

VERMONT'S REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSIONS 2019 AT WORK



The Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies consists of Vermont's 11 Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs).

In the absence of county government, RPCs are an essential link between local, state and federal government and related programs that serve community needs.

RPCs are political subdivisions of the State of Vermont, uniquely positioned to provide broad services to every Vermont municipality.

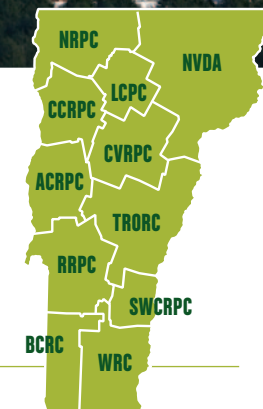
Regional Planning Commissions are governed by Boards made up primarily of locally appointed officials. These ties to local government help RPCs serve as a bridge between local, state and federal governments.

Regional Planning Commissions have federal and state statutory responsibilities in transportation, land use, emergency management, brownfields, housing, energy, and economic development.

The work of Regional Planning Commissions is supported through a complementary combination of local, state and federal funding. Local and state funding for RPCs helps maximize the recovery of federal dollars for our economy, our environment and our communities, and plays a key role in applying for grants that have broad benefits across each region.



WE ARE VERMONT'S REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSIONS



ACRPC	Addison County Regional Planning Commission
BCRC	Bennington County Regional Commission
CVRPC	Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission
CCRPC	Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission
LCPC	Lamoille County Planning Commission
NVDA	Northeastern Vermont Development Association
NRPC	Northwest Regional Planning Commission
RRPC	Rutland Regional Planning Commission
TRORC	Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission
SWCRPC	Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission
WRC	Windham Regional Commission

FROM AROUND THE STATE

Addison County Regional Planning Commission was pleased to provide funding and project management services to every one of its 21 municipal members this year under the municipal Grants in Aid program. ACRPC oversaw and reported the work that each community performed to improve its local road infrastructure to bring it into compliance with Municipal Road General Permit requirements for water quality. The improvements will help to reduce phosphorus and other road runoff and improve the performance and resiliency of the local road system.

Bennington County Regional Commission expanded its enhanced energy planning work to include implementation activities. Efforts have consisted of providing one-on-one assistance to establish municipal energy committees and develop projects in interested towns, coordinating workshops on regional energy issues and weatherization support, and co-hosting an electric vehicle expo with Drive Electric Vermont.

Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission partnered with Cabot, Marshfield, Plainfield, the Friends of the Winooski, and Vermont Woodlands Association on Water Wise Woodlands. This collaborative effort linked forest integrity, private forest stewardship, and watershed resilience. Concrete actions to build flood resilience through a forested upper watershed requires offering incentives, building supportive programs, and helping woodland owners learn informally from neighbors and respected experts.

Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission partners with Champlain Housing Trust and Housing Vermont on the Building Homes Together campaign to increase housing in Chittenden County. The campaign has a target of 3,500 new homes by 2021 with 700 permanently affordable. Successes to date include building over 2,270 homes the first three years; 14 municipalities are working on or adopted housing-related policies and incentives; and a statewide \$37M housing bond which resulted in 250 more affordable homes. However, with the housing bond already fully allocated, the projection through 2021 will still fall short of the goal of 700 new affordable homes.

Lamoille County Planning Commission worked as project manager with the Village of Jeffersonville and Vermont Agency of Transportation to install a large flood bypass culvert under Route 15. Prior to the installation of the culvert, the Route 15 embankment prevented floodwaters from the Brewster River from flowing out of the Village. The culvert was installed over a single weekend in November 2018 and was the most recent in a series of mitigation projects in Jeffersonville and Cambridge.

Northeastern Vermont Development Association continued our recreation-related planning and economic development activities throughout our 3-county region. NVDA is very involved in brownfield assessments and redevelopments in key communities. We are also making early, but significant strides in assisting our towns with rural broadband planning.

Northwest Regional Planning Commission is part of a coalition addressing the 'Formidable 4' of workforce development in the region: housing, child care, transportation and substance use. To address the impediment of available child care, NRPC is managing child care center development grants in St. Albans City and Alburgh that together could add additional capacity for up to 100 children.

Rutland Regional Planning Commission worked with municipalities on numerous community economic development initiatives including the facilitation of Economic Assessment Plans with retail leak analyses for the towns of Poultney and Danby. The RRPC also assumed administrative and financial responsibility for the Rutland Region Workforce Investment Board and the Department of Labor funded Real Careers program.

Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission continued to expand its water quality and energy programs. The Commission administered the first round Clean Water Block Grant of \$1,500,000 from the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources to support 22 clean water projects throughout the state. The Regional Plan was issued a certificate of energy compliance from the Public Service Department. The Commission assisted 7 municipalities developing local enhanced energy plans.

Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission is working to advance the social and cultural fabric of our communities and boost the economic prosperity and interdisciplinary connections for the creative sector in the east central Vermont region by hosting events to bring together artists, artisans, and entrepreneurs. These events, called 3CVT Mashups, support creatives by providing opportunities for networking, informational presentations from various local artists and representatives of relevant state agencies, and group discussions regarding the region's creative economy.

Windham Regional Commission is promoting trails and recreation opportunities to improve the health and wellness of our residents, the economic vitality of our towns and villages, and the appreciation of our surroundings by those who live, work, and visit here. The Windham Region Trails Project has two primary goals: assist Region towns and non-profits in developing successful, user-friendly public trail systems; and provide resources to the Region's residents and visitors on public trail and recreation opportunities.



