

Table of Contents

2	Agenda
3	Draft Minutes 2/4/2025
6	Community Outreach Survey – Draft Questions
13	Housing Targets – Memo
22	Substantial Regional Impact – Memo
24	Substantial Regional Impact – Definition, Adopted 2016
25	Substantial Regional Impact – Draft Definition, March 2018 (with 2025 Project Review Committee and Staff Input)



**Regional Plan Committee
Special Meeting**

February 20, 2025 at 4:00 pm

29 Main Street, Suite 4, Montpelier, VT 05602

To join Zoom meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87815276521?pwd=Mmw5U080SGpCTUFNVHZFSEERQUlI0dz09>

Meeting ID: 878 1527 6521, Passcode: 783374

One tap mobile (929)436-2866 or 1(301)715-8592

Persons with disabilities who require assistance or alternate arrangements to participate in programs or activities are encouraged to contact Nancy Chartrand at 802-229-0389 or chartrand@cvregion.com at least 3 business days prior to the meeting for which services are requested.

AGENDA

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| 4:00 pm | Adjustments to the Agenda |
| | Public Comment |
| 4:05 pm | Approval of Minutes (action) |
| 4:10 pm | Community Outreach Survey (discussion) |
| 4:20 pm | Housing Chapter Decision Points – Housing Targets (possible action) |
| 5:10 pm | Substantial Regional Impact Definition (discussion) |
| 5:30 pm | Adjourn |

Next regular meeting: March 4, 2025

CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Regional Plan Committee

Draft Minutes

February 4, 2025 4:00 – 5:30 pm

29 Main Street, Suite 4, Montpelier, VT 05602

Remote Access Via Zoom

Committee Members:

X	Alice Peal, Waitsfield Alternate Rep
	Alice Farrell, Barre Town Rep
X	Doug Greason, Waterbury Rep
X	Mike Miller, Montpelier Alternate Rep
X	John Brabant, Calais Rep

1

1

2 Staff: Sam Lash, Will Pitkin (remote), Christian Meyer, Brian Voigt (in person)

3

4 A Peal Called the meeting to order at 4:03PM

5

6 **Adjustments to the Agenda**

7 No adjustments to the agenda.

8

9 **Public Comment**

10 No public comment.

11

12 **Decision on Length of Meeting**

13 A. Peal discussed the possibility of officially extending meeting length to two hours, at least until a
14 complete draft of the Regional Plan is submitted to the Land Use Review Board, in light of recent
15 committee meetings extending past the scheduled 90 minutes to approximately 120 minutes.

16 Committee members expressed a general preference for keeping meetings scheduled for 90 minutes
17 and extending individual meetings as needed if important discussions run over.

18

19 *NB: CVRPC's office lost power at approximately 4:10pm, disconnecting C. Meyer and B. Voigt; C. Meyer
20 would later rejoin the meeting remotely from home.*

21

22 **Approval of Minutes**

23 M. Miller moved to approve October 2024, December 2024, and January 2025 meeting minutes; J.
24 Brabant seconded; all in favor; motion carried.

25

26 Committee members also requested that meeting minutes include more clarity and details on decisions
27 that the committee reaches.

28

29 **Community Outreach Survey**

30 A. Peal tabled the discussion on the community outreach survey since B. Voigt was planning to lead this
31 discussion and was not able to attend due to electrical issues at CVRPC's office earlier in the meeting.

1
2 **Energy Chapter Decision Points Discussion – Renewable Energy Generation Targets**
3

4 S. Lash and the committee discussed the potential role of hydroelectric dams in contributing to Central
5 Vermont’s renewable energy generation portfolio, including existing hydroelectric dams, opposition to
6 new hydroelectric dams due to environmental concerns, and advances in hydroelectric generation
7 technology and the possible role those new technologies may play in future generation.
8

9 J. Brabant addressed technological advances in other renewable sources, such as solar and wind, then
10 requested that the Regional Plan include a discussion of technological advances on the horizon for all
11 new renewable energy sources and be worded to give flexibility for future Regional Plan updates to
12 incorporate new technologies as they are invented and/or advanced to the point where they can be
13 feasibly implemented in the region. S. Lash assured the committee that the draft chapter includes such
14 language and will continue to highlight technological advances in renewable energy generation moving
15 forward.
16

17 S. Lash returned the conversation to a continuation of the previous meeting’s discussion of potential
18 renewable energy generation scenarios that would allow Central Vermont to reach its required
19 generation targets. She reiterated various pros and cons of the different alternative scenarios that were
20 presented in the meeting packet and requested the committee’s preferences between the different
21 alternatives.
22

23 M. Miller expressed concern that the renewable energy generation targets could later be used to
24 oppose worthy generation projects in the future if, for example, the region meets targets for a specific
25 source and another project for that source is proposed, opponents could use the region already having
26 met the target as a reason to oppose the project. S. Lash assured that the Regional Plan would include
27 language to mitigate this possibility and reminded the committee that the plan can be updated (and is
28 required to be updated periodically).
29

30 S. Lash asked the committee’s preferences on the proposed renewable energy generation source mix
31 scenarios. D. Greason preferred Scenario 3. J. Brabant preferred Scenario 3 but with a caveat that it is
32 based on current technology and may shift based on new technologies. C. Meyer proposed that re-
33 creating an Energy Committee may be an effective way to keep CVRPC’s energy priorities up to date
34 with emerging technologies.
35

36 **Energy Chapter Decision Points Discussion – Siting**
37

38 S. Lash and the committee discussed the proposed layers, including Vermont state-standard known and
39 possible constraints, optional Central Vermont-specific regional constraints, and other preferred
40 characteristics. Discussion centered on specifics of conserved land, municipal-owned land, proximity to
41 existing and planned development, proximity to three-phase electrical transmission lines.
42

43 The committee agreed to clarify that municipal lands should not be categorically excluded as a siting
44 constraint but, instead, municipal land exclusions should follow municipal priorities and specific sites’
45 uses.
46

47 M. Miller questioned how to best balance the desire to locate energy generation near demand centers
48 without occupying land that would be ideal for housing development (another regional and state

1 priority), especially when factoring in important and expensive infrastructure such as municipal water
2 and wastewater service. The committee agreed to include language in the Regional Plan that would
3 constrain land-intensive renewable energy generation in areas with infrastructure that would support
4 housing while still encouraging siting in areas with infrastructure that would support energy generation,
5 storage, and transmission.

6
7 C. Meyer also suggested that the Regional Plan differentiate siting constraints based on scale of the
8 projects (both generation capacity and physical footprint) and S. Lash provided background on common
9 differentiation points in energy planning (15kW, 150kW, 500kW).

10
11 The committee revisited the question of defining Substantial Regional Impact and whether 150kW or
12 500kW should be the default threshold for energy generation projects – and noted that the proposed
13 definition did include phasing to account for cumulative impacts of multi-phase projects. S. Lash will
14 bring a map of all areas in the region that could support projects over 500kW to a future meeting and, if
15 time allows, potentially another map that shows areas that could support projects over 150kW, then the
16 committee will use these maps to reach a final decision on the Substantial Regional Impact threshold.

17
18 W. Pitkin humbly requested that the committee reach clear decisions through a vote or at least spoken
19 consensus, per the committee’s earlier request for meeting minutes to clearly reflect decisions.

20
21 **Upcoming Meeting Topics**

22
23 A. Peal proposed an agenda for the next few meetings. The next meeting would include a discussion of
24 the Substantial Regional Impact definition, plus possibly another topic. The following meeting would
25 begin discussing the Land Use chapter and draft Future Land Use Area Map. The committee still needs to
26 discuss the community outreach survey due to technical difficulties at this meeting, so the committee
27 will plan to discuss that survey at the next meeting.

28
29 J. Brabant moved to adjourn, M. Miller seconded, all in favor.

30
31 A. Peal adjourned meeting at 5:47 PM

32
33 *Respectfully submitted by W. Pitkin*

Questions/Municipal Survey for **Central Vermont Regional Plan Future Land Use Map**:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your input will help the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC) develop the new Regional Future Land Use Map and guide future projects and policies as we work to align our Regional Plan with community vision. Please look for future information on our website <https://centralvtplanning.org/> about the Regional Plan update or feel free to contact us with any additional questions or comments sabado@cvregion.com. **(ADD LANGUAGE FOR PRIZE/GIFT CARD RAFFLE FOR FILLING OUT SURVEY-CONFIRM WITH CHRISTIAN)**

To each of our municipalities, please post or link this survey to your local papers, town offices and libraries, local social media sites, and to your town's Front Porch Forum. It will also be posted on our CVRPC website and highlighted in the CVRPC weekly newsletter. Hard copies of the survey are also available.

The new Regional Future Land Use Area Map will guide development in Central Vermont by designating areas for growth, conservation, and other uses based on environmental, infrastructure, and community factors. The map will be used to determine Act 250 location-based jurisdiction and State Designations.

1. Which town do you live in? (this will be answered by choosing a response from a dropdown list)

2. How old are you?
 - Under 18
 - 18-24
 - 25-44
 - 45-64
 - 65 or older

3. Which of the following applies to you? (Choose all that apply)
 - I am employed/am an employer within the Central Vermont region
 - I am self-employed
 - I am a primary caregiver
 - I am unemployed within the Central Vermont region
 - I am retired
 - I am a student

- I am a volunteer
- I am a visitor

4. What facilities/services do you use? (Check all that apply):

- Library
- Foodbank
- Town services
- Public transportation
- Parks and trails
- Grocery/shopping
- Other (please specify) _____

5. How would you prioritize key regional challenges? (use Likert scale)

- Transportation
- Energy
- Housing
- Economy
- Environment
- Other (please specify) _____

6. Which, if any, types of **residential** development are needed in the region going forward? (Choose all that apply)

- Starter/workforce housing
- Affordable housing
- Transitional housing (temporary housing that helps a person transition to permanent housing)
- Emergency housing (for those experiencing homelessness)
- Senior housing
- Multi-family housing
- Single-family housing (detached)
- Single-family housing (attached)
- Accessible housing (such ADA focused)
- Supportive housing (with support services and affordable options)
- No growth
- Other (please specify) _____

7. Which areas would you like to see more **residential** growth? (Choose all that apply)

- Near I-89
- Near main state road corridors
- Near public transit and/or bike paths
- Concentrated in and around municipalities and existing urban/growth areas (ie. Montpelier, Barre, Waterbury, Berlin)
- In my nearest village or center
- Near the lakes /reservoirs / waterbodies
- Near ski resorts / mountain recreation areas
- Other (please specify) _____

