

# Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission

## FY 23 Annual Report

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

### MUNICIPAL PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

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

- **Municipal Plans:** Met with four municipalities to discuss the process and requirements for updating their municipal plans, provided town-specific demographic data to one town for their update efforts and worked closely with another town (Middlesex) guiding them through a natural resource planning process, which resulted in an updated Natural Resource Chapter.
- **Municipal Plan Approvals/Confirmations/Energy Certifications:** Approved and confirmed five municipal plans and planning processes and additionally issued one Determination of Energy Compliance.
- **Zoning:** Undertook research and provided one planning commission with regulatory approaches for specific uses; drafted flood hazard, river corridor and cannabis zoning amendments for one town for planning commission consideration; aided one town with substantial document formatting for hearing processes preparation; presented new zoning changes to a select board in preparation of formal hearing and adoption process.
- **State Designations:** Presented Village Center Designation information to one town. Assisted four municipalities with Village Center Designation applications. Organized one Tax Credit Presentation Village Center implementation. Provided preliminary support and information to one town about Downtown Designation program and application process.
- **Training and Education:** Held two Planning & Zoning Forums and two town-specific presentations designed to build knowledge of current and emerging planning issues reaching over 40 municipal officials in at least 16 municipalities. Provided one-on-one assistance to two towns as they navigated Section 248 and 248a process. Provided one-on-one training to two zoning administrators and one town clerk to aid in the effective administration of the local permit process. Meet one-on-one with municipal planning commissioners to educate them about local roles and regional participation.
- **Capital Improvement Planning:** Helped enable Orange to draft their first capital improvement plan by acting as project manager. Provided Plainfield with guidance on how they can develop a comprehensive capital planning process.

- **Recreation Planning:** Served as steering committee member and resource in the Marshfield Recreation Economy for Rural Communities planning process.

## **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 FY23, CVRPC continued efforts on the Regional Plan update including collaborating with RPCs statewide to develop a methodology for consistent land use designations on the Future Land Use Map.

CVRPC also focused on plan implementation. A sampling of activities includes:

- Monitored Act 250 and Section 248 applications
- Started work on the regional plan update including gathering data, drafting chapters, and developing and outreach and communication plan.

## **BROWNFIELDS**

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

In FY23, CVRPC facilitated the completion of a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment and Corrective Action Plan on behalf of the Turning Point Center of Central Vermont. Brownfield funds will help in the process of transforming this Barre City property into a model recovery center for adults. Turning Point helps people find, maintain, and enhance their substance abuse recovery through peer-based recovery supports, by providing educational programs, and acting as a safe haven for sober recreation and social activities. CVRPC also enrolled an underutilized property in Northfield which will be developed into a multi-unit housing. Assessment work will be underway in FY24.

## **ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

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

- **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy:** CVRPC led an engagement and comment process with commissioners, identifying concerns and working to integrate local needs in the West Central Vermont Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The CEDS is a partnership among RPCs and RDCs in Central Vermont, Rutland, Addison, and Chittenden Counties, and the Vermont Department of Economic Development. The effort focuses on

economic development strategies. A CEDS unlocks future federal EDA investments for infrastructure development, job creation, and revolving loan funds. The CEDS was adopted by CVRPC and its partners and subsequently received federal Economic Development Administration approval.

- **Grant Writing and Administration:** Consulted with the Town of Berlin on a Northern Borders Regional Commission Catalyst Program application to expand water infrastructure to support further growth in their New Town Center. Administered a USDA Rural Development grant for the Plainfield Co-op to study the organization's financial feasibility and build a more financially stable future.
- **Broadband Development:** Provided administrative support to CVFiber, Central Vermont's Communications Union District. CVFiber has initiated the construction of fast, affordable broadband in the region.
- **Housing Development:** Created a 28-slide housing profile for the City of Montpelier
- **Healthy Communities:** Served as core leadership member of THRIVE (Central Vermont Community Health Equity Partnership backbone). Work foci included the drafting and adoption of an equity commitment for THRIVE following frontline community engagement and trainings; establishment of a committee of frontline residents to distribute \$25,000 of community funding to nine central VT community organizations. Worked with other RPCs to build a health equity toolkit for municipal and regional planning. Conducted health equity trainings and targeted conversations with Commission, Transportation Advisory, and Central VT Mobility Committees. Subsequent outreach and support resulted in Marshfield and Berlin participating in the Vermont Healthy Communities Technical Assistance Pilot focused on increasing pedestrian access around town and a four-season community recreation and energy generation project respectively. Developed three phase regional project focused on healthy food access and mobility for 2024 implementation. Supported coordination of acute and long-term response to temporary housing exodus and spike in unhoused community members in Montpelier, Barre City, Berlin, and Barre Town in partnership with municipalities and regional community health partners.
- **Tourism:** Participated and Green Mountain Byway Steering Committee and worked to advance byway promotion.
- **Regional Project Prioritization:** Coordinated with municipalities, regional non-profits, and CVEDC to set regional priorities among economic development projects. The regional project list serves as an investment guide for the State.