Municipal Planning and Implementation



Kevin Geiger of TRORC answers community members' questions about Bradford zoning bylaw revisions



RPCs provided 167 municipalities with planning, bylaw and zoning assistance.

Regional Planning Commissions serve as cost-effective professional planning staff for many of Vermont's municipalities and help communities improve town plans and bylaws through education and technical assistance to municipal staff.

RPCs have helped municipalities modernize bylaws and implement economic development, flood resiliency planning, energy and forest resources planning initiatives. Current and clear plans and bylaws guide smooth local and state permitting.

Regional Planning



A public meeting about the economics of outdoor recreation in the towns that surround Mount Ascutney

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

Transportation Planning

Through a contract with Vermont's Agency of Transportation (VTrans), RPCs coordinate the Transportation Planning Initiative (TPI). This effort is a statewide framework for public involvement in planning 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



A public workshop for a transportation study

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

Energy Conservation and Development



RPCs assisted with the creation of enhanced energy plans in 97 communities.

A 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 planning and implementation. RPCs participate in Section 248 proceedings and support comprehensive planning at the local and regional level to guide the permitting process.

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TRANSPORTATION PLANNING INITIATIVE	Enhance Cooperation & Coordination Between VTrans, RPCs & Municipalities	Better Connect Federal, Regional and Statewide Transportation Planning	Provides Technical Assistance to Municipalities	Advances VTrans Strategic & Long-Range Transportation Plans	Provides a Mechanism for Improved Public Outreach & Education
	227 municipalities actively engaged in regional transportation planning	68 coordination activities in support of regional public transit providers	162 municipalities participating in road foreman meetings annually	420 data collection activities conducted for VTrans	Objective 5 shares many cross-cutting performance measures with 1-4
	86 TAC meetings	39 VTrans committees that involve RPC staff participation	48% of transportation budget spent on municipal technical assistance	129 RPC coordination activities with municipalities & VTrans	
	95 non-municipal representatives actively engaged via TAC meetings	120 programs that RPCs assisted municipalities with transportation-related grants	52 road inventories conducted in support of Municipal Roads General Permit		
	RAIL, AIR, PUBLIC TRANSIT, BIKE/ PED, DISABILITY RIGHTS, CHAMBER OF COMMERCE/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INTEREST GROUPS		THIS IS IN ADDITION TO 142 MRGP INVENTORIES CONDUCTED IN FY18		



Economic and Community Development



RPC staff helped 160 communities prepare and write grants.

Construction began on the Putnam Block Redevelopment in Bennington, VT

Credit: Caroline Bonnavier Snyder

Economic growth is supported best when development efforts are partnered with solid land use planning. The community infrastructure and development patterns that RPCs help plan for and create provide the public support to private economic development.

RPCs work with municipalities and in partnership with local and Regional Development Corporations in several ways, including creating economic development sections in town and regional plans, helping municipalities plan for and develop critical infrastructure, and developing comprehensive strategies that will help to position Vermont for long-term economic prosperity.

Brownfields



RPCs applied for and received over \$10 million in EPA funds for brownfields assessment and redevelopment.

Groundbreaking for the Sara Holbrook Community Center, one of the CCRPC's brownfields projects in Burlington, VT

Environmental site assessments and remediation planning allow properties to be sold or re-developed to benefit the local and state economy, improve public health, facilitate development in designated Downtown and Village Centers, create or protect jobs and increase housing opportunities.

Special Projects



The Valley Trail, part of the Windham Region Trails Project

RPCs often engage in special projects that address unique community needs in many different areas such as flood resiliency, economic development, and transportation.

Quite often, these special projects create opportunities to identify and leverage future funding sources and result in future infrastructure improvements.

Geographic Information System Services

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



RPC staff provided mapping services to 211 communities.



Watershed Planning and Project Development



Regional Planners assisted with clean water activities in 199 communities.

RRPC staff evaluating drainage culvert erosion during a recent inventory

Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Resiliency



A large flood bypass culvert being installed under Route 15 in Jeffersonville, VT

RPCs assisted with emergency planning in 257 municipalities.

RPCs play key roles in the mitigation and preparedness phases of emergency management in partnership with Vermont Emergency Management, VTTrans, and the Agency of Natural Resources. RPCs provide staff to the State Emergency Operations Center, support to local emergency management directors and coordinators, Local Emergency Management Plan assistance, and coordination among responders and planners throughout the State's Public Safety Districts. RPCs also help update floodplain bylaws and FEMA-required hazard mitigation plans, arrange trainings and assist municipalities during disaster events.

RPCs work with the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), conservation districts, and watershed groups to develop watershed tactical basin plans. RPCs also work with municipalities to implement river corridor assessments in local planning and regulations.

The Municipal Roads Grants-in-Aid Program is a DEC program coordinated by RPCs. The program provides funding for municipalities to construct Best Management Practices on municipal roads to implement the state Municipal Road General Permit. Last year, 193 municipalities constructed water quality improvements on 827 local road segments and 5 catch basin outlets (approximately 51 miles); in FY 20, 215 municipalities plan to participate. RPCs also have a Block Grant from DEC to provide technical assistance services and funding for municipalities to implement water quality projects.

NRPC

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Assistance

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

Designation

- Designated Downtown
- Designated Village
- Designated Growth Center
- Neighborhood Development Area
- New Town Center

86%
of municipalities have
current town plans

Town Plan Status
 Current
 Expired
 No Town Plan

78%
of municipalities have
adopted Zoning bylaws

Zoning Bylaw Status
 Adopted
 Flood Only
 None

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VAPDA
VERMONT ASSOCIATION OF PLANNING
& DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES