

# **Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission**

## **FY 2025 Annual Report**

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

### **ACT 181**

In its work to integrate the legislative changes from Act 181, CVRPC continued to advance its draft of a new regional plan, including collaborating with RPCs statewide to develop methodologies for creating municipal housing targets and consistent land use designations on the Future Land Use Map. The plan will be consistent with new state legislation shifting responsibilities and authorities to the RPC. The new regional plan update is scheduled for adoption in FY26.

- Conducted tabling and community engagement in eleven libraries in Central Vermont to discuss the Regional Plan Future Land Use Map and housing survey.
- Met with the State Land Use Review Board to discuss ongoing challenges to the development of the Regional Future Land Use map.
- Coordinated meetings with Selectboards, City Councils and Planning Commissions to discuss Act 181 and the Regional Future Land Use map. Met with the Town of Berlin to discuss Act 181 and the Regional Future Land Use map.

### **BROWNFIELDS**

Environmental site assessments allow properties to be sold, developed, or re-developed in ways that benefit the local and state economy, create or protect jobs and increase housing opportunities.

In FY25, CVRPC facilitated the completion of;

- a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment for Country Club Road in Montpelier with the intended reuse of housing development for 3-500 units.
- A Phase II and Corrective Action Plan for the administrative offices, recycling center and permanent hazardous waste drop-off center of Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District in Berlin. Their former site was then sold to Good Samaritan Haven and is an emergency shelter for those experiencing homelessness.
- A Phase II Supplemental for the old Quality Inn in Barre which is being redeveloped as transitional housing with wraparound services.
- A Phase I for the old Dessareau Machine Shop which is a FEMA Buyout and will be green space, located in Barre.
- Secured 1.2 million EPA Brownfields Assessment Coalition Grant and 1 million EPA Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund Grant.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Economic growth is supported best when development efforts are partnered with solid planning functions. RPCs work with towns and in strong partnership with Regional Development Corporations

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(RDCs) to this end in a number of ways, including development of comprehensive strategies that will help to position Vermont for long term economic gain.

### **Economic Development District**

Following on the completion of the West Central Vermont CEDS, in FY25 CVRPC helped apply for an receive recognition as the federally designated Economic Development District (EDD) serving the counties of Addison, Chittenden, Orange, Rutland, and Washington. EDDs help lead locally-based, regionally driven economic development that leverages the involvement of the public, private, and non-profit sectors according to the economic development roadmap laid out in a CEDS.

### **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy:**

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is a partnership among RPCs and RDCs in Central Vermont, Rutland, Addison, and Chittenden Counties, and the Vermont Department of Economic Development. The effort focuses on economic development strategies. A CEDS unlocks future federal EDA investments for infrastructure development, job creation, and revolving loan funds. The CEDS was adopted by CVRPC and its partners and subsequently received federal Economic Development Administration approval.

### **Other activities**

- Assisted municipalities in Regional Priority Project applications.
- Served as Local Development District for the Northern Border Regional Commission to support the Cross VT Trail, Neck of the Woods Childcare in Waitsfield and Prospect Heights in Barre City.
- Coordinated with municipalities, regional non-profits, and CVEDC to set regional priorities among economic development projects. The regional project list serves as an investment guide for the State.
- Attended the Preservation Trust of Vermont's Village Meet-Up on Economic Development for Rural Communities

## **CLEAN WATER & INFRASTRUCTURE (WATERSHED PLANNING AND PROJECT DEVELOPMENT)**

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

### **WINOOSKI RIVER BASIN CLEAN WATER SERVICE PROVIDER**

**Clean Water Service Provider Program:** CVRPC serves as the [Winooski Basin Clean Water Service Provider \(CWSP\)](#) to identify, develop, design, implement, operate & maintain non-regulatory water quality restoration projects. Efforts strive to meet or exceed federal pollution targets for the Lake Champlain Basin as identified through the [Clean Water Service Delivery Act 76](#).

#### **Program Administration**

- Prequalified project implementors and engineering / construction contractors. There are currently nine pre-qualified project implementors, nine pre-qualified engineering contractors and two pre-qualified construction contractors. Statements of Qualification are being accepted on a rolling basis.

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- Reviewed Basin Water Quality Council Bylaws, Public Participation, and Outreach and Communication Policies.
- Organized and co-hosted a forest roads and skid trails assessment training with the Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District and Vermont State Forest, Parks & Recreation staff.
- Solicited new members for the Winooski River Basin Water Quality Council.
- Drafted landowner talking points to promote water quality restoration opportunities and describe funding and implementation requirements.
- Administered seventeen sub-awards / sub-contracts.

### **Technical Assistance:**

- Friends of the Mad River: Met with new staff and offered technical assistance with proposal development and project management. Discussed Project Development opportunities in Waitsfield.
- Friends of the Winooski River: Met with Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District and the Town of Richmond staff to review project development opportunities identified in the Richmond Stormwater Master Plan and future collaboration opportunities. Assisted with the development of four riparian buffer planting funding requests. Discussed funding challenges for designing and implementing stormwater projects.
- Lamoille County Conservation District: Assisted with proposal development requestion Project Development funding for the Upper Little River Watershed.
- Pre-qualified Engineering Consultants: Department of Environmental Conservation phosphorous crediting methodologies
- Vermont Land Trust: Coordinated meeting with Basin Planner and River Scientist to discuss a complex culvert replacement project in Richmond.
- Vermont River Conservancy: Facilitated project hand-off of Route 14 Floodplain Restoration and Riparian Buffer project (Calais).
- Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District: Met the new District Manager and discussed opportunities for collaborative project development. Assisted with prioritization of projects identified through Lake Wise Assessments and assisted cost-efficiency calculations for strategic wood addition projects.
- Winooski Valley Park District: Explored opportunities for collaboration on water quality restoration projects on Park District lands.

**Basin Water Quality Council:** Organized and hosted seven meetings. Staff reviewed nine project proposals, discussed the proposals with the Basin Planner and prepared a staff memo detailing the proposal scores and offering the Council a funding recommendation. Staff developed outreach materials to assist with general project development efforts and targeted landowner communication. Established a budget adjustment policy for Formula Grant funded projects. Project proposals are being accepted on a rolling basis to encourage an increased number of submissions.

**Outreach & Communication:** Met with numerous local and regional stakeholders to provide an overview of the Clean Water Service Provider program and discuss project funding opportunities including but not limited to Conservation Commissions (Berlin, Plainfield, Waitsfield), Barre City River Access Taskforce, Selectboards (Barre Town, Orange), American Council of Engineering Companies, Winooski Valley Park District, Burlington Parks & Recreation Department, Branch Nature Center, Town Administrators (Northfield) and Road Foremen (Cabot, East Montpelier)

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- Met with the Winooski Aquatic Organism Passage Team Meeting to discuss the intersection of water quality restoration and Aquatic Organism Passage culvert replacement projects. Coordinated project priorities for the participating organizations.

### Department of Environmental Conservation Coordination:

- Regularly participated in DEC-organized meetings for Clean Water Service Providers to discuss: Formula Grant administration, phosphorous tracking & accounting, policy changes, reporting requirement updates, developing a coordinated communication strategy, Operations & Maintenance funding challenges, co-funding projects with Reporting Entities, and the Clean Water Service Network Action Plan.
- Worked with Basin Planner to:
  - identify and prioritize culvert replacement and riparian buffer planting projects (Berlin) and floodplain reconnection projects (Plainfield, Waitsfield);
  - identify funding resources for invasive species management;
  - update the Watershed Projects Database; and
  - develop technical understanding of p-crediting methodology for multiple project types.
- Planned and co-hosted a stormwater and riparian buffer planting verification training.
- **Training:** Staff completed the following trainings:
  - Department of Forest Parks and Recreation Forest Road and Trail Erosion Inventory Training in Jay State Forest.
  - Operation & Maintenance Training Tier 2 Part 1: Assessing Verification Tools
  - Operation & Maintenance Verification Training Tier 2 Part 2: Verification of Buffer Planting Projects
  - Functioning Floodplain Initiative Updates Training on interface and methodology changes with Stone Environmental staff.

### TACTICAL BASIN PLANNING

**Tactical Basin Planning Support Grant:** Provide outreach regarding the Vermont Clean Water Act and RPC Tactical Basin Planning Support through regional, sector-based workgroup coordination, technical assistance to municipalities and participation in water quality trainings.

- **Clean Water Advisory Committee:** Organized and hosted six Clean Water Advisory Committee meetings. Meeting topics included FEMA map updates & River Corridor Bylaws, Wetlands Mapping & Reclassification, Municipal Wastewater Assistance & Workshops, and Forest Road Inventories and Town Forest management.
- **Regional Coordination:**
  - Regularly participated in the following meetings: Vermont Dam Task Force, Winooski Flood Resilience, Department of Environmental Conservation Clean Water Conversations, Vermont Agricultural Water Quality Partnership, quarterly meetings with watershed partners in the Winooski and Lamoille River Basins, UVM & Lake Champlain Sea Grant Research Webinars and Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission Clean Water Advisory Committee meetings.
  - Participated in the LakeWise kick-off meeting for Sabin Pond.

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- Collaborated with Friends of the Mad River, Yestermorrow Design / Build School and the Department of Environmental Conservation to host a Wastewater Workshop focused on residential septic best practices and innovative alternatives.
- Participated in the VT Agricultural Water Quality Partnership Winooski/Central Regional Coordination Meeting to discuss flood impacts on agricultural land, and opportunities for collaboration.
- Coordinated with New England Environmental Finance Center, University of New Hampshire Stormwater Center, and Lake Champlain Sea Grant regarding stormwater project opportunities and gaps in stormwater funding in the Winooski River Basin (ongoing).
- Coordinated with Department of Environmental Conservation staff regarding 3-acre permit obtainment status and funding opportunities for eligible sites in the region.
- **Outreach & Technical Assistance:**
  - Conducted the following outreach activities:
    - Municipalities in the Winooski River Basin to encourage their participation in CVRPC's March 2025 Wastewater Workshop.
    - Municipalities that have not adopted River Corridor Bylaws to encourage Planning Commissioners and Zoning Administrators to attend CVRPC's May 2025 Municipal Training focused on National Flood Insurance Program compliance, Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Insurance Rate Map updates, river corridor planning and the Department of Environmental Conservation's Rivers Program "No Adverse Impact Model Bylaw."
    - Conservation Commissions, Planning Commissions, Zoning Administrators regarding VT Significant Wetlands Inventory Update.
  - Offered the following technical assistance:
    - Coordinated meeting with Vermont Natural Resources Council and Town of Warren to discuss possible removal of the Warren Village Dam.
    - Identified 3-acre parcels to inform Warren's Hazard Mitigation Planning process.

### Water Quality Restoration Project Development

- **Upper Winooski Water Quality Restoration (Barre Town, Berlin, Calais, Cabot and East Montpelier):** Completed scoping of 15 projects. Submitted 4 new projects and 12 project updates to the Department of Environmental Conservation for uploading into Watershed Projects Database.
- **Berlin (Riparian Buffer Planting and Culvert Replacement):** The Berlin Conservation Commission and CVRPC are scoping nonregulatory, water quality restoration projects that will reduce the amount of phosphorus entering local waterways. This project is focused on identifying culvert replacement and riparian buffer planting opportunities. Twenty Buffer Planting and Culvert Replacement Projects were scoped, and 5 culvert projects were advanced to the Project Development phase.
- **Waitsfield (Floodplain Restoration Project Development):** The Waitsfield Conservation and Planning Commissions, in collaboration with CVRPC, are developing nonregulatory, water quality and flood resilience projects along the reaches of the upper Mad River. This project is focused on developing floodplain reconnection projects on four municipally-owned parcels and one privately-owned parcel.

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- **Calais (Marshfield Road Gully Stabilization and Culvert Replacement):** This project will produce a final design to stabilize a gully and identify a suitable replacement structure for an undersized, perched culvert.
- **Calais (East Calais Post Office & Moscow Woods Road Gully):** This project involves the installation of several pieces of infrastructure to mitigate stormwater runoff in the vicinity of the East Calais Post Office and the gully off Moscow Woods Road. The project was completed in June 2025.
- **Plainfield (Great Brook Scoping):** Conducted site visits with Conservation Commission along the Great Brook and in Village area to scope potential sites for floodplain restoration and riparian buffer planting projects.

**FEMA Map & Flood Bylaw Updates:** Outreach and technical assistance to municipalities to support the adoption of new FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps and update municipal flood hazard bylaws.

- Regularly engaged with state agency staff and regional partners through organized meetings and drop-in sessions focused on the pending release of FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps.
- Plainfield: Met with Planning Commission to discuss FEMA map updates and river corridor management.
- Duxbury: Corresponded with Zoning Administrator and Regional Floodplain Manager regarding the timeline for Flood Hazard bylaw updates and Flood Safety Act 121 implementation.
- Updated National Flood Insurance Program municipal bylaw checklists in preparation for the May 2025 CVRPC Municipal Training on flood insurance for participating towns.

**604b Water Quality Program:** Compilation of assessment-based priority projects for integration with the Department of Environmental Conservation Watershed Project Database. Additional work activities include enhanced regional planning for water quality as it related to climate change, flood resilience, and environmental justice. Project stakeholders include the municipalities served by the CVRPC, watershed and land conservation groups, the Agency of Natural Resources, the Winooski Clean Water Service Provider and its Basin Water Quality Council.

- Generated interactive map of potential projects to facilitate review and identification of priority Stormwater Infrastructure Mapping Report projects.
- Completed review of Northfield Stormwater Infrastructure Mapping Report. Identified 18 stormwater retrofit projects absent from the DEC Watershed Project Database.
- Met with Winooski River Basin Planner to develop a methodology for updating historic Stormwater Infrastructure Mapping Reports and Stream Geomorphic Assessments in the Watershed Projects Database.
- Corresponded with Department of Environmental Conservation Stormwater Program staff regarding the availability of infrastructure mapping report data.

## ENERGY PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION

RPCs integrate energy planning with emergency management, land use, transportation, and natural resources efforts. Staff worked with municipalities, including supporting 18 municipal energy committees and coordinators, supporting strategic planning, technical analyses, project development and implementation, community engagement and event planning, recruitment, etc. (see below). RPCs work closely with local, regional, and statewide partners to rapidly update and develop tools, resources,



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and programs to help municipalities take advantage of evolving funding landscapes and meet longstanding physical and social infrastructure needs and goals to reduce energy burden, emissions, and promote community-scale energy equity and resilience. RPCs participate in Section 248 proceedings and support comprehensive planning at the local, regional, and state levels to inform permitting process as well as towards GHG emissions, energy equity, reliability, and resilience goals.

**Enhanced Energy Plans & Certifications:** CVRPC is in the process of conducting a comprehensive update of the regional Enhanced Energy Plan and Energy Element and assisted communities with enhanced energy planning including:

### Regional Energy Planning and Implementation

- Drafted and reviewed energy, land use, and infrastructure chapters.
- Integrated updated energy efficiency targets, renewable generation targets, and incremental target methodologies.
- Developed rural addendum for GHG reduction and resilience.
- Coordinated on data improvements with PSD, EVT, VELCO, and other RPCs.
- Conducted committee reviews, outreach to utilities, and prepared draft climate/energy “thread” outlines.
- Incorporated social cost of carbon analyses, energy mapping updates, and climate framework elements.
- Reviewed proposed energy developments for conformance with the regional plan and Section 248 processes.
- Facilitated Project Review Committee meetings, developed review rubrics, and refined workflow.
- Participated in Efficiency Vermont partner meetings on weatherization, heat pumps, and residential energy standards.
- Attended state/national webinars and summits on renewable energy, equity in energy programs, rural energy improvements, and emerging federal/state policy.
- Coordinated with utilities, Public Service Department, and other RPCs on energy data, Act 174 compliance, and transmission planning.
- Participated in discussions on geothermal and thermal energy networks (TENs), IRA direct pay options, solar projects, and small-scale hydropower opportunities.
- Applied for and engaged in national cohorts (NREL, DOE programs).

**Training & Education:** Increased energy communications with municipalities via Energy e-Digest and listserv and weekly announcements in addition to targeted outreach. Topical digests included: EV&EVSE funding and programs updates, MERP, Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Program and GHG emissions reduction planning strategies, etc. Results include the development of municipal projects (see next section)

### Municipal Project Development and Support:

- Developed resilience hub resources (2-pager, website, workflow).
- Produced municipal targets & analyses breakout packets and maps for multiple towns.
- Conducted outreach on Energy Efficiency & Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) opportunities and supported EV template development.

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- Provided technical assistance (energy mapping, grant support, code development, reviewing utility bills).
- Facilitated planning commission and energy working group meetings (Worcester, East Montpelier, Waterbury, Northfield, Orange, etc.).
- Supported town projects: WindowDressers community builds, generator planning, hot weather preparedness, MERP implementation awards, Fire District projects.
- Helped with specific municipal initiatives (thermal energy networks, municipal solar, scenic buffer considerations, affordable housing project support).

### **ACT 172/Municipal Energy Resilience Program**

- Supported BGS ACT 172 Municipal Energy Resilience Grant Program development and rollout providing technical assistance, application support, education and outreach, and program coordination with partners and stakeholders:
  - 20 of 23 municipalities applied for and received assessments (49 buildings approved out of 69 applications in our region; 47 assessments completed (2 lost to flooding)),
  - 22 of 23 municipalities applied for and received \$4,000 mini grants (\$88,000 regionally)
  - Provided technical assistance and community visioning support on project development, report review and prioritization, and alternative funding identification to towns; provided recommendations and technical assistance in implementation phase rollout in coordination with other RPCs, BGS, and other program partners.
- 7 municipalities (Barre City, Plainfield, Cabot, Worcester, Roxbury, Orange, Washington) were awarded a total of \$2,475,644.44 for building envelope and HVAC projects.
- CVRPC supported both awarded and non-awarded towns through:
  - Developing project scopes, RFPs, and reporting guidance.
  - Preparing hardship cases (e.g., Barre City, Roxbury, Orange, Cabot).
  - Reviewing energy assessments and recommendations with towns.
  - Guiding use of mini-grants for fairs, events, and energy planning activities.
- Created a municipal buildings and facilities inventory for future project tracking, shared procurement, and capital planning.
- Coordinated with BGS, VT Department of Historic Preservation, Efficiency Vermont, and RPC partners to streamline project implementation and compliance.
- Attended and contributed to key events (e.g., Better Buildings by Design Conference, geothermal site visits, Plainfield Village Design Workshop).
- Conducted outreach to municipalities that did not receive funding, providing alternative funding and loan options (e.g., Williamstown, Warren, Waterbury, Berlin, Montpelier, Northfield).

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

- Vermont Climate Council – Climate Action Plan Participation
  - Active member of Just Transitions Subcommittee and Cross-Sector Mitigation Liaison.
  - Participated in working groups (thermal/buildings, electric, transportation).
  - Reviewed and presented on weatherization, equity tools, net-metering, and just transition guiding principles.



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- Contributed to updates on CAP pathways, strategies, and text.
- Attended workshops, TAC meetings, and public engagement sessions.
- Provided feedback on non-emissions pathways (e.g., waste heat recovery, land use/compact settlement).
- Commenced a regional database of municipal landholdings as a resource for identifying opportunities for energy infrastructure and needs.
- Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG)
  - Supported regional and municipal climate planning integration.
  - Conducted outreach for municipal and regional stakeholder feedback sessions.
  - Reviewed forest analysis additions and methodology questions.
  - Provided logistical support for public engagement sessions (e.g., Barre City event).
  - Assisted towns with project scoping (e.g., thermal energy networks, municipal climate vulnerability tool).
- Energy Efficiency & Conservation Block Grant (EECBG)
  - Facilitated transfer from County Courts back to RPC for Washington County.
  - Submitted and secured \$77,100 formula grant for mobile solar generators for municipal facilities.
  - Supported municipal applications (East Montpelier EV application).
  - Worked with towns to identify funding gaps, interconnection challenges, and renewable energy opportunities.
  - Ongoing coordination with municipalities to align with weatherization and fuel-switching projects.

## EMERGENCY PLANNING & DISASTER RECOVERY

RPCs play key roles in the preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery phases of emergency management in partnership with Vermont Emergency Management (VEM), the Vermont Homeland Security Unit, Department of Public Safety, VTrans, the Agency of Natural Resources, and State Emergency Planning Committees (SEPC). RPCs provide direct staff to the State Emergency Operations Center, coordination among responders, municipal officials, and planners throughout the State's four Public Safety Districts. RPCs also help update floodplain bylaws, river corridor regulations, and FEMA-required hazard mitigation plans. RPCs coordinate updates to municipal emergency plans and assist as needed in special circumstances like the July 2023 and 2024 flooding and other federally and non-federally declared disasters. The RPCs are a source of technical support and information and provide coordination and collaboration for trainings, workshops and seminars, often in conjunction with partners.

### **Local Hazard Mitigation Plans (LHMPs) & Implementation:**

- Assisting Warren and Berlin in developing LHMP updates. Monitored changes at the Federal level to meet program requirements. Completed updates and received FEMA approval for Barre City, Cabot, Middlesex, Waitsfield, Worcester and Waterbury. East Montpelier's plan is at VEM for their review.

### **Planning Assistance:**

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- Supported Capital Fire Mutual Aid in Congressional Discretionary Spending request for communications upgrade funding. Met with USDA to review funding options, currently assisting CFMA in pursuing the Community Development Block Grants-Disaster Recovery.
- Assisted Capital Fire Mutual Aid to meet Vermont Open Meeting Law requirements by hosting minutes and documents on CVRPC's website.
- Participated in Winooski Flood Resilience partner's meetings.
- Regular participant in Municipal Flood Recovery Working Group meetings (Waterbury).

### **State Support:**

- Helped facilitate individual assistance tour for FEMA to qualify county for individual assistance in 7/10/2024 flooding (DR-4810). Attended stakeholder meetings and provided input in the State's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan requirements meetings. Attended the State Integrated Preparedness Planning workshop. Provided administrative support and scheduled speakers for Central Vermont Regional Emergency Management Committee (REMC). Four meetings were held in FY25.

### **July 2024 flooding:**

During and following the flooding, staff provided technical assistance, support, and auxiliary capacity on myriad questions, concerns, and needs when municipal resources were stretched thin responding to the disaster on the ground and taking care of their residents. The RPC was there to assist local leaders and staff when they needed to understand their options and how to engage with state and federal partners and resources. Under the RPC memorandum of understanding with the Department of Public Safety for disaster response CVRPC staff participated in the following activities:

Local Liaison: During the 7/10/24 storms, staff were activated on to contact the 23 municipalities within the CV planning area and enter information into the WebEOC portal. Information related isolated residents, emergency situations, risks to life, observed damage to public and private facilities, economic impacts, and status of cultural landmarks was reported back to Vermont Emergency Management (VEM). Helped municipalities submit tickets for emergency assistance to VEM.

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

- Monitored possible storms and communicated with municipal EMDs.
- Disseminated FEMA disaster response process to town staff (select boards, zoning officers, EMDs and town planners),
- Provided municipalities answers on FEMA Public Assistance on document retention, how to document damages and which procurement guidelines to follow,
- Provided outreach for resources such as PPE, water test kits, information on Individual assistance, NRCS Emergency Watershed Program,
- Assisted municipalities to maximize their state ERAF scores by helping to complete LEMPs and making sure LHMPs being worked on were submitted before cutoff deadlines.
- Provided guidance on filings for disaster reimbursement, including fire departments and other town services activated for disaster response.
- Supported towns in emailing guidance and follow-up on debris removal questions.

### **Flood Mitigation Planning**

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- Met with many Central Vermont towns and provided guidance on Hazard Mitigation Grant Program applications.
- Regularly attended Department of Environmental Conservation Floodplain Manager Drop-In meetings.
- Staff hosted Great Brook Roundtable, a gathering of Plainfield municipal leaders, watershed organizations, state agencies and state representatives to discuss municipal priorities for flood recovery, opportunities for learning and collaboration, and planning next steps for implementation

### **RIVER Program:**

- Participated in meetings with Barre City, Montpelier, and Berlin municipal officials; engineering consultants from SLR; and members of other Vermont RPCs to identify and implement flood mitigation projects using FEMA and State of Vermont funding. Submitted FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program applications for six locations.

### **Other Local Support:**

- Staff met with state and federal representatives to discuss the response to the July 2023 and 2024 floods and how to better prepare and plan for future flooding events.
- Met with Montpelier Deerfield community group about neighborhood and basement flooding in this location and possible solutions.

### **Emergency Watershed Protection Program:**

- Staff provided grant administration and technical assistance for the towns of Middlesex, Marshfield, Plainfield, and Woodbury. Coordinated with the Natural Resources Conservation Service in response to damages from July 2023 & 2024 flooding.

## **EQUITY, ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE & HEALTHY COMMUNITIES**

- Participated in Vermont Commission on Native American Affairs training for Regional Planning Commissions.
- Collaborated with Barre City to develop Community Tree Plant Grant application and fund the planting of four new shade trees in Mathewson Playground.
- Served as a core partner with THRIVE (Central Vermont's Accountable Community for Health)- foci included developing a parallel Emergency Preparedness & Crises Response protocol for members, coordinating on Homelessness and Housing, and the rollout of the Community Health Needs Assessment; collectively received Public Health Champion Award for 2025 from Vermont Public Health Association.
- Adapted Hot Weather Preparedness Planning resources and guidance for Central Vermont region, held municipal workshop to support local planning efforts including regional and municipal scale maps of vulnerabilities, conditions, and existing shelter locations. Assisted 5 towns in drafting and passing Hot Weather Plans as annex to town local emergency management plans (VDH).
- Other work foci included coordination of acute and long-term response to temporary housing exodus and spike in unhoused community members in Montpelier, Barre City, Berlin, and Barre Town in partnership with municipalities and regional community health partners; as

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well as, coordinated long-term flood response supporting frontline communities including coordination with utilities on expansion of existing assistance programs to accommodate accessible flood adders.

### ENERGY PLANNING

RPCs work closely with local, regional, and statewide partners to rapidly update and develop tools, resources, and programs to help municipalities take advantage of evolving funding landscapes and meet longstanding physical and social infrastructure needs and goals to reduce energy burden, emissions, and promote community-scale energy equity and resilience. RPCs participate in Section 248 proceedings and support comprehensive planning at the local, regional, and state levels to inform permitting process as well as towards GHG emissions, energy equity, reliability, and resilience goals.

- Served on the Just Transitions Sub-Committee to the Vermont Climate Council on the 2025 Vermont Climate Action Plan Update and as the Just Transitions liaison on the Buildings and Thermal Sub-Committee- drafting thermal sector and just transition pathways and supporting chapter development.

### GRANT WRITING

- Helped Barre City, Montpelier, Plainfield, Cabot, Waterbury, and Calais apply for grants through the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program.
- Assisted Middlesex in writing municipal planning grant for road resiliency planning.
- Crafted Rural and Tribal Technical assistance grant applications for Waitsfield Meadow Road Bridge and Cabot Route 215 bridge south of village for full design work. Program currently frozen.
- Assisted Woodbury Planning Commission Chair with Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities application to address flooding in the Village from Buck Lake Brook before program was terminated.
- Montpelier: Provided letter of support for Recreation Economy for Rural Communities grant application.
- Served as contact for VT Urban and Community Forest Community Tree Planting Grant for municipal applicants. Provided outreach and education materials to Conservation Commissions, Planning Commission Chairs, and Selectboard Chairs.
- Provided MPM support to Orange for a Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside grant for a village sidewalk scoping study.

### HOUSING

- Developed methodology, conducted analysis and presented the findings of the Infill Analysis to the Barre City Council. Continued to work with the Barre City Housing Taskforce to interpret the results of the Infill Analysis. (Brian, Eli)
- Researched demographic and housing stock information for a Housing Assessment for the City of Montpelier.

#### Plainfield Housing Growth and Planning

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CVRPC worked closely with the Town of Plainfield as it recovered from the catastrophic 2024 flooding and pivoted to considering how it could reimagine its village with new housing, away from flood risk. CVRPC staff provided planning and zoning technical assistance, participated in design workshops, and facilitated in the preparation of State designation amendments and applications for the Community Investment Board. Through this work, Plainfield was able to update its zoning regulations and successfully apply for and receive a designated neighborhood development area (NDA) that includes the East Village Expansion and the former Goddard College campus, with the intention of sparking the development of two new residential neighborhoods. Much of this work was made possible with a special funding allocation through the Department of Housing and Community Development for technical assistance to municipalities assessing the feasibility of pursuing an NDA.

### PLANNING & ZONING

RPCs act as a cost-effective professional planning staff for many of Vermont's municipalities. Work in recent years has focused on improving town plans and local permitting through education, enhanced consultations (on-site training), supporting economic development, and facilitating planning around growth, all with a significant focus on flood resiliency and hazard risk mitigation. Current and clear plans and bylaws are essential in smooth state and local permitting. This work is supported through local and regional planning funds, local contributions and other grants. All technical assistance provided this year is shown on the At Work map; highlights include:

#### MUNICIPAL PLANNING

- Met with towns of Waterbury, East Montpelier, Orange, Williamstown and Berlin to discuss the process and requirements for updating their municipal plans (consultations).
- Discussed forest block and habitat connectivity requirements for municipal plan maps with Montpelier Planning & Zoning staff.

#### Grant Assistance

- Assisted the Town of Plainfield file for FEMA public assistance and federal highway administration assistance for damage sustained during the 2024 flooding.
- Provided application support for Municipal Planning Grant applications for East Montpelier, Williamstown and Orange.
- Provided pre-application and application support to Plainfield and Waitsfield for Northern Borders Regional Commission Catalyst grants.
- Provided support to Plainfield in their request application to the Regional Priority Project list.

#### **Municipal Plan Approvals/Confirmations/Energy Certifications:**

- Approved the municipal plan for the Town of Washington and confirmed the municipal planning process.

#### **Zoning:**

- Met with the Calais Development Review Board to discuss the use of interactive maps for deliberating on permit decisions.
- Undertook research and provided one planning commission (Plainfield) with regulatory language for complete streets and building and lot pattern criteria in their Village District zoning.

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### State Designations:

- Provided guidance for Neighborhood Development Area proposal in Middlesex.
- Assisted three municipalities (Plainfield, Moretown and Northfield) in determining site suitability and program requirements in applying for a Neighborhood Development Area (NDA) designation.

### Training and Education:

- Held a municipal training on National Flood Insurance Program for town staff and zoning officers on requirements of the program and best practices.
- Held a municipal training to provide an overview of Act 250 reform, changes to the State Designation Program, the new Flood Safety Act and review of HOME Act.

### Recreation Planning:

- Participated in statewide councils to advance trail and outdoor accessibility, and identify how recreation can support economic development (Vermont Trails and Greenways Council; VT Outdoor Recreation Day)
- Wrightsville Beach Recreation District: Hosted Board meetings and provided interim administrative support for Board during manager transition.
- Berlin: Assisted Zoning Administration with VT Department of Forest Parks and Recreation Land and Water Conservation Fund grant application for the acquisition of new municipal park land.

## REGIONAL PLANNING

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

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

- Reviewed Central VT Solid Waste Management District 2025 Solid Wastewater Implementation Plan and submitted letter of Regional conformance.
- Monitored Act 250, Section 248, and Section 248a applications.
- Provided Preferred Siting Letters of Support to four proposed solar projects applying for Section 248 permits, reviewed two projects that went to hearing, and reviewed 12+ additional 248 projects, including solar, storage, line, substation, telecommunication tower, and other infrastructure projects.
- Commenced a regional database of demographic and economic information tracking trends to understand community changes and identify needs over time.

## MAPPING (GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM SERVICES)

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

- Produced custom maps and / or datasets:
  - Barre City: interactive map of infill analysis data layers and results



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- Cabot: map commemorating one-year anniversary of the July 2023 flood; map of ecological resources; town-wide trail map (ongoing)
- Capital Fire Mutual Aid: map of existing and planned communication towers in the region
- East Montpelier: summarized roads by road class; historic map of town
- Fayston: map of zoning district boundaries and flood hazard areas
- Marshfield: map of recreation trails in the town forest
- Middlesex: updates to parcel boundary dataset (ongoing)
- Montpelier: map of natural resources inventory
- Plainfield: map of potential parcel buyout locations; map of critical resources and hazard areas along the Great Brook; interactive map displaying Federal Emergency Management Agency and Federal Highways Administration project sites; map of alternative truck route to help with post-disaster recovery decision-making
- Warren: map of flood hazard areas
- Produced the following (print) maps:
  - Local Hazard Mitigation Planning: Barre City, East Montpelier, Waitsfield, Warren (ongoing), Waterbury, Worcester
  - Municipal Plan Map Updates: Moretown (ongoing)
  - Neighborhood Development Area: Plainfield
- Updated zoning data and / or maps for: Middlesex, Northfield (ongoing)
- Provided data to municipal consultants: Woodbury
- Statewide coordination:
  - Regular participation in the monthly Enterprise Geospatial Consortium meetings.
  - Participated in LIDAR and aerial imagery acquisition steering committee and reviewed the draft Vermont Imagery Plan (2025 – 2030).

## TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Through our contract with the VTrans, CVRPC coordinates the Transportation Planning Initiative (TPI). This effort has provided a statewide framework for public involvement in planning the improvements to Vermont's transportation system, with local communities represented through regional Transportation Advisory Committees (TACs). Each regional TAC prioritizes projects, identifies local and regional transportation needs, and provides the platform for public involvement in the planning and development of the state's transportation system. RPCs serve as the point of delivery for the statewide transportation planning process to support local, regional, state and federal transportation network advancement.

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

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

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- Participated in site visit with VTrans and VT Fish & Wildlife to the I-89 "Sharkyville" culvert in Waterbury under design for replacement with the Federal Highway Wildlife Crossings Pilot Program.

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

- Hosted the Central Vermont Mobility Committee. This committee serves as a forum for local transit providers and stakeholders to discuss how transit is provided to central Vermonters who are generally unable to utilize the standard services of GMT.
- Provided grant/project management for Mad River Path VT-100 Corridor Study to connect the Valley from Warren Falls to the Cross Vermont Trail at US-2

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

- Submitted traffic calming/speed reduction demonstration projects for Middlesex and Calais to VTrans for technical review.
- TOD RAISE - Managed transit oriented development study with the municipalities of Berlin, Barre City, and Northfield. These studies will be completed with funding through the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission.
- TOD RAISE – Participated in community charrette and plan deliverables for the Northfield Vision Plan and Barre Downtown Master Plan.
- Assisted Waitsfield in planning for upgrades to Meadow Road Bridge to extend structures lifespan.
- Coordinated meeting with DEC River engineer and town of Warren to discuss land slide risks and debris management.
- Assisted Middlesex in Municipal Planning Grant application for Road Resiliency Study of town roads and culverts for capital planning.
- Washington and Roxbury - Outreach to Road Commissioners and Town Clerk's offering assistance with meeting Municipal Roads General Permit requirements

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

- Conducted 49 data collection activities specifically for VTrans (traffic counts, park and ride surveys, pedestrian counts, etc., bridge and culvert surveys)

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

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

## **SPECIAL PROJECTS**

### **Plainfield Housing Growth and Planning**

CVRPC worked closely with the Town of Plainfield as it recovered from the catastrophic 2024 flooding and pivoted to considering how it could reimagine its village with new housing, away from flood risk. CVRPC staff provided planning and zoning technical assistance, participated in design workshops, and facilitated in the preparation of State designation amendments and applications for the Community Investment Board. Through this work, Plainfield was able to update its zoning regulations and successfully apply for and receive a designated neighborhood development area (NDA) that includes the East Village Expansion and the former Goddard College campus, with the intention of sparking the development of two new residential neighborhoods. Much of this work was made possible with a special

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funding allocation through the Department of Housing and Community Development for technical assistance to municipalities assessing the feasibility of pursuing an NDA.

### ADMINISTRATION AND FUNDING

The FY25 CVRPC budget was ~ \$2.4 million. Revenue sources included local, state, and federal performance contracts, grants, and local assessments.

Most of the CVRPC's revenue sources are tied to contracts with scopes of work, guidelines, and/or performance measures. This means CVRPC has limited flexibility in how it can use most of its funding. Funding received through municipal assessments is the exception, which makes this funding stream particularly important. It gives us the greatest latitude to respond to the region's needs. The grants we receive enable us to work with our towns on areas such as transportation, emergency planning, community development, energy, and natural resources. Revenue from federal and state grantors requires non-federal matching funds ranging from 10 percent (Transportation Planning Initiative) to 50 percent (Emergency Management Planning Grant). Municipal assessments and regional planning funds passed through to CVRPC under a performance grant with the Department of Housing and Community Development are used to provide this match.

CVRPC maintains a Board-designated reserve fund, and a four-year plan for equipment and software upgrades and replacement.

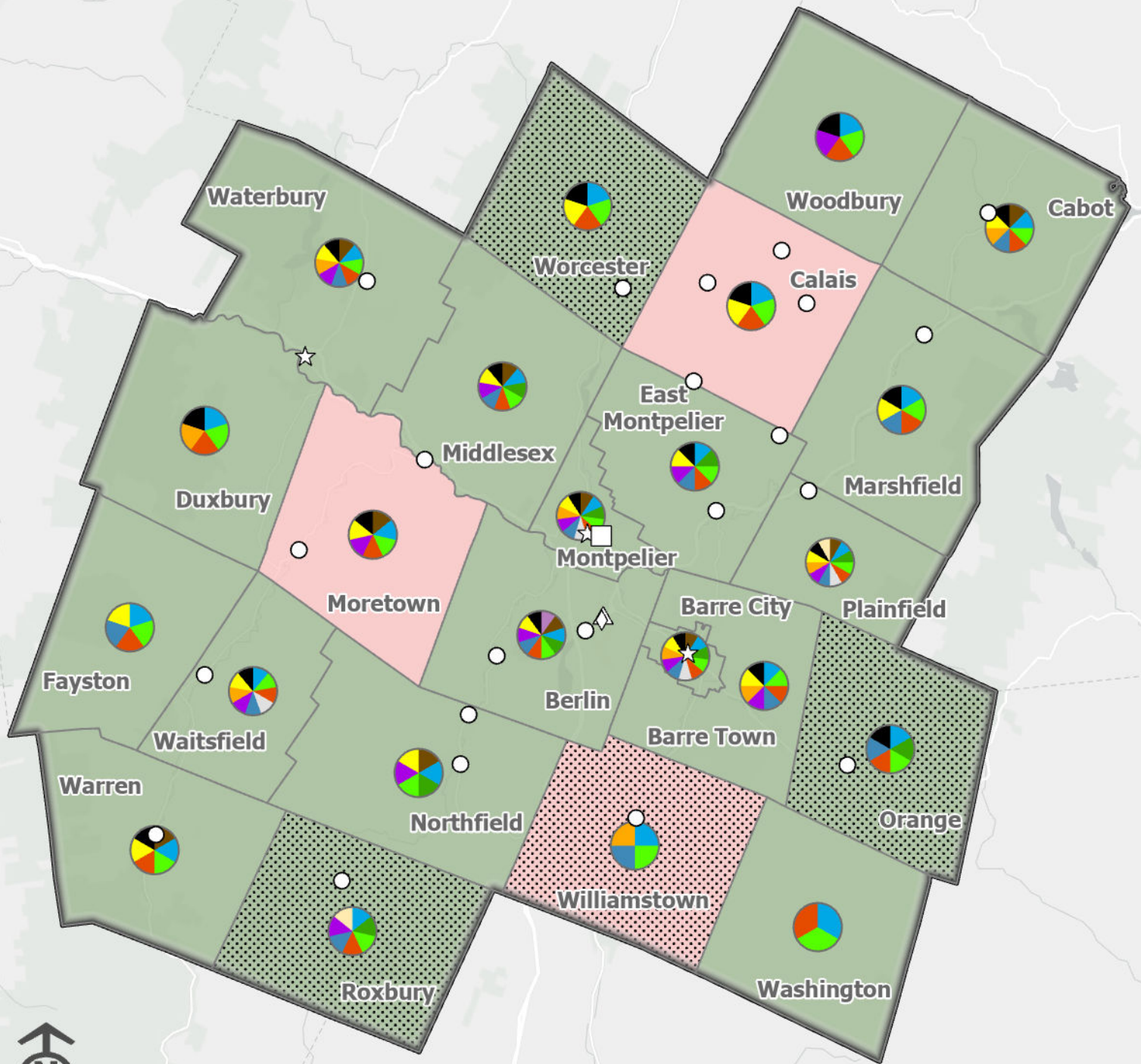
CVRPC's annual audit will be completed in fall 2025. CVRPC has had no audit findings in recent years. It is considered a 'low risk' grantee by federal agencies. Staffing throughout FY25 included up to eleven employees: Executive Director, Senior Planners (2), Planners (7), and an Office Manager. CVRPC supported workforce development through use of two planning technicians for transportation and planning services. CVRPC contracts for accounting services.

In FY25, CVRPC updated its procurement policy and administrative/financial management policy.

### 'AT WORK' MAP

CVRPC has updated its At Work Map depicting the range of services provided to member its municipalities in FY25. The map is available on the next page, and online at: <https://vapda-report-vapda.hub.arcgis.com/>

# CVRPC At Work-FY2025



## Legend

- RPC Boundary
- State Designations**
- Designated Downtown
- Designated Village
- Designated Growth Center

- Neighborhood Development Area
- New Town Center
- Municipal Plan Status by Municipal Boundary**
- Current

- Expired
- No Town Plan
- Zoning Status by Municipal Boundary**
- Adopted
- Flood Only
- None

### At Work Projects



- Act 181
- Brownfields
- Clean Water & Infrastructure

- Economic Development
- Energy Planning & Implementation
- Emergency Planning & Disaster Recovery
- Equity & Environmental Justice & Healthy Communities
- Grant Writing & Administration
- Housing
- Planning & Zoning
- Mapping
- Transportation Planning
- Unmet Needs & Other