## **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.

### **Enhance Cooperation and Coordination between VTrans, RPC Regions and Municipalities**

- Held ten Transportation Advisory Committee meetings, with 19 municipalities regularly attending and engaging in the TPI. Meetings included regular attendance by GMT, VTRANS and various other institutional partners. TAC meetings provide an opportunity to gather community expertise and guide regional transportation planning.
- Coordinated activities between municipalities and VTrans, including the regional mobility committee, new project summaries, and regional transit coordination.
- Reviewed VTrans sponsored projects for regional and municipal concerns and participated VTrans led project meetings. Coordinated the completion of VTrans new project summaries with municipalities.

### **Better Connect Federal, Regional and Statewide Transportation Planning**

- Maintained a current regional transportation plan (within 8 years).
- Reviewed Act 250 applications; no comments required relating to transportation.
- Reviewed Section 248 applications; no comments required relating to transportation.
- Coordinated activities in support of regional public transit providers, including representing Washington County on the GMT Board, and regular regional mobility committee meetings.
- Participated in VTrans Advisory Committee meetings, including the Knapp Airport Master Plan Advisory Committee.
- Aggregated data on municipal transportation assets, existing Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE) infrastructure, and existing renewable generation towards developing a regional approach to municipal fleet efficiency/electrification and regional EVSE planning.

### **Provide Technical Assistance to Municipalities**

- Assisted ten municipalities with transportation related grant applications.
- Served on the Berlin Fisher Road Complete Streets study steering committee providing technical assistance on bike and pedestrian planning.
- Attended VTrans Trestle #308s kick-off meeting in support of town
- Assisted and drafted a funding narrative for the Town of Orange to successfully apply for the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside grant for a village sidewalk scoping study
- Provided support to Warren for the successful Sugarbush Access Path grant application
- Completed one municipal transportation related feasibility/project definition study for Northfield to study the Northfield Falls intersection for pedestrian improvements. Successfully assisted the municipality apply for and receive funding to implement the recommendations.
- Assisted Waitsfield, the Mad River Valley Planning District, VTrans and the project consultant to refine intersection improvement scoping at Route 100 and Route 17. This regional priority project will study the intersection for opportunities to better integrate pedestrian and bike users and address safety concerns.

- Inventoried ash trees in the highway right of way in Roxbury and assisted the Town with development of a draft ash tree management plan. The arrival of Emerald Ash Borer means municipal costs for debris removal will increase substantially.

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

- Conducted 29 data collection activities specifically for VTrans (traffic counts, park and ride surveys, pedestrian counts, etc.)

#### **Provide a Mechanism for Improved Public Outreach and Education**

- Facilitated meetings of the Central Vermont Mobility Committee (formerly the Regional Elderly and Disabled Persons Advisory Committee) to discuss service and rider engagement strategies.

### **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND DISASTER RESILIENCY**

RPCs play key roles in the preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery phases of emergency management in partnership with Vermont Emergency Management (VEM), the Vermont Homeland Security Unit, Department of Public Safety, VTrans, the Agency of Natural Resources, and Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs). RPCs provide direct staff to the State Emergency Operations Center, administrative support to the LEPCs and coordination among responders, municipal officials, and planners throughout the State's four Public Safety Districts. RPCs also help update floodplain bylaws, river corridor regulations, and FEMA-required hazard mitigation plans. RPCs coordinate updates to municipal emergency plans and assist as needed in special circumstances like the July 2023 flooding 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.

- **Local Hazard Mitigation Plans (LHMPs) & Implementation:** Assisted Orange and Fayston to complete Local Hazard Mitigation Plans. Integrated extreme temperature planning, climate resilience, and frontline community impacts into LHMPs. Of the Region's 23 municipalities 16 have a FEMA-approved plan. Hosted a workshop and presented on the Transportation Resilience Planning Tool (TRPT) and how it can be incorporated into Local Hazard Mitigation Plans.
- **Local Emergency Management Plans:** Assisted 23 municipalities with plan development, 20 of 21 plans submitted, and accepted by Vermont Emergency Management by end of FY23.
- **Planning Assistance:** Met with Cabot Selectboard to discuss dam removal options for the Clark Sawmill Dam that is listed on town LHMP. Met with Waterbury to discuss LHMP support for town attempt to complete in house. Created and distributed ERAF reports to 19 municipalities. Provided municipalities hazard plan templates.
- **Grant Writing and Administration:** Supported Plainfield in their successful Hazard Mitigation Grant Application to FEMA to rebuild the Brook Road bridge to address regular flooding at this location. Supported Calais in grant administration for the Kent Hill Road culver redesign scoping study.

- **State Support:** Provided State Emergency Operation Center (SEOC) support by contacting towns to ascertain damages and by acting as supplemental staff to the SEOC Situational Awareness Unit. Attended stakeholder meetings and provided input in the State Hazard Mitigation Plan process. Attended the State Threat Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment workshop. Provided administrative support and scheduled speakers for Central Vermont Regional Emergency Management Committee (REMC). Three meetings were held in FY23.
- **Pandemic Support and Response:** Coached municipalities on identifying needs and priorities for investment American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds and on compliance with ARPA requirements. Supported towns in reporting on ARPA awards. Helped the City of Barre in stakeholder engagement forum for spending ARPA awards.
- **Local Liaison:** Completed the local liaison duties for the 12/23/22 storm. Staff contacted all municipalities to gather information on existing outages, shelters and warming centers, road and infrastructure damage, and private damages if known. Transferred info to Vermont Emergency Management.
- **Other Local Support:** Assisted Capital Fire Mutual Aid to meet Vermont Open Meeting Law requirements by hosting minutes and documents on CVRPC's website.

## **GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM SERVICES**

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

- Updated zoning data and / or maps for Barre Town, Cabot, East Montpelier, Middlesex, Montpelier, Plainfield
- Created the following (print) maps:
  - Village Designation: Cabot, Plainfield, Williamstown, Worcester.
  - Ash Tree Inventory: Roxbury
  - Bridge and Culvert Inventory: Fayston, Middlesex
  - Local Hazard Mitigation Plan: Fayston and Orange.
- Produced custom maps for Barre Town, Berlin, Montpelier, Moretown, Plainfield, Roxbury.
- Updated Web Maps for the Towns of Calais and Orange to facilitate public access to spatial data.
- Created a Web Map for the Town of Middlesex focused on recreation planning and natural resource management.
- Collected global positioning system (GPS) data for trails in the Orange Town Forest.
- Developed a sidewalks dataset for the region and produced custom sidewalk maps for all member municipalities.
- Met with Town of Berlin staff to discuss the use of GIS in field surveys and asset planning.
- Participated in statewide coordination meetings to discuss data standards for parcel boundaries and zoning districts.

## **ENERGY CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

RPCs integrate energy planning with emergency management, land use, transportation, and natural resources efforts. Staff worked with municipalities, including supporting 19 municipal energy committees and coordinators, supporting strategic planning, technical analyses, project development and implementation, community engagement and event planning, recruitment, etc. (see below). RPCs work closely with local, regional, and statewide partners to rapidly update and develop tools, resources, and programs to help municipalities take advantage of evolving funding landscapes and meet longstanding physical and social infrastructure needs and goals to reduce energy burden, emissions, and promote community-scale energy equity and resilience. RPCs participate in Section 248 proceedings and support comprehensive planning at the local, regional, and state levels to inform permitting process as well as towards GHG emissions, energy equity, reliability, and resilience goals.

**Enhanced Energy Plans & Certifications:** CVRPC Assisted Middlesex and Waitsfield to finalize their Plans. Issued Determinations of Energy Compliance for Woodbury's Plan, providing the municipality with substantial deference in Section 248 proceedings. Created Municipal Enhanced Energy Plan Starter Kit and met with municipalities to kick-off the enhanced energy planning process including East Montpelier, Worcester, Marshfield, Duxbury, Williamstown, Warren, and Moretown, among others.

#### Municipal Project Development and Support:

- Supported BGS ACT 172 Municipal Energy Resilience Grant Program development and rollout; integration of regional energy goals into municipal approach and development of workflow webinars, website, outreach plan and campaigns, and data templates, resulted in high town engagement ahead of FY 24 launch. Of 23 municipalities, 21 have been responsive. Staff are supporting aggregating priorities, projects, and data.
- Applied to Department of Energy/National Renewable Energy Laboratory cohorts: Implement on-site clean energy procurement strategy, and Incorporating Community Voices in Clean Energy Planning and Deployment cohorts. CVRPC has been accepted to both to support regional approach to municipal procurement and energy planning community engagement in FY24.
- Supported Northfield EVSE application to Vermont Council Rural Development Climate Catalysts Innovation Fund (awarded)
- Supported and coordinated applications to the VCRD Climate Resilience Communities program (Northfield, WEC, East Montpelier, and Mad River Ridge to River applied; Northfield selected for Community Visit).
- Provided technical analyses, coordinated with utility and industry as well as school and public stakeholders on specific fuel-switching, and on-site generation and storage project development (Barre City, Berlin, Duxbury, Montpelier/Roxbury Schools, Northfield, Orange, Plainfield, Marshfield, Waitsfield, Warren, Washington, and Worcester).
- Facilitated development of local public/nonprofit/private partnerships to develop revolving and gap funds to cover upfront costs of residential weatherization services and/or door-to-

door support with existing services and programs for residents with low and moderate income (Middlesex, Roxbury, Waitsfield, Montpelier).

- Supported two Central Vermont WindowDressers campaigns (Montpelier/Barre City and Mad River Valley+Middlesex) by connected WindowDressers campaign with Capstone Community Action services among other regional partners. Resulted in 75 volunteers built 258 storm window inserts for 40 households including 86 inserts provided for free of charge to ten income eligible households (Montpelier/Barre City); 68 volunteers built 125 storm window inserts for 21 households including three income eligible households who received the inserts free of charge (via Middlesex Community fund and MRV Interfaith Council) (Warren, Waitsfield, Middlesex, Moretown, and Fayston).
- Applied to VCRD Climate Catalysts Innovation Grant (awarded \$4,000)- developed regional effort to expand the impact of community builds as a platform to further connect vulnerable residents to weatherization services, solicit community feedback and engagement on energy and resilience initiatives, and more.
- Closed-Loop Network Geothermal/Thermal Networks Working Group (EAN), Core Member: attended monthly meetings, which included reviewing best practices learned from feasibility studies and developing Vermont-specific site/project suitability criteria, finance/ownership models, and community toolkit; identified several projects in initial phases as potential pilots (Barre City, Berlin, Norwich).
- Coordinated and submitted initial application materials on behalf of Washington County Courts to the US Department of Energy (DOE) for the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant valued at ~\$76k.

**Training& Education:** Increased energy communications with municipalities via Energy e-digest and listserv and weekly announcements in addition to target outreach, subscription has increased by 92 net contacts in the past year. Topical digests included: funding and programs updates.

- Accepted and presented pitch at EAN's September Summit: [Re]Imagining Community Resilience Hubs in Vermont: Shifting Power to Communities. Resulted in participation as community partner in Middlebury College Capstone wherein students developed and adapted the resilience hub model to Vermont rural communities via a needs assessments and templates for upgrades. Results included literature review on disparities in rural energy, social, and community infrastructure and adaptability of community resilience hub model; and webinar to support drawdown of federal energy infrastructure funds to municipalities: Community Led Resilience Hubs for VECAN Winter Workshops Series with VCRD (54 attendees participated).

#### **Data and Standards:**

- Collaborated with other RPCs, State agencies, VCGI, and Efficiency Vermont on updates to energy planning standards (Act 174), mapping tools, and the LEAP regionalization analysis and Generation Scenarios tools.
- Participated in Middlebury College's Environmental Capstone as a community partners: developed a municipal energy use baseline and tracking template to support Enhanced Energy



Planning, tracking implementation, developing a county-wide GHG inventory, and to qualify towns for energy assessments via the Municipal Energy Resilience Grant Program.

- Applied to the Energy Equity Project Community of Practice cohort: a national collaborative effort to create a standardized framework for energy equity measurement, reporting, and tracking that drives clean energy investment and impact for BIPOC and frontline communities, was accepted for summer cohort (FY24).

**Program and Policy Implementation and Updates:** Collaborated with other RPCs, regional and state partners on development and implementation of programs towards achieving energy and GHG emissions targets- including but not limited to:

- Provided comments and participated in stakeholder advisory efforts including:
  - Clean Electricity Programs and RES Updates (PSD), ANR Rulemaking, Municipal Vulnerability Index and VT Climate Toolkit (ANR, Climate Office), Clean Heat Standard reform, Green Workforce Development (EAN), and Residential Energy Building Energy Standards;
  - Reviewed and provided feedback on Efficiency VT regional data and reports. Reviewed updated Energy Burden Report draft; provided feedback per request (NVDA).
  - Reviewed State DOE GRIP funding applications and provided letter of support for regional utilities.
  - Supported over 21 Central Vermont applications to the VT Community EV Charging Incentive Program (ACCD).

## **WATERSHED PLANNING AND PROJECT DEVELOPMENT**

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

- **604b:** Reviewed 39 Stormwater Master Plans and Stormwater Infrastructure Map Reports. Identified 57 projects not included in the Watershed Projects Database and 28 projects with discrepancies between the report information and the Watershed Projects Database entry.
- **Clean Water Service Provider for the Winooski River Basin:** Facilitated monthly Basin Water Quality Council meetings. In coordination with the Basin Water Quality Council, adopted Rules of Procedure and a project scoring methodology (for reviewing proposed projects and prioritizing them for funding). Met with Department of Environmental Conservation project management team and other Clean Water Service Providers to discuss program implementation and offer feedback on guidance documents. Pre-qualified six organizations as Project Implementors and issued a single Request for Proposals for non-regulatory, phosphorous-reduction projects.
- **Tactical Basin Planning & Partner Engagement:** Participated in quarterly regional coordination meetings for the Winooski and Lamoille River basins, a series of meetings organized by the Vermont Natural Resources Council and The Nature Conservancy to discuss

dam removal project ideas and opportunities for collaboration, and eight Chittenden County Clean Water Advisory Committee meetings to report out on progress with the Winooski Clean Water Service Provider. Facilitated two Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission Clean Water Advisory Committee meetings to connect with partner organizations, learn about municipal needs related to water quality improvements and engage with the Basin Planner to develop an updated Tactical Basin Plan for the Winooski River Basin. Recruited new members to the Clean Water Advisory Committee. Reviewed the draft 2023 Winooski River Tactical Basin Plan and provided feedback to the Basin Planner, including the identification of strategies for CVRPC collaboration.

- **Tactical Basin Plan Implementation:** Advanced Vermont's effort to reduce phosphorus loading to Lake Champlain via the Winooski River Basin by:
  - Managing stormwater projects in Moretown (implementation) and Barre City (Final Design).
  - Conducting a site visit in Northfield with Department of Environmental Conservation staff, the Northfield Planning Commission and a representative of Norwich University to discuss potential restoration opportunities along Slate Brook.
  - Writing a successful grant application to fund stormwater improvements in Calais and Woodbury.
  - Meeting with the Roxbury Planning Commission, Northfield Planning Commission and the Plainfield Conservation Commission to discuss surface water reclassification, stream corridors, water quality initiatives, project development and funding, and Tactical Basin Planning objectives.
  - Reviewing Town Plans and Zoning Bylaws for conformance with model River Corridor language for regulating development in flood hazard areas and identifying municipalities for targeted outreach in the next fiscal year.
  - Assisting the Town of Plainfield with zoning bylaw updates to flood hazard and river corridor regulations.
  - Responding to requests for information to assist with the development of a stormwater master plan for Williamstown.
  - Providing Clean Water Initiative Program signs to partners and recording their use on the Clean Water Project Signs Online Tracking Spreadsheet.
- **Municipal Roads Grants in Aid:** Conducted pre-construction site visits for projects in one municipalities and coached municipalities on program requirements.

## **SPECIAL PROJECTS**

**Municipal Solar Workshops:** CVRPC hosted two out of a three-part workshop series intended to support member municipalities interested in municipal solar projects. The workshops were for town leaders interested in solar but unsure of how to start. Part I covered an overview of different models of municipal solar and provided the broad strokes of how to develop and implement projects. In addition to staff resources, experts from Norwich Solar joined the workshop. Part II focused on how to get started with siting municipal projects, and practicing on available tools (including the new Act 174 Planning Atlas Map Viewer) that can be used for project development as well as to facilitate

community conversations. The topics touched on basic considerations resizing, storage, and dual land use to frame project development best practices. The trainings have resulted in technical assistance for developing specific projects in Marshfield Village & Town, Worcester, Middlesex, Berlin (matching fund opportunities for Northeast Borders application), and more.

In FY24 the series will continue with Part III. This final installment was submitted as a proposal and has been accepted for the Renewable Energy Vermont annual conference. It is titled EmPOWERing Municipal Solar: Building Connections between Communities and Industry Experts (Fall 2023).

## **ADMINISTRATION AND FUNDING**

The FY23 CVRPC budget was ~ \$2 million. Revenue sources included state and federal performance contracts, grants, and local assessments.

Most 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 can use the vast majority of its funding. Funding received through municipal assessments is the exception, which makes this funding stream particularly important. It gives us the greatest latitude to respond to the region's needs. The grants we receive enable us to work with our towns on areas such as transportation, emergency planning, community development, energy, and natural resources. Revenue from 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 CVRPC under a performance grant with the Department of Housing and Community Development are used to provide this match.

CVRPC maintained its line of credit in FY23 due to a prevalence of product-based contracts. It maintains a Board-designated reserve fund, and a four-year plan for equipment and software upgrades and replacement.

CVRPC's annual audit will be completed in fall 2023. CVRPC has had no audit findings in recent years. It is considered a 'low risk' grantee by federal agencies. Staffing throughout FY23 included up to nine employees: Executive Director, Senior Planners (3), Planners (3), Assistant Planner (1), and an Office Manager. CVRPC supported workforce development through use of three Planning Technicians for transportation and planning services. CVRPC contracts for accounting services.

In FY23, CVRPC adopted a new Clean Water Service Provider Public Participation Policy as well as updated its Personnel, Grants Management and Procurement Policies; revised its Bylaws; and updated Rules of Procedure for one Committee.

## **ADDENDUM – JULY 2023 FLOOD EVENT RESPONSE**

During the July 10-11 flooding event in Central Vermont, the RPC relied on relationships built over years of collaboration with municipalities and the disaster response systems they have helped create and been trained on. While the work RPSs undertake to mitigate the impacts of a disaster chiefly takes place between events, the following addendum to our annual report provides a recounting of how an RPC can step in to fill gaps in times of need. During and following the flooding, staff provided technical assistance, support, and auxiliary capacity on myriad questions, concerns, and needs when municipal resources were stretched thin responding to the disaster on the ground and taking care of their residents. The RPC was there to assist local leaders and staff when they needed to understand their options and how to engage with state and federal partners and resources. As recovery continues, the RPC is transitioning back to a planning role, ensuring that we learn from this event and provide our municipalities with the resources and assistance they need to mitigate the impacts of future disasters, become more resilient, and ultimately thrive.

Under the RPC memorandum of understanding with the Department of Public Safety for disaster response CVRPC staff participated in the following activities.

**Local Liaison:** Staff were activated on three occasions to contact the 23 municipalities within the CV planning region and enter information into the WebEOC portal. Information related isolated residents, emergency situations, risks to life, observed damage to public and private facilities, economic impacts, and status of cultural land marks was reported back to Vermont Emergency Management (VEM). Helped municipalities submit tickets for emergency assistance to VEM.

**State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC):** Two CVRPC staff provided support to the SEOC. Support was provided for documentation and in situational awareness. CVRPC Staff were staffed the SEOC for a total of 7 days, each shift was between 12 and 13 hours.

Under the annual RPC **Emergency Management Performance Grant**, staff provided the following technical assistance to support municipalities as they responded to the flooding and eventually began the transition to the recovery process:

- Monitored the storm before the event and communicated with municipal EMDs to be prepared,
- Disseminated FEMA disaster response process to town staff (select boards, zoning officers, EMDs and town planners),
- Provided municipalities answers on FEMA Public Assistance on document retention, how to document damages and which procurement guidelines to follow,
- Helped municipalities get access to the FEMA Grants Portal due to staff changeover and loss of access,
- Staffed the local Multi-Agency Resource Center (one day),
- Provided outreach for resources such as PPE, water test kits, information on Individual assistance, NRCS Emergency Watershed Program,
- Notified towns about national guard visits and DSA teams

- Assisted municipalities to maximize their state ERAF scores by helping to complete LEMPs and making sure LHMPs being worked on were submitted before cutoff deadlines.
- Provided guidance on filings for disaster reimbursement, including fire departments and other town services activated for disaster response.
- Supported Barre City and Montpelier identify structures in Special Flood Hazard Area and list historic structures for substantial damage assessment tasks.
- Collected damages on town roads and submitted road condition reports to VTans District 6
- Supported towns in emailing guidance and follow-up on debris removal questions,
- Queried sources for available assistance for severely damaged municipal fire station in the Town of Woodbury,
- Organized meeting on floodplain buyout and elevation programs for Barre City and Montpelier,
- Tracked down information for towns on driveway repair eligibility under FEMA Individual assistance
- Attended Plainfield Flood Forum at town request,
- Attended meeting on status of dams within region and which historical dams were lost or damaged during event.