8. Which, if any, types of **commercial** development are most needed in the region going forward? (Choose all that apply)

- Mixed use
- Retail in downtowns / growth areas
- Dining in downtowns / growth areas
- Anything tourism-related
- Boutique commercial (smaller specialty stores)
- Large-scale development
- Office space / corporate campuses
- Other (please specify) _____

9. Where would you like to see more **commercial** growth? (Choose all that apply)

- Near I-89
- Near main state road corridors
- Near public transit and/or bike paths
- Concentrated in and around municipalities and existing urban/growth areas (ie. Montpelier, Barre, Waterbury, Berlin)
- In my nearest village or center
- Near lakes /reservoirs / waterbodies
- Near ski resorts / mountain recreation areas
- Other (please specify) _____

10. Which, if any, types of **industrial** development are most needed in the region going forward? (Choose all that apply)

- Forest product industry

- Extraction industry
- Manufacturing / goods production
- Food processing
- Warehousing / distribution
- Technology-related industry
- Research and development campuses
- Incubator centers (programs that help startups develop and grow)
- Other (please specify) _____

11. Which areas would you like to see more **industrial** growth?
(Choose all that apply)

- Near I-89
- Near main state road corridors
- Near public transit and/or bike paths
- Concentrated in and around municipalities and existing urban/growth areas (ie. Montpelier, Barre, Waterbury, Berlin)
- In my nearest village or center
- Near lakes /reservoirs / waterbodies
- Near ski resorts / mountain recreation areas
- Other (please specify) _____

12. Regarding **general** growth and development, which, if any, of the following issues do you consider a priority within the region?
(Choose all that apply)

- Preserving / expanding agriculture and related industries
- Preserving / expanding forestry and related industries
- Preserving the area's rural character
- Preserving the area's natural resources
- Improving cost effectiveness of utilities and infrastructure
- Minimizing traffic congestion
- Expanding public water supplies
- Expanding / enhancing internet capacity
- Attracting new employment and/or business
- Reducing or minimizing automobile dependence

13. Regarding **economic** development, please rank the following priorities for the region (1 is the most important, 6 is the least important):

- Workforce training and education
- Telecommunications / internet access and capacity
- Workforce housing
- Accessible medical care
- Quality of life amenities (features or services within a community that enhance overall well-being in a place - such as schools, parks and recreation, diverse cultural options, reliable transportation)
- Utilities and infrastructure

14. Which, if any, of the following ideas would you favor to increase **economic** activity in the region? (Choose all that apply)

- Revitalization of historic downtowns / city centers
- More trails and passive outdoor recreation
- More cultural and sporting events
- Expanded / upgraded amenities at existing state parks and municipal parks and forests
- Improved safety and designation of on-road bicycle routes
- No changes needed; current policies are appropriate

15. Please tell us which part of the region's road network you think most needs improvement and what you would like to see.

16. What are your priorities related to the transport network?
(Choose all that apply)

- Pedestrian safety
- Pedestrian access
- Bike lane
- Transit access
- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions
- Other (please specify) _____

Finally, we invite you to tell us some of your specific thoughts about various aspects of the Central Vermont region. For these questions, please recall we're asking you to think beyond your own community, so please consider the broader area surrounding your town, even if that includes areas outside our region because that helps set the context for our discussions.

1. As briefly as possible, what do you consider the three greatest **strengths** of the Central Vermont region?
 2. As briefly as possible, what do you consider the three greatest **weaknesses** of the Central Vermont region?
 3. As briefly as possible, what do you consider the three greatest **opportunities** of the Central Vermont region?
 4. As briefly as possible, what do you consider the three greatest **threats** of the Central Vermont region?
 5. Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about your aspirations or concerns for the region or town?
-

OTHER IDEAS TO CONSIDER

Link to a map – interactive map to complement survey. Boundary lines, village and growth center (state designations), and roads.

Question(s) related to land use conservation/rural categories:

How familiar are you with the current land use practices in your community?

- Very familiar
- Somewhat familiar
- Not familiar at all

Which types of land would you prioritize for conservation in your community?
(Choose all that apply):

- Wetlands
- Forests
- Grasslands
- Riverbanks/streambanks
- Farmland

- Other (please specify)

Which land uses do you believe are currently most prevalent in your community? (Choose all that apply)

- Residential development
- Commercial development
- Recreational/tourism development
- Agricultural land (such as traditional practices, ie. dairy, meat, hay)
- Other agricultural land (such as specialty items, ie. flowers, grass-fed beef, sheep, and cheese)
- Forest land (forestry and forest-product based business such as maple production)
- Extraction industry (such as minerals/rock)
- Conservation land
- Wetlands/ponds/lakes
- None or very limited development
- Other (please specify)



MEMO

Date: February 13, 2025

To: CVRPC Regional Plan Committee

From: Eli Toohey, Community Development Planner

Re: Housing Targets & Housing Chapter, statute, decision points

☒ **ACTION REQUESTED: Approve the use of the *Vermont Housing Needs Assessment Regional Targets for 2025-2030* as the basis for establishing CVRPC's Regional Housing Targets in the Regional Plan Update.**

On January 21, 2025, the Department of Housing and Community Development and Vermont Housing Finance Agency released the [Vermont Housing Needs Assessment: 2025-2029](#) which examines current and expected need for housing development in the state by 2029. The regional targets can be found on page 4 of [Appendix 1](#). The targets for the CVRPC region are:

- 2025 – 2030: 2,540 (low) – 3,864 (high)
- 2025 – 2050: 8,045 (low) – 15,856 (high).

