publicservice.vermont.gov/content/act-174-recommendations-and-determination-standards>

Municipal Enhanced Energy Planning Best Practices & Resources:

<http://centralvtplanning.org/programs/energy/>. An updated guide will be released in mid-September.