Utilities, Facilities & Services

Aspiration

Foster equitable, efficient, accessible and resilient utilities, facilities and services networks that protect public health, sustain environmental quality, support economic development and facilitate new housing.

Goals, Strategies and Policies

Goal 1. Maintain reliable public water and wastewater systems that protect public health and support compact, planned growth.

Strategies:

1.1. Identify critical water and wastewater infrastructure in need of repairs or upgrades.

1.2. Promote:
   a) regional coordination on water and wastewater planning, asset management and emergency preparedness and response;
   b) partnerships with state agencies and utilities to leverage funding for system maintenance and improvements;
   c) rehabilitation, modernization, preventative maintenance and timely repairs to maintain existing water and wastewater assets;
   d) water conservation measures, water-efficient technologies and green infrastructure that extend system capacity and reduce demand, environmental impacts and operating costs;
   e) regional coordination among system operators to share expertise and resources;
   f) public access to information about service status, disruptions and improvement plans; and
   g) upgrades in areas with underserved or high-growth populations.

1.3. Provide technical assistance to municipalities to evaluate:
   a) the suitability of alternative technologies, including decentralized systems and green infrastructure solutions, for system upgrades and expansion; and
   b) opportunities for water and wastewater system expansion in areas planned for compact, mixed-use development.

1.4. Provide technical assistance to municipalities:
   a) to incorporate water and wastewater infrastructure planning into municipal land use, housing, economic development and capital improvement plans;
   b) to prioritize investments with environmental protection goals, including water quality and habitat protection;
   c) to implement asset management programs, including data and monitoring systems that track system performance, identify risk and improve operational efficiency;
   d) to plan infrastructure improvements and expansion that align with regional land use goals, state regulations and public health requirements;

e) to integrate climate resilience considerations into capital planning and infrastructure design; and

f) for system assessment, planning and regulatory compliance.

1.5. Discourage:

a) system expansion that exceeds existing capacity without corresponding infrastructure improvements; and

b) practices that overuse or degrade water resources or compromise system reliability.

Policies:

1.1. Support:

a) municipal applications for state and federal funding for water and wastewater improvements;

b) coordinated water and wastewater planning and asset management;

c) system rehabilitation, modernization and climate-resilient upgrades;

d) conservation, efficiency and green infrastructure that reduce demand and environmental impacts;

e) public access to information on system capacity, disruptions and planned improvements;

f) regional coordination among system operators to share expertise, resources and emergency support;

g) expansion of service in areas with high public health or housing needs;

h) municipal technical assistance for regulatory compliance, system assessment and service expansion planning;

i) system upgrades where they reinforce compact development, infill housing and planned growth patterns; and

j) decentralized or innovative wastewater systems when they meet public health, environmental and long-term maintenance standards.

1.2. Before Regional Planning Commission support is granted, require:

a) development proposals demonstrate adequate system capacity or planned improvements aligned with municipal and regional plans;

b) major capital projects to incorporate climate resilience, energy efficiency and long-term maintenance planning; and

c) municipal plans to integrate water and wastewater planning with land use, hazard mitigation and capital planning.

Commented [DG3]: Excellent

1.3. Oppose:

a) expansion of systems that exceed capacity without funded improvements;

b) practices that compromise water quality or long-term system reliability;

c) development in areas lacking safe and reliable water or wastewater service;

d) new water withdrawals or infrastructure expansions that degrade water resources or conflict with regional land use goals; and

e) subdivision or development proposals that increase system risk or overburden aging infrastructure.

1.4. Employ:

a) system monitoring and asset management data to guide regional priorities for upgrades, expansion and reinvestment; and

b) water demand forecasting to support long-range housing, economic development and resilience planning.

1.5. Prevent contamination of water supplies through incompatible land uses or inadequate wastewater management.

Goal 2. Increase access to safe, affordable and efficient solid waste and materials management services.

Strategies:

2.1. Identify:
   a) gaps in current solid waste collection, recycling and disposal services; and
   b) emerging technologies that support waste reduction and diversion.

2.2. Evaluate opportunities to integrate circular economy principles into regional solid waste systems.

2.3. Promote:
   a) proper disposal practices and waste- and contaminant-reduction strategies through education, outreach and coordinated enforcement programs;
   b) the maintenance and expansion of access to universal recycling, composting, diversion programs and reuse options across all municipalities;
   c) sustainable waste management practices through innovation in recycling, composting and hazardous waste management;
   d) regional transfer stations and shared facilities to lower disposal costs and increase service delivery efficiency;
   e) investments in emerging technologies that reduce landfill use and promote sustainable materials management;
   f) collaboration between municipalities and private providers to improve service efficiency; and
   g) partnerships with private haulers to maintain service in rural areas.

2.4. Provide technical assistance to municipalities:
   a) for planning and permitting cost-effective collection, disposal and recycling services;
   b) to align waste management investments with public health and environmental protection goals;
   c) to evaluate opportunities to expand service access to underserved areas;
   d) to prioritize programs that reduce costs and increase access for underserved populations; and
   e) to integrate waste management planning into broader infrastructure and land use plans.

2.5. Discourage:
   a) practices that increase waste, environmental harm or public health risks from waste disposal; and
   b) illegal dumping and unmanaged waste disposal through regulatory enforcement and monitoring.

Policies:

2.1. Support:
   a) municipalities in securing grants and funding for waste reduction projects;

b) universal recycling, composting, reuse and waste diversion programs;
c) sustainable waste management technologies that reduce landfill dependence;
d) regional transfer stations and shared-service facilities that improve efficiency;
e) partnerships between municipalities and private haulers to maintain rural service coverage;
f) integration of circular economy principles into regional and municipal planning;
g) technical assistance for municipalities on permitting, planning and system modernization;
h) co-location of recycling, composting and waste collection facilities when compatible with neighborhood context;
i) the diversification of waste processing options, including organics, construction debris, and hazardous materials;
j) collaboration between municipalities and private providers to improve service efficiency;
k) municipal participation in state and regional waste planning initiatives;
l) emerging waste management technologies when they meet strict environmental, safety and public health standards;
m) regional coordination to reduce system costs and improve service efficiency; and
n) public education and enforcement programs that reduce contamination and improper disposal.

2.2. Oppose:
a) waste infrastructure decisions that disproportionately burden low-income or rural communities;
b) reductions in recycling or waste services that increase inequities;
c) expansions of facilities that pose environmental or public health risks;
d) siting of solid waste infrastructure in sensitive natural areas or high-risk locations;
e) development that increases waste production without adequate management strategies; and
f) disposal practices that increase pollution or degrade natural resources.

2.3. Before Regional Planning Commission support is granted, require:
a) solid waste proposals seeking regional support to demonstrate alignment with state universal recycling laws, environmental protections and equitable service delivery;
b) municipal solid waste plans to incorporate access strategies for underserved or rural areas; and
c) long-term maintenance plans for new or expanded solid waste facilities.

2.4. Employ:
a) waste generation, service access and demographic data to guide regional planning and investment; and
b) data collection to monitor waste generation and assess capacity constraints.

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Commented [DG5]: Three items – first two are codified (laws and protections), is the third? If all three are codified, maybe clarify by recasting as "State laws and regulations addressing…..

Goal 3. Expand modern, affordable communication networks to serve all communities.

Strategies:

3.1. Identify areas with limited broadband, cellular or other communications services.

3.2. Employ mapping and data analysis to monitor service quality and guide infrastructure expansion planning.

3.3. Align regional communication planning with economic development, emergency management, education and telehealth initiatives.

3.4. Provide technical assistance to municipalities:
   a) to incorporate digital infrastructure into municipal plans;
   b) for communication network planning, permitting and funding applications;
   c) to preserve rights-of-way and access corridors to facilitate future infrastructure deployment;
   d) integrate connectivity considerations into local and regional development plans; and
   e) to upgrade connectivity to schools, libraries, health facilities, low-income households and municipal buildings.

3.5. Promote:
   a) the diversification of connectivity solutions to include fixed, wireless and community-based networks;
   b) affordable access for low-income households to limit digital inequities;
   c) equitable access to communication networks and technologies;
   d) adoption of modern communication technologies for homes, businesses and public facilities;
   e) the maintenance of and upgrades to existing communication infrastructure to ensure reliability;
   f) equitable deployment practices that prioritize the expansion of high-speed internet access to underserved, rural and low-income communities;
   g) innovative technologies such as fiber-optic, wireless or satellite-based solutions to close coverage gaps;
   h) infrastructure investments that maximize coverage and community impact and align with planned growth areas; and
   i) community-scale digital literacy programs.

3.6. Partner with utilities, telecom providers and state agencies to integrate communication network planning with land use planning, economic development and emergency response systems.

3.7. Evaluate:
   a) opportunities to co-locate fiber, conduit or towers with other infrastructure projects;
   b) long-term maintenance and resiliency needs of regional communications infrastructure; and
   c) strategies to reduce the digital divide.

3.8. Discourage:
   a) investments in the communication network that exacerbate inequities in access; and

b) development practices that hinder broadband deployment or create digital divides.

Policies:
3.1. Support:
    a) universal access to high-speed broadband and reliable cellular service;
    b) upgrades to existing communications infrastructure to improve reliability;
    c) affordable service options for low-income households;
    d) equitable deployment strategies that prioritize underserved rural and low-income areas;
    e) satellite, wireless or hybrid systems when they improve service in hard-to-reach areas;
    f) municipal technical assistance for telecommunications permitting and funding applications;
    g) community-based or cooperative broadband models where traditional providers do not meet service needs;
    h) preservation of rights-of-way to facilitate future communications infrastructure; and
    i) digital literacy programs that reduce the digital divide.
3.2. Oppose:
    a) communication infrastructure decisions that widen inequities;
    b) development that obstructs future broadband deployment or co-location;
    c) reliance on outdated or unreliable communication technologies;
    d) siting of communication facilities in locations that pose safety, environmental or cultural conflicts when feasible alternatives exist;
    e) siting of new towers in scenic or historic areas unless co-location is not feasible; and
    f) barriers to installing modern infrastructure in public corridors.
3.3. Before Regional Planning Commission support is granted, require:
    a) equitable access to communication services in all public investment and development projects;
    b) municipal planning and permitting processes to integrate communications infrastructure planning;
    c) broadband and communications projects to align with municipal plans and regional connectivity priorities;
    d) utilities and providers to coordinate with municipalities during major deployments; and
    e) new development to be designed to accommodate broadband and communication needs.
3.4. Prevent long-term exclusion of underserved neighborhoods from broadband expansion.
3.5. Employ:
    a) coverage mapping, speed testing and service quality data to guide regional planning and investment; and
    b) equity-based criteria for evaluating communication infrastructure proposals.

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Commented [DG6]: Not sure how "prevent" works as a policy. CVRPC can support, oppose, employ. How are we able to prevent?

Goal 4. Incentivize accessible, high-quality educational and childcare facilities that support community and economic needs.

Strategies:

4.1. Identify:
- a) gaps in educational and childcare services across the region; and
- b) demographic trends that influence school and childcare facility needs.

4.2. Promote:
- a) the expansion of access to high-quality early education, K-12 and post-secondary facilities;
- b) public-private partnerships to increase availability of childcare and educational programs;
- c) coordination with workforce development and economic programs to align educational services with local needs;
- d) co-location of childcare within housing, employer campuses or community facilities;
- e) childcare facility siting in walkable and transit-connected areas;
- f) design and maintenance standards that improve safety and accessibility;
- g) the maintenance of and upgrades to existing facilities to ensure safety, accessibility and quality standards are met.

4.3. Provide technical assistance to municipalities:
- a) for school facility and childcare planning, permitting and funding applications;
- b) to integrate facilities planning with housing and economic development initiatives;
- c) to integrate transportation planning into facility siting decisions to ensure safe access to schools and childcare centers;
- d) evaluate strategies for multi-use facilities that serve educational, childcare and community purposes; and
- e) preserve historic or culturally significant educational facilities while upgrading functionality.

4.4. Partner with:
- a) school districts, municipalities and state agencies to address capacity shortages and align facilities with municipal and regional growth areas; and
- b) local organizations, businesses and educational institutions to encourage the provision of wraparound services.

4.5. Discourage:
- a) expansion that exceeds community needs or compromises service quality;
- b) closures or service reductions that exacerbate inequities; and
- c) development of new facilities in areas without access to adequate transportation or utilities.

Policies:

4.1. Support:
- a) access to technical assistance and funding for childcare providers planning upgrades

b) the evaluation of facility conditions to identify deferred maintenance and modernization needs
c) a diversity of programming to support early childhood, vocational training and lifelong learning;
d) expansion and modernization of early education, K–12 and childcare facilities;
e) public–private partnerships that increase childcare and educational availability;
f) co-location of childcare in housing, employer campuses and community facilities;
g) siting facilities in walkable, transit-connected areas;
h) wraparound services and multi-service models that strengthen family and community well-being;
i) shared-use facilities that increase community benefit and reduce capital costs;
j) adaptive reuse of historic or underutilized buildings for educational or childcare uses when compatible with neighborhoods; and
k) upgrades that improve safety, energy efficiency and accessibility

4.2. Oppose:
a) closures or consolidations that reduce access in underserved areas;
b) expansion of facilities inconsistent with long-term community needs;
c) siting facilities in areas without adequate transportation or utilities;
d) facility proposals that compromise student or childcare safety;
e) development that increases childcare or school access inequities; and
f) siting of new facilities outside growth areas unless needed to address service gaps.

4.3. Before Regional Planning Commission support is granted, require:
a) proposals demonstrate alignment with local plans, accessibility standards and community need;
b) school districts and municipalities to coordinate facilities planning with housing and transportation plans;
c) facilities to meet accessibility standards and equitable service criteria; and
d) facilities to integrate climate resilience and hazard mitigation in design and operation.

4.4. Employ:
a) demographic and enrollment forecasting to guide long-range facilities planning;
b) data collection to assess enrollment trends and facility capacity; and
c) community engagement to ensure facilities reflect cultural and local priorities.

Commented [DG8]: This policy is the same as Strategy 4.2.e. Globally, strategies and policies need to be compared and tightened up to reduce this sort of overlap.

Commented [DG9]: Does this policy put CVRPC in opposition to state wide educational reform that might involve consolidation and school closures?

Commented [DG10]: Are equitable service criteria codified in statue and regulations to the extent that meeting them can be defined?

Commented [DG11]: See my note above about consolidation. At the risk of wordsmithing, maybe "ensure facility decisions consider"

Goal 5. Diversify community-serving facilities to meet evolving community needs and ensure safe, efficient and accessible public services.

Strategies:
5.1. Identify:
a) areas with limited childcare capacity;
b) aging or high-need municipal buildings and facilities; and

c) gaps in community-serving facilities such as senior centers, youth spaces and multipurpose civic buildings.

5.2. Provide technical assistance to municipalities to integrate:
   a) community input and health-equity principles into facility planning and service expansion; and
   b) municipal facility planning into capital improvement and land use planning programs.

5.3. Provide technical assistance to municipalities to:
   a) evaluate gaps in service coverage;
   b) prioritize facility investments in underserved or remote communities;
   c) preserve historically or culturally significant municipal structures while adapting them for modern use;
   d) plan flexible, multi-use facility designs that reflect demographic trends and are adaptable to evolving needs;
   e) align facility development with regional housing, transportation and workforce needs; and
   f) implement upgrades to existing facilities that enhance accessibility and energy efficiency.

5.4. Promote:
   a) energy-efficient and climate-resilient facility design;
   b) the maintenance of existing municipal facilities through preventative maintenance and capital planning;
   c) partnerships between municipalities, nonprofits and private providers to increase access to community-serving facilities;
   d) partnerships with schools, nonprofits and service providers to broaden facility offerings;
   e) coordination with workforce development and economic programs to align educational services with local needs; and
   f) shared-use facilities that maximize public benefit, reduce capital costs and improve community access.

5.5. Discourage:
   a) development of new facilities where existing buildings can be adaptively reused;
   b) facility expansion that exceeds community needs or compromises service quality; and
   c) facility consolidation or closures that reduce access for vulnerable populations.

5.6. Advance regionwide efforts to ensure equitable, culturally responsive community spaces.

Policies:

5.1. Support:
   a) municipal investments in areas accessible by walking, bicycling and transit;
   b) investments that improve accessibility, safety and operational efficiency;
   c) flexible, multi-use community facilities that serve diverse populations;
   d) energy-efficient and climate-resilient upgrades to municipal buildings;
   e) partnerships that expand access to community-serving spaces;

> **Commented [DG12]:** This and 5.4.b are examples of generally applicable topics (would be applicable to public water and waste water e.g.) that could be rolled into a higher level location to reduce repetition. Maybe a new goal that captures all "best practices" items.

f) preservation and adaptive reuse of historic or culturally significant municipal structures;
g) temporary service facilities in areas experiencing rapid change or post-disaster needs;
h) equitable distribution of public facilities across communities;
i) investments in facility safety, accessibility and modernization;
j) shared-use or co-location arrangements that maximize community benefit; and
k) coordinated facility planning aligned with housing, transportation and workforce needs.

5.2. Oppose:
a) unnecessary construction of new facilities where adaptive reuse is feasible;
b) consolidation or closures that reduce access for vulnerable communities;
c) incompatible land uses near essential community-serving facilities;
d) development patterns that increase burdens on municipal services without appropriate mitigation;
e) facility expansions outside growth areas unless addressing critical service gaps; and
f) facility development inconsistent with municipal growth areas.

5.5. Before Regional Planning Commission support is granted, require:
a) new or expanded municipal facilities to meet equitable access standards;
b) municipal facility proposals seeking regional support to demonstrate need, accessibility and long-term financial feasibility;
c) integration of municipal facilities planning into capital improvement and land use plans; and
d) facility design to incorporate hazard mitigation and climate adaptation.

5.3. Employ:
a) demographic, health and service-access data to guide prioritization of public facility investments; and
b) community engagement processes to ensure facility decisions address cultural relevance and health equity.

Goal 6. Expand access to comprehensive health care, mental health services and public health infrastructure to support community well-being.

Strategies:
6.1. Identify:
a) underserved populations; and
b) gaps in access to primary care, mental health care, substance use treatment, public health support and social services.

6.2. Provide technical assistance to municipalities to:
a) plan for and permit new healthcare facilities;
b) implement health-equity and public health considerations in local land use and infrastructure planning;
c) integrate health and social service planning into community and economic development efforts and emergency response plans;

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Commented [DG13]: Education reform in Vermont is likely to include school consolidations and closures. This will be contentious and painful, and will involve tradeoffs. Should CVRPC commit itself to opposing a plan that is the result of compromises, some of which may affect vulnerable communalities?

    d) evaluate opportunities for multi-service hubs or co-located facilities;
    e) evaluate demographic and health data to guide public health investment priorities;
    f) prioritize investments that reduce barriers to care and improve community health; and
    g) expand health and social services in underserved or high-need areas.

6.3. Promote:
    a) regional collaboration to strengthen networks of care and improve service coordination;
    b) cross-sector models that combine health, social services and community amenities;
    c) the alignment of public health infrastructure improvements with emergency preparedness activities; and
    d) partnerships with providers, neighboring municipalities and state and regional agencies to coordinate services and improve access.

6.4. Discourage:
    a) facility closures or consolidation that diminish community health access; and
    b) the development of new facilities in areas without adequate transportation, utilities or community support.

Policies:

6.1. Support:
    a) regional collaboration that strengthens networks of care and improves coordination among providers;
    b) investments in community health centers, mental health facilities and substance-use treatment resources in underserved areas;
    c) co-location of health, social services and community amenities to reduce barriers to care;
    d) local planning that integrates public health considerations into land use and infrastructure decisions;
    e) affordable, accessible transportation options that connect residents with essential health services;
    f) funding applications for multi-service hubs, mobile clinics and telehealth infrastructure that improve rural access;
    g) adaptive reuse of underutilized buildings for health and social service uses when compatible with surrounding neighborhoods;
    h) flexible zoning and permitting to facilitate the expansion of health and social services in village centers and growth areas;
    i) emergency preparedness and public health coordination between municipalities, hospitals, EMS providers and regional agencies; and
    j) partnerships that improve the efficiency and reach of regional public health systems.

6.2. Oppose:
    a) facility closures that reduce access to primary care, mental health support or emergency medical services;

b) development proposals that exacerbate inequities in access to essential health and human services;

c) public health investments that fail to address inequities or that increase geographic disparities;

d) development patterns that add population in areas without adequate access to essential health services;

e) siting of health facilities in areas lacking adequate utilities, transportation access or hazard resilience; and

f) siting decisions that undermine long-term community health needs.

6.3. Prioritize expansion in communities with limited or inconsistent health service access.

6.4. Before Regional Planning Commission support is granted, require:

a) new health facilities to incorporate hazard mitigation, climate resilience and emergency operations planning;

b) facilities to meet equitable access and universal design standards;

c) public health and healthcare facility proposals seeking regional planning commission support to demonstrate alignment with local plans, health equity goals and infrastructure capacity; and

d) major development proposals to evaluate impacts on local healthcare, emergency response and public health infrastructure.

6.5. Employ:

a) data and community assessments to identify needs and measure service outcomes;

b) shared-service models to reduce administrative and operational burdens on small or rural municipalities; and

c) demographic, health, and service-access data to guide regional health facility planning and public investment.

Goal 7. Maintain and enhance emergency medical, fire and rescue services.

Strategies:

7.1. Identify:

a) gaps in emergency response coverage, staffing availability and service capacity;

b) risks and vulnerabilities in public safety infrastructure; and

c) opportunities for regionalized or shared-service models, mutual aid agreements and regional staffing strategies to efficiently deliver emergency services.

7.2. Provide technical assistance to municipalities to:

a) plan for emergency services, evaluate response times and assess operational capacity;

b) site emergency facilities and resources in locations that improve response times;

c) implement capital improvement plans for emergency facilities and equipment;

d) expand regional capacity for emergency response to meet evolving risks, including climate-related hazards;

> **Commented [DG14]:** Are these standards codified?

e) align emergency medical and fire service planning with local hazard mitigation and climate resilience planning; and

f) prioritize investments that strengthen community resilience, life safety and response in high-risk or remote municipalities.

7.3. Provide technical assistance to municipalities to integrate:
   a) hazard and risk data into capital planning for emergency services;
   b) emergency services planning into municipal hazard mitigation and resilience plans; and
   c) emergency response considerations into land use and transportation planning.

7.4. Promote the preservation of:
   a) existing emergency service facilities that are strategically located and maintain a functional capacity; and
   b) local response capability through coordinated long-term planning.

7.5. Promote:
   a) sustainable staffing, training and volunteer recruitment strategies;
   b) partnerships with state agencies, healthcare providers and mutual aid networks to coordinate training, resource sharing and emergency response preparedness;
   c) the maintenance of existing public safety assets, including shelters, warning systems and communication technologies;
   d) the expansion of public safety infrastructure to address growing or changing community needs; and
   e) community education and preparedness programs to reduce risk and support emergency response.

7.6. Prioritize upgrading or replacing aging or unsafe facilities.

7.7. Discourage:
   a) new development in areas where emergency services cannot be provided efficiently;
   b) erosion of local response capacity by discouraging deferral of critical maintenance; and
   c) development patterns that require unplanned service expansion.

7.8. Advance emergency management training and leadership development across the region.

7.9. Evaluate evolving climate trends to guide updates to emergency response protocols.

Policies:

7.1. Support:
   a) regionalized service models, mutual aid agreements and shared staffing strategies;
   b) investments that reduce emergency response times and improve public safety coverage;
   c) maintenance, modernization and climate-resilient upgrades to existing facilities;
   d) volunteer recruitment, training and long-term staffing development;

e) integration of hazard mitigation and climate resilience in emergency services planning;

f) upgrades to equipment, communications and technology;

g) adaptive reuse of appropriate structures for emergency services when cost-effective and strategically located;

h) collaboration with healthcare providers to enhance emergency medical response capacity;

i) temporary or mobile emergency facilities to address short-term coverage gaps or disaster recovery needs; and

j) public education and preparedness programs.

7.2. Oppose:

a) development that increases demand for emergency services without supporting necessary infrastructure;

b) facility closures that reduce local emergency response capacity;

c) expansions of emergency facilities outside designated growth areas unless necessary to meet critical safety needs;

d) development in high-risk hazard areas where emergency response is limited or unsafe;

e) development patterns that create fragmented, inefficient emergency response zones; and

f) siting new residential or commercial development in areas where services cannot be delivered efficiently.

7.3. Before Regional Planning Commission support is granted, require:

a) new facilities to incorporate resilient, energy-efficient and accessible design;

b) large development proposals to provide impact assessments of emergency service needs and capacity;

c) emergency services projects seeking regional support to demonstrate alignment with municipal hazard mitigation and capital plans; and

d) emergency communication infrastructure improvements to be integrated into regional emergency planning.

7.4. Employ:

a) monitoring systems, hazard mapping and assessments to guide investment decisions;

b) hazard and climate trend data to guide emergency preparedness, staffing and facility location planning;

c) regional risk assessments to prioritize public investment in emergency service infrastructure; and

d) data and mapping technologies to assess response times and identify service gaps.

Goal 8. Maintain stormwater and drainage infrastructure to protect water quality, reduce flooding risks and support climate-resilient development.

Strategies:

8.1. Identify high-risk stormwater and drainage problem areas.

8.2. Provide technical assistance to municipalities:

a) for stormwater master planning, permitting and funding;
b) to preserve natural drainage corridors, wetlands and riparian buffers;
c) to prioritize projects that reduce nutrient loading and improve water quality;
d) to prioritize stormwater infrastructure improvements in areas facing elevated flood or water-quality risks;
e) to integrate stormwater master planning into local hazard mitigation and capital improvement plans; and
f) to expand stormwater infrastructure to address increased precipitation and development pressures.

8.3. Partner with watershed groups, utilities and state agencies to coordinate stormwater management.

8.4. Prioritize the implementation of stormwater improvements in areas with recurrent flooding or impaired waters.

8.5. Promote:
a) nature-based solutions that enhance infiltration, storage and flood mitigation;
b) public education on stormwater management and best practices; and
c) the maintenance of stormwater systems through routine inspection, cleaning and repair.

8.6. Discourage development in flood-prone areas without adequate stormwater capacity.

Policies:

8.1. Support:
a) implementation of stormwater master plans and drainage improvement projects;
b) nature-based solutions that enhance infiltration and reduce runoff;
c) preservation of natural drainage features, wetlands and riparian buffers;
d) investments that address nutrient loading and improve impaired waters;
e) routine inspection and maintenance of stormwater systems;
f) municipal stormwater planning, permitting and funding applications;
g) green infrastructure retrofits and low-impact development practices in existing built areas;
h) innovative stormwater technologies where shown to improve performance and reduce costs;
i) coordination between municipalities, watershed groups and state agencies to align stormwater priorities and leverage funding; and
j) culvert and drainage upgrades aligned with climate resilience standards.

8.2. Oppose:
a) development that increases impervious surface coverage without adequate stormwater management;
b) construction in high-risk flood hazard or drainage-compromised areas;
c) the loss or fragmentation of natural drainage corridors and floodplain storage;
d) stormwater designs that fail to account for projected increases in extreme precipitation;
e) the extension of stormwater infrastructure to areas where development is discouraged by regional or municipal plans;

f) redevelopment projects that fail to integrate enhanced stormwater controls; and

g) practices that redirect stormwater in ways that increase downstream flooding; and

h) practices that degrade water quality or overwhelm downstream systems.

8.3. Before Regional Planning Commission support is granted, require:
   a) development proposals seeking regional support to demonstrate compliance with stormwater regulations, water quality goals and climate-resilient design standards;
   b) projects in impaired watersheds to incorporate enhanced stormwater controls and long-term maintenance plans;
   c) stormwater designs that align with climate projections and modern performance standards; and
   d) capital projects to incorporate stormwater management components consistent with water quality goals.

8.4. Employ:
   a) monitoring systems and modeling tools to evaluate system capacity, performance and maintenance needs;
   b) watershed-scale data, modeling and mapping to guide stormwater investment priorities; and
   c) public education efforts to improve compliance with best management practices.

Goal 9. Expand parks and recreation facilities to promote public health, environmental resilience and quality of life.

Strategies:

9.1. Identify:
   a) gaps in access to parks, trails, recreation areas and community facilities; and
   b) opportunities for accessible and inclusive recreation design.

9.2. Promote:
   a) the expansion of recreational assets in areas with growing populations or unmet community needs;
   b) regional coordination to develop interconnected trail networks and shared recreation resources;
   c) recreational investments where they strengthen village centers and planned growth areas;
   d) the maintenance of existing parks and recreation facilities through regular upkeep and stewardship;
   e) universal design principles that improve access for all ages and abilities; and
   f) multi-use designs that support public health, safety and year-round access.

9.3. Provide technical assistance to municipalities:
   a) for recreation planning, facility design and grant preparation;
   b) to integrate recreation planning with land use, transportation and environmental protection goals;
   c) preserve natural areas, scenic views and ecological corridors in recreation planning; and

Commented [DG15]: Are these codified? If CVRPC is to give or withhold support here, these standards need to be clear.

Commented [DG16]: Same comment as for 8.3.a

d) prioritize investments that promote health, environmental resilience and community belonging.
9.4. Partner with municipalities, nonprofits and landowners to support recreation development and conservation.
9.5. Discourage recreational development that damages natural resources or increases maintenance burdens.

Policies:
9.1. Support:
   a) recreation investments in areas with unmet community needs;
   b) interconnected regional trail networks;
   c) maintenance and stewardship of existing parks and facilities;
   d) multi-use, accessible recreation design;
   e) preservation of scenic, ecological and natural areas within recreation systems;
   f) partnerships with municipalities, nonprofits and landowners for conservation and recreation development;
   g) adaptive reuse of underutilized municipal or school properties for recreation purposes;
   h) seasonal and temporary recreation amenities where consistent with natural resource protection; and
   i) recreation planning integrated with land use, transportation and environmental goals.
9.2. Oppose:
   a) recreation development that damages natural resources;
   b) projects that increase long-term maintenance burdens without clear community benefit;
   c) conversion of high-quality natural areas to recreational use where ecological impacts are significant;
   d) projects that fragment wildlife corridors or reduce ecological connectivity;
   e) recreation uses that increase erosion or degrade water quality;
   f) new facilities until maintenance of existing infrastructure is adequately funded; and
   g) facility development in locations that undermine environmental resilience.
9.3. Before Regional Planning Commission support is granted, require:
   a) recreation facilities to meet accessibility, safety and environmental standards;
   b) recreation facility proposals seeking regional support to demonstrate accessibility, environmental protection and alignment with local plans;
   c) major projects to incorporate stormwater, habitat protection and climate resilience strategies.
9.4. Employ:
   a) public engagement to ensure facilities reflect community needs and cultural relevance;
   b) data and public input to identify priority needs and measure facility use; and
   c) health and demographic data to guide recreation planning and facility investments.

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Regional Plan Committee 6 January 2026

Commented [DG17]: Can this be tightened? It would be easy to claim that trails, especially mountain bike trails, damage natural resources. There should be a way for CVRPC to support well thought out and designed facilities that alter natural resources.

Commented [DG18]: "Adequately funded" seems like an amorphous test.

Commented [DG19]: Same concern with knowing that these standards are clear