Further disaggregation of the regional housing target will rely on the Future Land Use Map (currently under development) and stakeholder input (from the survey and other approaches to soliciting input). Determining the capacity for additional growth in the Future Land Use Areas is an important next step for establishing a methodology for assigning housing targets. The statutory definitions of the Future Land Use Areas can be found beginning on page 2 of this memo. The process of meeting with municipalities to develop their future land use areas is underway.

Required Elements of the Housing Chapter

24 V.S.A. § 4348a(a)(9) A housing element that identifies the regional and community-level need for housing that will result in an adequate supply of building code and energy code compliant homes where most households spend not more than 30 percent of their income on housing and not more than 15 percent on transportation. To establish housing needs, the

Department of Housing and Community Development shall publish statewide and regional housing targets or ranges as part of the Statewide Housing Needs Assessment. The regional planning commission shall consult the Statewide Housing Needs Assessment; current and expected demographic data; the current location, quality, types, and cost of housing; other local studies related to housing needs; and data gathered pursuant to subsection 4382(c) of this title. If no such data has been gathered, the regional planning commission shall gather it. The regional planning commission's assessment shall estimate the total needed housing investments in terms of price, quality, unit size or type, and zoning district as applicable and shall disaggregate regional housing targets or ranges by municipality. The housing element shall include a set of recommended actions to satisfy the established needs.

24 V.S.A. § 4302(c)(1): To plan development so as to maintain the historic settlement pattern of compact village and urban centers separated by rural countryside.

24 V.S.A. § 4302(c)(1)(A) Intensive residential development should be encouraged primarily in areas related to community centers, and strip development along highways should be discouraged.

24 V.S.A. § 4302(c)(1)(C) Public investments, including the construction or expansion of infrastructure, should reinforce the planned growth patterns of the area.

24 V.S.A. § 4302(c)(1)(D) Development should be undertaken in accordance with smart growth principles as defined in subdivision 2791(13) of this title.

24 V.S.A. § 4302(c)(11): To ensure the availability of safe and affordable housing for all Vermonters.

(A) Housing should be encouraged to meet the needs of a diversity of social and income groups in each Vermont community, particularly for those citizens of low and moderate income and consistent with housing targets provided for in subdivision 4348a(a)(9) of this title.

(B) New and rehabilitated housing should be safe, sanitary, located conveniently to employment and commercial centers, and coordinated with the provision of necessary public facilities and utilities.

(C) Sites for multi-family and manufactured housing should be readily available in locations similar to those generally used for single-family conventional dwellings.

(D) Accessory apartments within or attached to single-family residences which provide affordable housing in close proximity to cost-effective care and supervision for relatives, elders, or persons who have a disability should

be allowed.

Statutory Definitions of Future Land Use Areas

High-Density Growth Areas

Downtown Centers: These areas are mixed-use centers bringing together community economic activity and civic assets. They include downtowns, villages, and new town centers previously designated under chapter 76A and downtowns and village centers seeking benefits under the Community Investment Program under section 5804 of this title. The downtown or village centers are the traditional and historic central business and civic centers within planned growth areas, village areas, or may stand alone. Village centers are not required to have public water, wastewater, zoning, or subdivision bylaws.

Village Centers: These areas are mixed-use centers bringing together community economic activity and civic assets. They include downtowns, villages, and new town centers previously designated under chapter 76A and downtowns and village centers seeking benefits under the Community Investment Program under section 5804 of this title. The downtown or village centers are the traditional and historic central business and civic centers within planned growth areas, village areas, or may stand alone. Village centers are not required to have public water, wastewater, zoning, or subdivision bylaws.

Planned Growth Areas: These areas include the high-density existing settlement and future growth areas with high concentrations of population, housing, and employment in each region and town, as appropriate. They include a mix of historic and non-historic commercial, residential, and civic or cultural sites with active streetscapes, supported by land development regulations; public water or wastewater, or both; and multimodal transportation systems. These areas include new town centers, downtowns, village centers, growth centers, and neighborhood development areas previously designated under chapter 76A of this title. These areas should generally meet the smart growth principles definition in chapter 139 of this title and the following criteria:

Statutory Criteria: 24 V.S.A. § 4348a(a)(12)(B)

- (i) The municipality has a duly adopted and approved plan and a planning process that is confirmed in accordance with section 4350 of this title and has adopted bylaws and regulations in accordance with sections 4414, 4418, and 4442 of this title.
- (ii) This area is served by public water or wastewater infrastructure.
- (iii) The area is generally within walking distance from the municipality's or an adjacent municipality's downtown, village center, new town center, or growth center.

- (iv) The area excludes identified flood hazard and river corridor areas, except those areas containing preexisting development in areas suitable for infill development as defined in section 29-201 of the Vermont Flood Hazard Area and River Corridor Rule.
- (v) The municipal plan indicates that this area is intended for higher-density residential and mixed-use development.
- (vi) The area provides for housing that meets the needs of a diversity of social and income groups in the community.
- (vii) The area is served by planned or existing transportation infrastructure that conforms with “complete streets” principles as described under 19 V.S.A. chapter 24 and establishes pedestrian access directly to the downtown, village center, or new town center. Planned transportation infrastructure includes those investments included in the municipality’s capital improvement program pursuant to section 4430 of this title.

Village Areas: These areas include the traditional settlement area or a proposed new settlement area, typically composed of a cohesive mix of residential, civic, religious, commercial, and mixed-use buildings, arranged along a main street and intersecting streets that are within walking distance for residents who live within and surrounding the core. These areas include existing village center designations and similar areas statewide, but this area is larger than the village center designation. Village areas shall meet the following criteria:

Statutory Criteria 24 V.S.A. § 4348a(a)(12)(C)

- (i) The municipality has a duly adopted and approved plan and a planning process that is confirmed in accordance with section 4350 of this title.
- (ii) The municipality has adopted bylaws and subdivision regulations in accordance with sections 4414, 4418, and 4442 of this title.
- (iii) Unless the municipality has adopted flood hazard and river corridor bylaws, applicable to the entire municipality, that are consistent with the standards established pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 755b (flood hazard) and 10 V.S.A. § 1428(b) (river corridor), the area excludes identified flood hazard and river corridors, except those areas containing preexisting development in areas suitable for infill development as defined in 29-201 of the Vermont Flood Hazard Area and River Corridor Rule.
- (iv) The municipality has either municipal water or wastewater. If no public wastewater is available, the area must have soils that are adequate for wastewater disposal.
- (v) The area has some opportunity for infill development or new development areas where the village can grow and be flood resilient.

Moderate-Density Growth Areas

Transition or Infill Areas: These areas include areas of existing or planned commercial, office, mixed-use development, or residential uses either adjacent to a planned growth or village area or a new stand-alone transition or infill area and served by, or planned for, public water or wastewater, or both. The intent of this land use category is to transform these areas into higher density, mixed-use settlements, or residential neighborhoods through infill and redevelopment or new development. New commercial linear strip development is not allowed as to prevent it negatively impacting the economic vitality of commercial areas in the adjacent or nearby planned growth or village area. This area could also include adjacent greenfields safer from flooding and planned for future growth.

Low-Density Growth Areas

Resource-based Recreation Areas: These areas include large-scale resource-based recreational facilities, often concentrated around ski resorts, lakeshores, or concentrated trail networks, that may provide infrastructure, jobs, or housing to support recreational activities.

Enterprise Areas: These areas include locations of high economic activity and employment that are not adjacent to planned growth areas. These include industrial parks, areas of natural resource extraction, or other commercial uses that involve larger land areas. Enterprise areas typically have ready access to water supply, sewage disposal, electricity, and freight transportation networks.

Hamlets: Small historic clusters of homes and may include a school, place of worship, store, or other public buildings not planned for significant growth; no public water supply or wastewater systems; and mostly focused along one or two roads. These may be depicted as points on the future land use map.

Rural General: These areas include areas that promote the preservation of Vermont's traditional working landscape and natural area features. They allow for low-density residential and some limited commercial development that is compatible with productive lands and natural areas. This may also include an area that a municipality is planning to make more rural than it is currently.

Rural Agriculture and Forestry: These areas include blocks of forest or farmland that sustain resource industries, provide critical wildlife scenic beauty, and contribute to economic well-being and quality of life. Development in these areas should be carefully managed to promote the working landscape and rural economy, and address regional goals, while protecting the agricultural and forest resource value.

No Growth Areas

Rural Conservation: These are areas of significant natural resources, identified by regional planning commissions or municipalities based upon existing Agency of Natural Resources mapping that require special consideration for aquifer protection; for wetland protection; for the maintenance of forest blocks, wildlife habitat, and habitat connectors; or for other conservation purposes. The mapping of these areas and accompanying policies are intended to help meet requirements of 10 V.S.A. chapter 89. Any portion of this area that is approved by the LURB as having Tier 3 area status shall be identified on the future land use map as an overlay upon approval.

CVRPC Regional Housing Allocation Model

Staff recommend using the *Vermont Housing Needs Assessment* Regional Targets for 2025-2030 as the basis for establishing

CVRPC's Regional Housing Targets in the Regional Plan Update. The regional target for new housing units over this 5-year period ranges from 2,504 (low-end scenario) to 3,864 (high-end scenario). We will use this range to establish targets for each of the Future Land Use Areas (and their sub-areas). Most new residential development should occur in the High-Density Growth Areas, with fewer units allocated to the Moderate- and Low-Density Growth Areas. We recommend that no new housing be allocated to *Rural Conservation Areas*.

Table 1 displays the low- and high-range housing targets for Future Land Use Areas for the 5-year and 25-year time periods. In this example, we allocate 80% of new residential development to the High-Density Growth Areas, 15% to Moderate-Density Growth Areas and 5% to Low-Density Growth Areas.

High-Density Growth Areas include *Planned Growth Areas, Village Areas, Downtown Centers* and *Village Centers*. Within the High-Density Growth Areas, *Planned Growth Areas* have the most capacity for growth and represent the locations most conducive to new development. *Village Areas* are the next most conducive to growth with walkable areas, proximity to amenities, water and/or wastewater capacity, and opportunities for expansion outside of flood hazard areas. *Downtown Centers* and *Village Centers* may be within a *Planned Growth Area* and include a mix of economic and civic assets. If situated in a *Planned Growth Area*, they have, by definition, elements that prove they are primed for housing growth. Standalone (i.e. (not in a *Planned Growth Area* or *Village Area*) *Downtown Centers* and *Village Centers* may not be as primed for residential development as their *Planned Growth Area* and *Village Area* counterparts.

For example, *Village Centers* are not required to have public water, wastewater, zoning, or subdivision bylaws and may or may not be able to accommodate housing growth. Table 1 displays the housing targets in High-Density Growth Areas if 75% of the new development is assigned to *Planned Growth Areas* and *Village Areas*, with the remaining 25% allocated to *Downtown Centers* and *Village Centers*.

Moderate-Density Growth Areas include *Transition Areas* and *Infill Areas*. These areas feature existing or planned commercial, office, mixed-use or residential development adjacent to a *Planned Growth* or *Village Areas* or a new stand-alone transition or infill area with existing or planned public water, wastewater or both. These areas are intended to move towards a higher density of mixed- and residential-uses through redevelopment of existing structures and greenfield development. Table 1 displays the housing targets in Moderate-Density Growth Areas if 100% of the new development is assigned to *Transition Areas* and *Infill Areas*,

Low-Density Growth Areas include *Resource-Based Recreation Areas*, *Enterprise Areas*, *Hamlets*, *Rural General* and *Rural Agriculture & Forestry Areas*. *Resource-Based Recreation Areas* include large-scale, resource-based recreational facilities, often concentrated around ski resorts, lakeshores or trail networks. Residential development opportunities for these areas include converting seasonal facilities into year-round housing and constructing workforce housing. *Enterprise Areas* include large land areas with high economic activity that are not adjacent to Planned Growth Areas. These include industrial parks, areas of natural resource extraction or other commercial uses and typically have ready access to water, sewage disposal, electricity and freight transportation networks. While most of these locations make sense for new economic development, there may also be opportunities to develop workforce housing or convert commercial space to residential apartments. *Hamlets* are small, historic clusters of homes around a school, place of worship, store or other public buildings. These areas are not intended for significant growth as there is typically no access to public water or wastewater systems. Development in these areas should focus on the replacement of (lost) historic buildings. *Rural General Areas* promote the preservation of Vermont's working landscape and allows for low-density residential and commercial development compatible with resource-based activity, productive lands and natural areas. *Rural Agriculture and Forestry Areas* include large blocks of forest and farmland that sustain resource-based industries, provide critical wildlife habitat and scenic beauty, and contribute to economic well-being and quality of life. Development in these areas should be carefully managed to address the regional goal of protecting the working landscape and promoting our rural economy.

Table 1 displays the housing targets in Low-Density Growth Areas if 30% of new development is assigned to Resource-Based Recreation Areas, 20% is allocated to Enterprise Areas, 15% is allocated to Hamlets, 20% is allocated to Rural General and 15% is allocated to Rural Agricultural and Forestry Areas.

NOTE: We will seek more explicit guidance on the allocation of new residential development to Growth Areas and the proportion of that growth that should be allocated to each sub-area at a future Regional Plan Committee meeting.

Table 1: Distribution of new residential development to Future Land Use Areas.

		2025 – 2030		2025 - 2050	
High-Density Growth Areas (80% of Housing Target)		Low	High	Low	High
<i>Downtown Centers & Village Centers</i>	25%	508	773	1,609	3,171
<i>Planned Growth Areas & Village Areas</i>	75%	1,524	2,318	4,827	9,514
	Sub-total	2,032	3,091	6,436	12,685
Moderate-Density Growth Areas (15% of Housing Target)					
<i>Transition or Infill Areas</i>	100%	381	580	1,207	2,378
	Sub-total	381	580	1,207	2,378
Low-Density Growth Areas (5% of Housing Target)					
<i>Resource-based Recreation Areas, converting seasonal to permanent</i>	30%	39	57	122	238
<i>Enterprise Areas, commercial building conversions</i>	20%	25	39	80	159
<i>Hamlets, mostly replacing lost historic housing</i>	15%	19	29	60	119
<i>Rural General, low- and very low residential</i>	20%	25	39	80	159
<i>Rural Agriculture and Forestry, farms and working lands homes</i>	15%	19	29	60	119
	Sub-total	127	193	402	793
No Growth Areas (0% of Housing Target)					
<i>Rural Conservation</i>	0%	0	0	0	0
	Sub-total	0	0	0	0
TOTAL		2,540	3,864	8,045	15,856

Please note: The allocation of new residential units presented here is VERY preliminary. As we complete a first draft of the Future Land Use map, we will have a better idea of the amount of development the Future Land Use Areas (e.g. Downtown Center, Transition Area) can accommodate.



MEMO

Date: February 13, 2025

To: CVRPC Regional Plan Committee

From: Will Pitkin, Planner

Re: Substantial Regional Impact Definition and Project Review

☒ **ACTION REQUESTED: Review and suggest edits to the *draft* substantial regional impact definition.**

CVRPC is required by [statute](#) to define what a substantial regional impact is in the context of the Central Vermont region.¹ CVRPC uses its adopted definition of substantial regional impact as a filter to determine which projects should be considered by the Project Review Committee. Although the Project Review Committee can decide to review projects that do not meet the criteria established in the substantial regional impact definition (e.g. member municipality concern, professional judgment), beefing up the definition will increase consistency and clarity in the project review process. Please note that CVRPC documents alternate between calling this “*substantial* regional impact” and “*significant* regional impact”. The correct phrasing, per **24 V.S.A. § 4345a**, is “substantial regional impact”.

CVRPC adopted a definition of substantial regional impact in the 2016 Regional Plan. However, the definition was vague, so the Project Review Committee put forward an amended definition in March 2018. That definition, however, was never adopted by the full Board of Commissioners. Included in the meeting packet are: 1) the definition included in the 2016 Regional Plan and 2) the amended definition proposed in March 2018. Staff and the Project Review Committee have already reviewed the substantial regional impact definition and offered their feedback. These contributions have been incorporated into the definition proposed in March 2018.

Please review these documents and provide feedback during our meeting or

¹ VT Statute 24 V.S.A. § 4345a (17) states that a regional planning commission shall “as part of its regional plan, define a substantial regional impact.... This definition shall be given substantial deference, where relevant, in State regulatory proceedings.”

via email to Will (pitkin@cvregion.com) and Sam (lash@cvregion.com) by February 24, 2025. We intend to incorporate your feedback into a revised draft that will be presented to the Project Review Committee for approval at their February 27, 2025 meeting and to the Regional Plan Committee for approval at their March 4, 2025 meeting.



Substantial Regional Impact

As identified by the Central Vermont Regional Plan 2016, amended 2018

Development projects of Substantial Regional Impact are those that will have substantial and ongoing impact on two or more municipalities, including the host municipality. Among the development projects of substantial Regional impact are those that:

- Will likely impact on a resource within the Region which is widely used or appreciated by people outside of the locality in which it is located.
- Which may affect settlement patterns to the extent that the character or identity of the Region (or its sub- Regions) is significantly affected.
- Are likely to alter the cost of living, availability of choices, access to traditional way of life or resources widely used or appreciated by Regional residents.

In addition, because CVRPC has defined housing as a critical need for the Region, CVRPC will participate in the Act 250 review for any project which proposes to:

- increase the total number of year round housing units (according to the most recent U.S. Census) in its host municipality by more than 2%; or create more than 30 housing units of any type; or create more than 5 “affordable” housing units, as defined by VSA Chapter 117 Section 4303.



Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission

PROJECT REVIEW COMMITTEE

SUBSTANTIAL REGIONAL IMPACT GUIDELINES

March 13, 2018

FINAL DRAFT

PURPOSE: To provide uniform and consistent guidelines for evaluating land development projects to determine if they are regionally significant.

PROCESS: The Project Review Committee will use these criteria to evaluate the regional impacts a land development project may have in order to determine consistency with the Central Vermont Regional Plan. Projects that meet or exceed these thresholds will be evaluated for consistency with the Regional Plan and to determine if a regional impact (either positive or negative) exists. The Project Review Committee will review the proposal against the specific criteria to determine if comments regarding consistency with the Central Vermont Regional Plan will be provided. Comments will be sent to the District 5 Environmental Commission, the Vermont Public Utility Commission, or municipal permitting authority, as appropriate.

DEFINITION: In the context of the Central Vermont Regional Plan, Substantial Regional Impact means any development proposal that may have a sustained or lasting impact to the municipalities in the Central Vermont Region due to the location, scale, size, density, or uses that are proposed. To determine if a project has Substantial Regional Impact, the following guidelines will be used for evaluation.

GENERAL GUIDELINES: The following general criteria will apply to all applications that are submitted to the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission for review. If a project meets any of these criteria it will be reviewed for consistency with the Central Vermont Regional Plan to determine if a regional impact exists.

1. The project is located in more than one municipality or is located on property that is directly adjacent to a municipal boundary.
2. The project will impact a natural, historic, cultural, or significant resource that is explicitly described or identified in the Central Vermont Regional Plan. Examples include but are not limited to: wetlands, floodplains/Special Flood Hazard Areas, river corridors, or named

waterbodies; critical resource areas as identified in the Central Vermont Regional Plan¹, or similar regionally significant resources including priorities identified within the Vermont Conservation Design.

3. The project may require ongoing participation by the Regional Planning Commission for a period of at least one calendar year.
4. The project proposes development that is inconsistent with the regional future land use map regarding the location or character of development type, density, or intensity.
5. The project includes the extension, expansion, or widening of a federal or state designated roadway.
6. The project proposes a use that will increase the peak hour vehicle trips by 50 or more as estimated by the current edition of the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual.

USE SPECIFIC GUIDELINES: The following guidelines will apply to all applications that are submitted to the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission for review. The population of the municipality where the project is located will determine which guidelines will be used to evaluate each project.

GUIDELINES FOR DETERMINING SUBSTANTIAL REGIONAL IMPACT FOR NEW PROJECTS OR EXPANSIONS OF EXISTING USES		
TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT	MUNICIPALITIES WITH A POPULATION GREATER THAN 2,500²	MUNICIPALITIES WITH A POPULATION LESS THAN 2,500²
Office	Greater than 30,000 gross square feet	Greater than 20,000 gross square feet
Commercial/Retail	Greater than 25,000 gross square feet	Greater than 15,000 gross square feet
Wholesale & Distribution	Greater than 50,000 gross square feet	Greater than 30,000 gross square feet
Hospitals & Health Care Facilities	Greater than 25 beds or 20,000 gross square feet	Greater than 10 beds or 10,000 gross square feet
Housing	Greater than 30 new lots or units	Greater than 20 new lots or units
Industrial	Greater than 50,000 gross square feet	Greater than 30,000 gross square feet

¹ Critical resource areas as noted in the 2016 Central Vermont Regional Plan include National Natural Landmarks; State designated natural areas; Sites listed on the Vermont Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species, and Significant Natural Communities as designated by the Vermont Natural Heritage Inventory; and elevations over 2,500 feet and or slopes greater than 15%.

² Based on the 2010 U.S. Census, the municipalities with a population greater than 2,500 persons includes Barre City, Barre Town, Berlin, East Montpelier, Montpelier, Northfield, Waterbury, and Williamstown. All other municipalities have fewer than 2,500 persons.

GUIDELINES FOR DETERMINING SUBSTANTIAL REGIONAL IMPACT FOR NEW PROJECTS OR EXPANSIONS OF EXISTING USES

TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT	MUNICIPALITIES WITH A POPULATION GREATER THAN 2,500²	MUNICIPALITIES WITH A POPULATION LESS THAN 2,500²
Hotels	Greater than 200 rooms	Greater than 75 rooms
Mixed Use	Gross square feet greater than 45,000 (with residential calculated at 1,500 square feet per unit) or if any of the individual uses meets or exceeds a threshold defined herein	Gross square feet greater than 30,000 (with residential calculated at 1,500 square feet per unit) or if any of the individual uses meets or exceeds a threshold defined herein
Airports	All new airports, runways, and runway extensions	
Attractions & Recreation Facilities	Greater than 200 parking spaces or a seating capacity of more than 1,000	Greater than 75 parking spaces or a seating capacity of more than 500
Schools & Institutions (including post-secondary facilities)	A capacity of more than 300 students or 30,000 gross square feet	A capacity of more than 150 students or 15,000 gross square feet
Waste Handling Facilities	New facility or expansion of capacity for an existing facility	
Quarries, Asphalt, & Cement Plants	New facility or expansion of capacity for an existing facility	
Wastewater Treatment Facilities	New conventional treatment facility or expansion of the permitted capacity for an existing facility or community septic treatment facilities exceeding 25,000 gallons per day or serving a development project that meets or exceeds an applicable threshold as identified herein	New conventional treatment facility or expansion of the permitted capacity for an existing facility or community septic treatment facilities exceeding 10,000 gallons per day or serving a development project that meets or exceeds an applicable threshold as identified herein
Electric Generation, Storage, and Transmission Facilities	Renewable Energy Generation above 150kW, energy storage with a footprint of more than 2 acres, distribution or transmission infrastructure that exceeds existing ROW. Projects to address hazard mitigation concerns that meet these criteria will be reviewed but expedited.	
Communication Facilities	New project or expansion of an existing project of limited size and scope and larger that requires approval by the Public Utility Commission	
Public Drinking Water Supplies	New facility or expansion of permitted capacity for an existing facility	
Intermodal Freight Terminals	New facility or expansion of an existing facility	
Intermodal Passenger Terminals	New facility or expansion of an existing facility	

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS: In addition to the criteria listed above, the following situations will be considered when evaluating a project against the thresholds for substantial regional impact.

1. Speculative Developments – If the final development type is difficult to determine or unknown because a project tenant has not been identified, the thresholds for the highest intensity development type allowed under current land use regulations will be used. If

local regulations do not exist, staff will consult with the municipality and the applicant to determine the possible development type.

2. Multi-Phased Developments – If a project is proposed in multiple phases, the cumulative total of the project will be reviewed against the thresholds for substantial regional impact. If the total project meets or exceeds any of the identified thresholds, the entire project will be reviewed for substantial regional impact regardless of the timing of phases. If, over the course of the project, the phasing or type of development changes, projects that have previously been reviewed for substantial regional impact will be reviewed again to determine if additional thresholds have been met.
3. Multiple Land Parcels – If parts of the project are located on separate land parcels, the decision whether the project is a single (perhaps multi-phased) development, or actually separate projects should be based on such considerations as whether the separate parcels are owned by the same entity, whether a master plan has been prepared for the overall project, or whether any approvals have been sought for the overall project as a unit.

DEFINITIONS: The following definitions will be used to further identify or describe the types of development that qualify for the thresholds listed in the table above.

1. Attractions & Recreational Facilities means an establishment or set of establishments that provide leisure time recreational or entertainment activities occurring in either an indoor or outdoor setting.
2. Communication, Utility, and Transmission Facilities means any project that involves the transmission, storage, production, or distribution of fuels or electricity; or any expansion or creation of telecommunication facilities.
3. Intermodal Freight Terminals means an area and building where the mode of transportation for cargo or freight changes and where the cargo and freight may be broken down or aggregated in smaller or larger loads for transfer to other land based vehicles. Such terminals do not include airports or facilities primarily intended for the transfer of people from passenger rail to other modes.
4. Intermodal Passenger Terminals means an area and building where people change transportation vehicles in order to complete a trip. This could include but is not limited to, rail, bus, passenger car, or taxi service.
5. Waste Handling Facility means structures or systems designed for the collection, processing or disposal of solid waste, including hazardous wastes, universal waste,

household waste, and includes transfer stations, processing plants, recycling plants, composting facilities, and disposal systems.

6. Wholesale and Distribution means activities within land areas that are predominantly associated with the receipt, storage, and distribution of goods, products, cargo and materials.

Adopted by the Board of Commissioners: _____ / _____ / 2018

Juliana Potter, Chair
CVRPC Board of Commissioners

DRAFT