

Windham Regional Commission

FY 2025 Annual Report

Celebrating our 60th year, the Windham Regional Commission (WRC) is an important resource to 27 towns in southeast Vermont, including all of the towns of Windham County, the towns of Readsboro, Searsburg, and Winhall in Bennington County, and the town of Weston in Windsor County. In the absence of county government, we are an essential link between local, state, and federal government. Our mission is to assist towns in Southeastern Vermont to provide effective local governance and work collaboratively with them to address regional issues.

Each town's Selectboard determines who will represent the town on the WRC. Each member town can appoint two [commissioners](#) who represent that town's interest in regional affairs. The exception is Somerset, where a town supervisor is appointed by the Governor. Additionally, the WRC has up to 9 citizen interest [commissioners](#) who represent other regional interests such as business and industry, healthy communities, agriculture, natural resources, energy, and housing. The WRC is organized around several committees. These [committees](#) are where most of the work gets done and the decisions made. Commissioners serve on these committees and make the decisions. The WRC has 12 highly-qualified [staff](#) who provide support to the committees, and execute the Commission's [program of work](#).

PLANNING & ZONING

RPCs act as a cost-effective professional planning and plan implementation staff in support of many of Vermont's municipalities. Work in recent years has been focused on improving town plans and local permitting through education, municipal consultation, bylaw modernization, and implementing new requirements for housing, flood resiliency, forest blocks and habitat connectivity, energy, and water quality planning. Clear and up-to-date plans and bylaws are essential to smooth state and local permitting. We also recognize capacity constraints for local planning and zoning administration, and that intermunicipal approaches may be beneficial in the future.

RPCs also coordinate planning at the regional level through the adoption and implementation of a comprehensive regional plan, and related plans and studies, such as the regional enhanced energy plan and regional transportation plan. These plans guide local planning and the investment decisions of the public and private sectors. RPC's planning and zoning work is supported through local and regional planning funds, local contributions, and other grants. The technical assistance and regional planning provided this year is shown on the At Work map; some highlights were:

- Provided general assistance to towns in updating and adopting town plans (12 towns) and land use regulations (11 towns). Updating town plans included assisting towns with addressing Act 174 enhanced energy planning standards, Act 171 planning standards for protection of forest blocks and habitat connectors, planning for housing needs, addressing flood resiliency, providing updated town plan maps and community data, and responding to general procedural and statute questions. Updating bylaws involved assisting towns with amendments to increase housing opportunities, updating flood hazard area regulations, including protection of river corridors,

addressing new requirements in statute, and administration and enforcement of such regulations.

- Provided general technical assistance to towns on topics including Chapter 117 statutory processes and requirements, Act 171 (forest blocks and habitat connectors), Act 174 (energy planning), HOME Act (municipal zoning reforms to encourage housing), Act 181 (state land use planning framework reforms) and general administration and enforcement of land use regulations.
- Worked with one town on a new Village Center designation application and two towns on draft Neighborhood Development Area applications.
- Hosted a regional training on Basics of Land Use Planning and Regulation. Provided customized presentations for Planning Commissions and others (e.g., Selectboard and Zoning Board of Adjustment or Development Review Board members), as requested.
- Hosted a workshop for municipal officials on the state land use planning reforms enacted under Act 181.
- Conducted four municipal consultations with town Planning Commissions to discuss town planning, regional planning commission review and approval of town plans and confirmation of towns' planning processes, and regional commission programs and assistance to towns.
- Assisted six towns in developing and submitting Municipal Planning Grant applications. Three of these Municipal Planning Grant applications were funded.
- WRC contracted with the towns of Weston, Winhall, Jamaica, Townshend, Westminster, Wilmington, and Whitingham to work on Town Plan updates. WRC also worked with the town of Athens on developing the town's first Town Plan. Several of these communities received funding through the Municipal Planning Grant program to complete these projects over the last two funding cycles.
- WRC was contracted by the towns of Newfane, Putney, Wardsboro, Weston, Wilmington, and Dover to draft zoning bylaw amendments.
- WRC completed its work on updating the Windham Regional Plan and the plan was adopted on July 29th. The plan focuses on how to support compact development in our village centers and downtown areas, how to make settlements more climate adaptive and resilient, and how to maintain and improve habitat connectivity within the region. The updated regional plan is web-based and WRC hired a consultant to assist with the design and development of the website that will host the plan. The purpose behind this is to provide communities with a more accessible and useful planning tool and source of information.
- WRC assisted with administration and project management for the Municipal Planning Grant received by the towns of Brattleboro, Rockingham, and Wilmington for the completion of a Windham Region Cultural Plan. The plan will identify arts and cultural assets and their economic impact, and provide set of goals and action step to ensure the continued strength of the creative sector in southeast Vermont.
- Led a 4-town housing and flood adaptation study and charrette for the towns of Jamaica, Londonderry, Weston and Winhall – the towns hardest hit by the 2023 flooding in the region – in collaboration with the UMass-Amherst Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning graduate program and the American Institute of Architects Communities by Design Program.

- Provided Londonderry with project coordination services for the development of community wastewater systems in the villages of North Londonderry and South Londonderry under State ARPA grants.
- Project Review - During this reporting period the WRC reviewed six Act 250 applications and two Section 248 applications (both solar projects). Act 250 applications included those related to the Mount Snow Resort, a mobile home park in Brattleboro, Grace Cottage Hospital upgrade, and Stratton Mountain Resort Master Plan update.

ACT 181

- With the adoption of the Windham Regional Plan update on July 29, 2025, WRC will begin working with member towns in Fall 2025 on updating the Regional Plan to address the new regional planning requirements under Act 181.
- WRC participated in an effort led by the Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies (VAPDA) to develop a Statewide Future Land Use Mapping Methodology to ensure consistency with mapping the new Act 181 regional future land use districts statewide.
- Hosted a workshop for municipal officials on the state land use planning reforms enacted under Act 181.
- Began developing draft Regional Future Land Use Map to comply with Act 181 requirements.
- Began developing information materials to distribute to towns regarding Act 181 and implications at the municipal level.
- Developed a draft methodology to disaggregate regional level housing targets to municipalities in accordance with the HOME Act and Act 181.
- Reviewed materials from the Land Use Review Board (LURB) regarding Regional Plan approval process, Tier 3 rulemaking, and the Tier 1A application process.

BROWNFIELDS

- The WRC [brownfields program](#), since its inception in 2000, has brought a total of \$7.7 million dollars in federal brownfields funds to the region for assessment and cleanup of brownfields sites. In 2024/2025, we received an additional \$148,000 in assessment funds from the state.
- Participated in the VT DEC Brownfields Roundtables and the Southern VT Roundtable hosted by UCONN TAB.
- During this past year WRC Brownfields program has worked on the following sites:

Site	Town/Village	Brownfields Work	Reuse plan
0 Bridge St.	Bellows Falls	Phase II and BRELLA assistance complete.	New multi-family housing
Site	Town/Village	Brownfields Work	Reuse plan
81 Royal Rd., Morningside Shelter	Brattleboro	Site Investigation, Supplemental Sampling and	Groundworks plans to demolish existing

		CAP complete. Preparing for cleanup.	structure and build a new homeless shelter.
130 Birge St.	Brattleboro	Phase II and HBMA complete.	Redevelopment for immigrant housing but funding was pulled.
485 West River Rd.	Brattleboro	Soil gas sampling complete.	Continued commercial use.
Adams Grist Mill	Bellows Falls	Phase II complete.	Continued use as museum.
Bellows Falls Bike Project	Bellows Falls	ABCA/CRP complete. Preparing for cleanup.	Nonprofit Bike Project plans to purchase site for continued use.
Island Gas Station	Bellows Falls	Phase I and BRELLA assistance complete.	Would like to redevelop for an artist studio but on hold.
Bellows Falls Train Station	Bellows Falls	Vapor Intrusion CAP and sampling complete. Preparing for cleanup.	Town plans to continue to use the building as a train and bus station with the addition of a café or brewery.
Boys & Girls Club	Brattleboro	BRELLA enrollment complete. Site Investigation and indoor air assessment field work complete.	Plan to demolish existing structure and build a new club structure.
CF Church	Brattleboro	ECOA/CAP and pilot testing complete.	Continued commercial use.
Foodworks	Brattleboro	Phase II sampling complete.	Nonprofit Groundworks plans to purchase site for continued use as food shelf.
The Garage	Bellows Falls	Offsite vapor plume delineation complete.	Affordable housing constructed.
Leonard Block	Brattleboro	Phase II and VI Supplemental Sampling complete.	Redevelopment for housing.
McNeill's Brewery	Brattleboro	Phase II complete.	Potentially affordable housing.
S. Newfane Store	Newfane	Phase II complete and Supplemental Sampling underway.	Restore greenspace as part of FEMA buyout.
Talc Mine Site	Windham	Phase I complete.	Plan to build a new town garage.
Site	Town/Village	Brownfields Work	Reuse plan
TLR	Bellows Falls	Pilot testing underway.	Plan to redevelop site for CT River Heritage Center.
Windham School Site	Windham	Phase I complete.	Town is purchasing closed school. May use for office or other community space.

Winston Prouty	Brattleboro	Phase II complete.	Plan to develop site for new housing.
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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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

- Developed a comprehensive Windham Region Outdoor Recreation Economy Inventory and Analysis through the Conway School Graduate Program in Sustainable Landscape Planning, with the goal of developing a regional outdoor recreation economy plan.
- Engaged in the creation of the U.S. Economic Development Administration-recognized Southern Vermont Economic District.
- Participated on Southeastern Economic Development Strategies (SeVEDS) Board. Active on the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Update Committee.
- Participated on the Welcoming Communities Challenge Project led by the Brattleboro Development Credit Corp. and funded by the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston.
- Participated on the Downtown Brattleboro Alliance Executive Committee.
- Participated on the Southeastern Vermont Housing Coalition, Planning Committee and Housing Development Subcommittee.
- Working with Winston Prouty Center, located on the former Austine School for the Deaf campus in Brattleboro, in a community planning effort to explore the development of a new neighborhood that could host 300 new homes.
- Continuing to provide support to towns as they deliberate on the needs and potential benefits of community water and wastewater systems. Working directly with the town of Londonderry in support of their wastewater grants.
- Active at the state level in advocacy for state support for community water and wastewater systems in order to retain existing homes and businesses in villages and to make compact settlement possible per state, regional, and municipal policy.
- Continue to assist Windham Region communities with village center and downtown designation applications.
- Participated in the Windham Aging project, designed to consider the future of senior living in the region.
- Continue to participate on the Windham County Economic Development Program Committee.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Through contracts with VTrans, RPCs 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.

The following five categories are performance measures reported to VTrans as part of their report to the legislature.

Objective #1: Enhance Cooperation and Coordination between VTrans, RPC Regions, and Municipalities

- Held 8 TAC meetings. Engaged 10 non-municipal TAC members actively in transportation planning.
- Actively engaged 26 municipalities in transportation planning.
- Coordinated 14 RPC activities with municipalities and VTrans.

Objective # 2: Better Connect Federal, Regional, and Statewide Transportation Planning

- Regional transportation plan is current (within 8 years).
- Coordinated 3 activities in support of regional public transit providers.

Objective # 3: Provide Technical Assistance to Municipalities

- Assisted 14 municipalities with transportation-related grants.
- Spent 85% of budget on municipal technical assistance.
- Conducted 6 municipal transportation inventories.
- Assisted 6 municipalities with transportation element of municipal/town plan.
- Conducted 3 road erosion inventories in support of the municipal road general permit using TPI dollars and other funding sources.

Objective # 4: Deliver Results that Advance VTrans Strategic and Long-Range Transportation Plans

- Performed 70 data collection activities specifically for VTrans.

Objective # 5: Provide a Mechanism for Improved Public Outreach and Education

- Together with Mt. Ascutney Regional Commission and Southeast Vermont Transit, continued to support our regional Elders and Persons with Disabilities Transportation program to provide on demand transportation for seniors and persons with disabilities to medical appointments, shopping, meals, and social engagements.
- Organized and engaged with regional stakeholders, municipalities, Windham Region Legislators and VTrans as part of the update to the Vermont Statewide Rail Plan to advocate for the expansion of passenger rail service in Southeastern Vermont, in particular the extension of the Valley Flyer service to Brattleboro and Bellows Falls. This included a letter of support from the Windham Region Transportation Advisory Committee to VTrans.
- Participated and publicized the ongoing MassDOT Northern Tier Passenger Rail Greenfield-Boston study, including coordinating with Windham Region Legislators.
- Facilitated the transition of the Windham Regional Transportation Committee to a Transportation Advisory Committee.

- WRC serves on the board of Southeast Vermont Transit.

Highlights

- WRC continues to support the road foremen in the region. One aspect of this support is loading data and apps onto tablets for use by highway departments, and providing training to a number of towns on the use of technology for town highway work.
- WRC serves as the Municipal Project Manager for the Spring Hill Road replacement project in Londonderry, the Athens Ober Hill Road Flood Resiliency Scoping Study, the Rockingham Bellows Falls Riverfront Trail Scoping Study, the Athens Brookline Road Box Culvert project, the Guilford Slate Rock Road Box Culvert Project, the Route 121 culvert replacement project in Windham, and the Grout Pond Road improvement project in Stratton.
- The ongoing Bellows Falls Riverfront Trail project will extend the existing riverfront pathway in Bellows Falls from the current endpoint along Mill Street approximately ½ mile south to Paper Mill Road. This will create a dedicated pedestrian connection to downtown for residents at the southern end of the village as well as improve access to the Connecticut River waterfront. The WRC serves as the project manager on this project.
- The WRC continues to coordinate with our interstate neighbors in Massachusetts and New Hampshire on a variety of projects, working together with the Southwest Regional Planning Commission (NH) and the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (MA) to improve regional transportation links. These include the redevelopment of the Hinsdale-Brattleboro Existing 119 Bridges and Island Complex, the Fort Hill Rail Bridge redevelopment, the Shell Bridge Redevelopment, the expansion of Passenger Rail Service in the Tri-State area, as well as various initiatives to improve bus and passenger rail transit.
- The WRC worked with the Southern Vermont's smallest town, Searsburg, on an application to the Municipal Technical Assistance Program to address flooding issues related to an undersized culvert on Sleepy Hollow Road and is serving as the project manager for this project.
- The Windham Regional Commission assisted 14 towns as well as Southeast Vermont Transit in applying for grants from different transportation related grant programs, including Transportation Alternatives and Municipal Highway and Stormwater Mitigation grants for Brattleboro, Jamaica, Windham, Stratton, Wardsboro, Putney, Guilford and Grafton, Better Roads grants for Halifax, Athens, Wilmington, Grafton, Whitingham, Readsboro, Newfane and Westminster and Bicycle and Pedestrian grants for Townshend, Jamaica, Wilmington, and Rockingham.

EMERGENCY PLANNING & DISASTER RECOVERY

RPCs play a key role in the mitigation and preparedness phases of emergency management in partnership with Vermont Emergency Management, the Vermont Homeland Security Unit, VTrans, and the Agency of Natural Resources. RPCs also help update floodplain bylaws and hazard mitigation plans, coordinate updates to municipal emergency plans, and serve as local liaisons between towns and the State Emergency Operations Center in hazard events like the July 2023 flooding and the Covid-19 pandemic.

- WRC's Executive Director coordinates closely with VEM through his role as the Chair of the Emergency Planning Committee of VAPDA.
- WRC's Emergency Planner completed the training requirements to become a Vermont Certified Emergency Management Director.
- WRC brought together regional stakeholders and participated in the fall 2024 statewide catastrophic exercise 5, Binary Blizzard, and the early summer 2025 local liaison and WebEOC protocol testing exercise.
- Currently working with interested towns on updating of flood hazard bylaws in conjunction with new FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps expected in 2027.
- The WRC develops local hazard mitigation plans for our towns, with the exception of Brattleboro, which maintains its own. A Plan template is maintained to expedite these updates.
- Engaged with Jamaica, Londonderry and Weston, three towns in the region hardest hit by the July 2023 flooding, on the RIVER initiative which resulted in three applications. All of the applications sit as alternates for submittal to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Grant Program.
- WRC staffs the Regional Emergency Management Committee, which holds quarterly meetings for Emergency Management Directors (EMDs) and others actively involved in emergency management. Topics are chosen by the participating members.
- Following any significant event, WRC serves in a liaison role to collect damage information from towns for VEM to use in determining whether to seek a Presidential Emergency Disaster Declaration. This year Vermont Emergency Management developed a protocol for regional planning commissions to follow to guide outreach to towns with the goal of minimizing duplicate requests for information.
- Completed town profiles and held trainings for the rollout of the state sponsored Municipal Vulnerability Index (MVI).
- WRC holds and arranges for trainings, exercises and meetings for EMDs and Floodplain Administrators assist in their continued learning and engagement in those local roles.
- WRC maintains a Certified Floodplain Manager on staff who works with interested towns on developing updated flood hazard bylaws which incorporate state-designated river corridors.
- WRC supports the development of grant applications for hazard mitigation projects and the project management of awarded grants from FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, FEMA's Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) grant, HUD's Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Resilience, and VEM's Flood Resilient Communities Fund (FRCF). This year the funding streams have shifted, and BRIC and FRCF have ended for new awards. There are several active applications and grant funded projects in the region currently. Two buyouts were completed this year, with a couple others in process.
- WRC staff participated in numerous FEMA sponsored trainings as part of the State Emergency Operations Center training program.
- WRC staff coordinated with researchers from NOAA developing a National Water Model tool to aid water decision making at the local and regional levels, using our region as one test case.
- Staff attended the annual Vermont Emergency Management conference.

EQUITY & ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE & HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

- WRC has addressed environmental justice and healthy communities by assessing and cleaning up contaminated sites throughout the region, but especially in Bellows Falls and Brattleboro where there is a concentration of contaminated sites and lower income populations. See the Brownfields Section above for details.
- Provided Londonderry with project coordination services for the development of community wastewater systems in the villages of North Londonderry and South Londonderry. The projects would address several health and sanitation concerns related to both potable and surface water quality in the two villages.
- Bicycle counts on roadways and multi-use pathways were done at 12 count locations in six towns, including several counts in Grafton to feed into their outdoor recreation report.
- Continued our effort to study bike parking in downtown Brattleboro, by conducting an inventory of bike racks, and on one day each month of bikes parked in the downtown district.
- WRC is serving as a subcontractor to a consultant working on a VOREC-funding outdoor recreation plan for Grafton.
- Provided mapping support to the Friends of the West River Trail, the Winston Prouty Center for Child and Family Development, and Wilmington Trails Committee.
- WRC serves as the project manager for the Bellows Falls Riverfront Trail project that will extend the existing riverfront pathway in Bellows Falls from the current endpoint along Mill Street approximately ½ mile south to Paper Mill Road. This will create a dedicated pedestrian connection to downtown for residents at the southern end of the village as well as improve access to the Connecticut River waterfront.
- Continued to support our regional Elders and Persons with Disabilities Transportation program to provide on demand transportation for seniors and persons with disabilities to medical appointments, shopping, meals, and social engagements.
- A number of the efforts completed under the Economic Development Section above address issues around economic equity for residents in the region.
- Executive Director serves as Vice Chair of the Winston Prouty Center for Child and Family Development, which provides inclusive education and family support to promote the success of children and families.

MAPPING

In addition to enhancing the RPC work, RPCs provide municipalities, state agencies, and regional groups with mapping and data analysis in support of their projects. In many cases the maps you see in town offices and garages were produced by the WRC.

- Mapping support to town planning efforts is at the core of WRC's mapping program. Town plan maps, and corresponding data, were updated for Athen's, Jamaica's, Townshend's, Weston's, and Winhall's town plan. Village center designation mapping was done for Readsboro and Winhall. Zoning bylaw mapping support was provided to Londonderry and Readsboro. Maps for hazard mitigation plans were done for Athens, Marlboro, Stratton, and Vernon. We worked with

the Wardsboro Planning Commission on updates to their zoning map, and Vernon School on updates to their source protection plan maps.

- With the Windham Regional Plan undergoing an update, staff completed updates to 22 regional plan maps, and began work on future updates to our future land use map to comply with requirements under Act 181.
- GIS staff provide extensive support to **town highway departments** in myriad ways. We've helped eleven towns use tablets for mapping and inventory work through training and developing on-line maps. We developed plow route maps for Grafton and Wilmington. Three well-attended regional road foremen's meetings were held, with the primary topics being pavement management and preservation, invasive species, Municipal Roads General Permit, applying for grants from the Vtrans Municipal Assistance Bureau, Green Mountain Power's underground power line project, and purchasing municipal trucks in a changing market.
- GIS staff continues to provide support for transportation-related inventory and mapping work. We completed **culvert inventory update** for Halifax, clean-up of data for Dummerston, began working on updates for Newfane, and Wilmington, and inventoried and **photographed large bridges** in culverts in 6 towns. We completed sidewalk inventories for Wilmington, Saxtons River, and Bellows Falls. We continued to provide training and outreach to towns on how to use the VtCulverts tool to both view and manage their culvert data.
- Support for towns as they continue to work on compliance with Vermont's **Municipal Roads General Permit** has been ongoing, including outreach on the newly revised permit. We completed a road erosion inventory update for Vernon, and began inventory work in Halifax and Wilmington, and continued to provide assistance to over a dozen towns on their Grants in Aid projects.
- **Town road maps**, which include all public and private names, road ownership and class, and surface type, have long been provided to towns. This year we updated maps for Athens, Dover, Grafton, Guilford, Winhall, Townshend, and Wilmington, and provided the corresponding updated data to Vtrans. We continued working with Vtrans on a project to ensure all roads surface type codes are correct in the state's master road centerline GIS data.
- Continued our effort to study bike parking in downtown Brattleboro, by conducting an inventory of bike racks, and on one day each month of bikes parked in the downtown district. This year we provided a summary of six years of data to the Brattleboro Planning Commission.
- WRC continues efforts to provide support for our communities **regarding trails and recreation paths**. We were subcontractors to a consultant working on a VOREC-funding outdoor recreation plan for Grafton, and engaged with Conway School students as they worked on a Outdoor Recreation Inventory for the Windham Region. We provided mapping support to the Friends of the West River Trail, the Winston Prouty Center for Child and Family Development, and Wilmington Trails Committee. WRC's GIS planner on the board of the Vermont Trails and Greenways Council, provided support as the develop a Trail Accessibility Hub, and provided testimony before the House Transportation Committee regarding town maintenance of legal trails.
- WRC provides mapping and grant writing support to towns and non-profit organizations when they apply for various grants, including VTrans Better Roads Grants (Halifax, Grafton, Jamaica, Newfane, and Wilmington), and Bike Ped Program grants (Wilmington).

- VtCulverts is Vermont's on-line municipal bridge and culvert data inventory tool. WRC is one of two Regional Planning Commissions that help manage and administer the tool for all RPCs and towns in the state.
- GIS staff led an extensive bicycle and pedestrian count program. Our online maps of bicycle and pedestrian count data we've collected since 2018 (bike) and 2013 (ped) were updated and rebuilt. We conducted 43 pedestrian counts in seven towns. These counts were on sidewalks, multi-use pathways, trails, and at crosswalks. Our counts in Rockingham were a detailed analysis of patterns at one intersection on Old Terrace. Bicycle counts on roadways and multi-use pathways were done at 12 count locations in six towns, including several counts in Grafton to feed into their outdoor recreation report. Staff reflected on lessons learned from ten years of bike and ped counts by presenting on a webinar to Windham Region towns and trail groups.
- At the request of six towns (Grafton, Readsboro, Rockingham, Westminster, Whitingham, and Wilmington), we conducted 19 different traffic counts, recording data on vehicle volume, speed, and class.
- Staff created completed an updated E911 map of Dover, and started working on map updates for Guilford and Marlboro.

ENERGY PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION

A renewed focus on clean, renewable, sustainable, and affordable energy presents Vermont with great opportunity and significant challenges. RPCs integrate energy planning with land use, transportation, and natural resources planning, and work with municipalities to assist with project implementation. RPCs participate in Section 248 proceedings and support comprehensive planning at the local and regional level to inform the permitting process.

- WRC continues to assist municipalities in the Windham Region with the Municipal Energy Resilience Program (MERP, Act 172) that launched in early 2023. 12 of the region's municipalities received implementation grant funding to support weatherization, fuel-switching, and resilience projects in public buildings. With a shift in focus toward project delivery, WRC continues to provide regional technical assistance to grant awardees and has also contracted directly with several towns to serve as a municipal project manager for MERP.
- WRC finalized updates to the Enhanced Energy Plan/Energy Chapter for the Windham Regional Plan and submitted a request for a determination of energy compliance under Act 174. The Plan is currently under review at the Vermont Department of Public Service. In addition to finalizing the Plan itself, WRC completed a series of municipal energy data profiles to support towns in local energy planning efforts.
- In collaboration with the Climate Action Office, WRC organized a Public Input Session for the 2025 Climate Action Plan Update and provided meeting support.
- WRC assisted Townshend in developing a new Local Enhanced Energy Plan, and supported Jamaica in updating its Plan to be compliant with new Act 174 requirements. WRC is currently working with Rockingham on a Local Enhanced Energy Plan.

- The WRC worked with Town Energy Committees throughout the region. Regional Energy Committee gatherings are held to share information and collaborate on common weatherization projects. This regional forum will continue to be a support system for our Energy Committees.
- WRC closed out the Resiliency Zone Project, a collaboration between the Commission and Green Mountain Power to support the creation of resiliency zones through planning and public outreach. Advancements in GMP's capacity to accelerate line undergrounding and storm-hardening shifted the focus of utility resilience planning in the region away from partial strategies to a systemwide approach. This shift made home and business-specific engagement and planning less relevant, signaling a need to end the project. WRC continues to support conversations between GMP, public officials, town energy committees, and other stakeholders to foster collaboration on utility resilience work and the evolution of strategies used to advance it.

CLEAN WATER & INFRASTRUCTURE

RPCs work with the Agency of Natural Resources to implement the state's Clean Water Initiative through basin planning and assistance to municipalities in meeting statutory and regulatory requirements. RPCs also work with municipalities and watershed organizations to implement river corridor assessments in local planning and regulations which result in better and safer growth management decisions.

- WRC worked with Vermont DEC to initiate and provide input into Stormwater Master Planning for municipalities in the region. Three municipalities have received completed plans this year, one is currently underway and four municipalities are just beginning planning process.
- For the three communities that received completed Stormwater Master Plans, WRC worked with the Towns, VT DEC, and other water quality partners to conduct site visits, prioritize project readiness and need and assign a partner to help advance top projects to the design and implementation.
- WRC is continuing to work with the Town of Dover, Mount Snow, ANR, the Connecticut River Conservancy and others to remove the Snow Lake impoundment at Mount Snow and restore the natural flow of the north branch of the Deerfield River.
- WRC is working in collaboration with the Town of Rockingham, private businesses, VTrans and the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation to address stormwater runoff issues in three business parks. The goal of this work is to manage stormwater runoff and restore the landscape affected by washouts.
- Participated in various collaborative watershed efforts, including:
 - Supported the Deerfield River Watershed Alliance in their efforts to nominate the Deerfield River and its tributaries as a federally designated Wild and Scenic River.
 - Hosted water quality public meetings in cooperation with Vermont DEC to solicit public input on the draft Basin 12 (Deerfield) Tactical Basin Plan.
 - Organized a public informational meeting, in conjunction with Vermont DEC, on the newly completed Upper West River Corridor Plan.
 - Worked with the Connecticut River Joint Commission's (CRJC) Wantastiquet Local River Subcommittee to link and represent Connecticut River towns to relevant planning issues

along the River. WRC continues to serve on the CRJC Full Commission and serves as an officer on the Vermont Commission.

- WRC works with the Connecticut River Conservancy and Deerfield Watershed Alliance to promote water monitoring results for major rivers and tributaries throughout the region.
- Acting as grant administrator for the Water Infrastructure Sponsorship Program in one municipality.
- Provided comments during public comment periods for the on-going FERC relicensing process for the Vernon and Bellows Falls hydroelectric facilities.
- Conducted site visits on the request of five municipalities for stormwater issues. Submitted four applications for clean water funding to support the advancement of green stormwater solutions for those projects.
- Working with the Rockingham Conservation Commission and Connecticut River Conservancy on three nomination petitions for Outstanding Resource Waters.

GRANT WRITING & ADMINISTRATION

- Assisted six towns in developing and submitting Municipal Planning Grant applications.
- Provide grant administration support for four Municipal Planning Grant projects.
- In conjunction with municipal partners, submitted four Clean Water Enhancement grant applications and one Long Island Sound Futures Fund grant application.
- Assisted one municipality in submitting a Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities grant.
- Serving as Municipal Project Manager for two salt shed projects, one culvert scoping study, one transportation flood resiliency scoping study, one trail scoping study, four culvert replacement projects, and one road improvement project.
- Administered three brownfields grants from EPA and two brownfield grants from the State of Vermont.
- Assisted eight towns with preparing Transportation Alternatives and Municipal Highway and Stormwater Grant applications.
- Assisted eight towns with preparing VTrans Better Roads Grants applications.
- Assisted four towns with preparing a VTrans Bike and Pedestrian Program grant applications.
- Assisted five towns with developing and submitting Hazard Mitigation Grant Program applications.
- Assisted two towns in submitting for Congressionally Directed Spending.
- Assisted one town in submission for and administration of an awarded project under the Enhancement Development, Design, and Implementation Block Grant (EDDIBG) program.
- Assisted with administration and project management for two Flood Resilient Community Fund prior awarded projects.
- Assisted with administration and project management for two FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program prior awarded projects.

UNMET NEEDS & OTHER

- Working with the University of Vermont through the Leahy Institute for Rural Partnerships on the mapping of all public/community wastewater systems in Vermont and collecting data on their capacity. The goal is to provide both a high-level and localized picture and of where these systems do and do not exist in order to inform understanding as to where public wastewater-dependent development, such as housing at scale, is possible.
- WRC continues to participate in the Vermont Nuclear Decommissioning Citizens Advisory Panel and has so since its inception.
- WRC has led engagement with UMass-Amherst, UVM, the Conway School, and Norwich University to increase awareness of and connections between both the Windham Regional Commission and the state's other regional planning commissions. The goal is to further expand this outreach to other universities in the New England region.
- WRC has participated in the exploration of climate migration to Vermont and New England, and most recently participated in a discussion among experts throughout the nation hosted by UMass-Amherst's Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning program and the Lincoln Institute.
- WRC's Executive Director has been asked to engage in discussions with coastal adaptation and retreat networks in New England to share Vermont's experience with response, recovery, and mitigation in the wake of multiple catastrophic flooding events to share lessons-learned.
- WRC has led discussion about regional and municipal engagement in large scale landscape conservation and connectivity within Vermont, northern New England, and as part of the bi-national northern Appalachian Staying Connected Initiative. Most recently we participated in the inaugural Northeastern North America Landscape Connectivity Summit held in Montreal as a representative of Vermont's regional planning commissions.
- WRC supports professional development by participating in planning for the NNECAPA conference and VPA workshops, as well as RPC Meetups.
- WRC is beginning to work on a Municipal Bond Bank sponsored project to learn about the needs of public water suppliers in the region, provide administrative support as to assist the suppliers on a temporary basis, and work to help them expand system capacity.

ADMINISTRATION & FUNDING

Virtually all of the WRC's revenue sources are tied to contracts with scopes of work, guidelines, and/or performance measures. This means that the WRC has limited control over how it chooses to use the vast majority of its funding. Funding received through town assessments is the exception, which makes this funding stream particularly important because it gives us the greatest latitude to respond to WRC-identified needs in the region. Town assessments, and the funding received through the WRC's performance contract with the state, are also necessary to provide matching funds required by grantors. The grants we receive enable us to work with our towns on areas such as transportation, emergency planning, community development, brownfields redevelopment, energy, and natural resources. Revenue from virtually all federal and state grantors requires matching funds, and typically non-federal matching funds. Required match ranges from 10 percent (Transportation Planning Initiative) to 50 percent

(Emergency Management Planning Grant). Our budget and work program is available on our [About the WRC page](#) on our website.

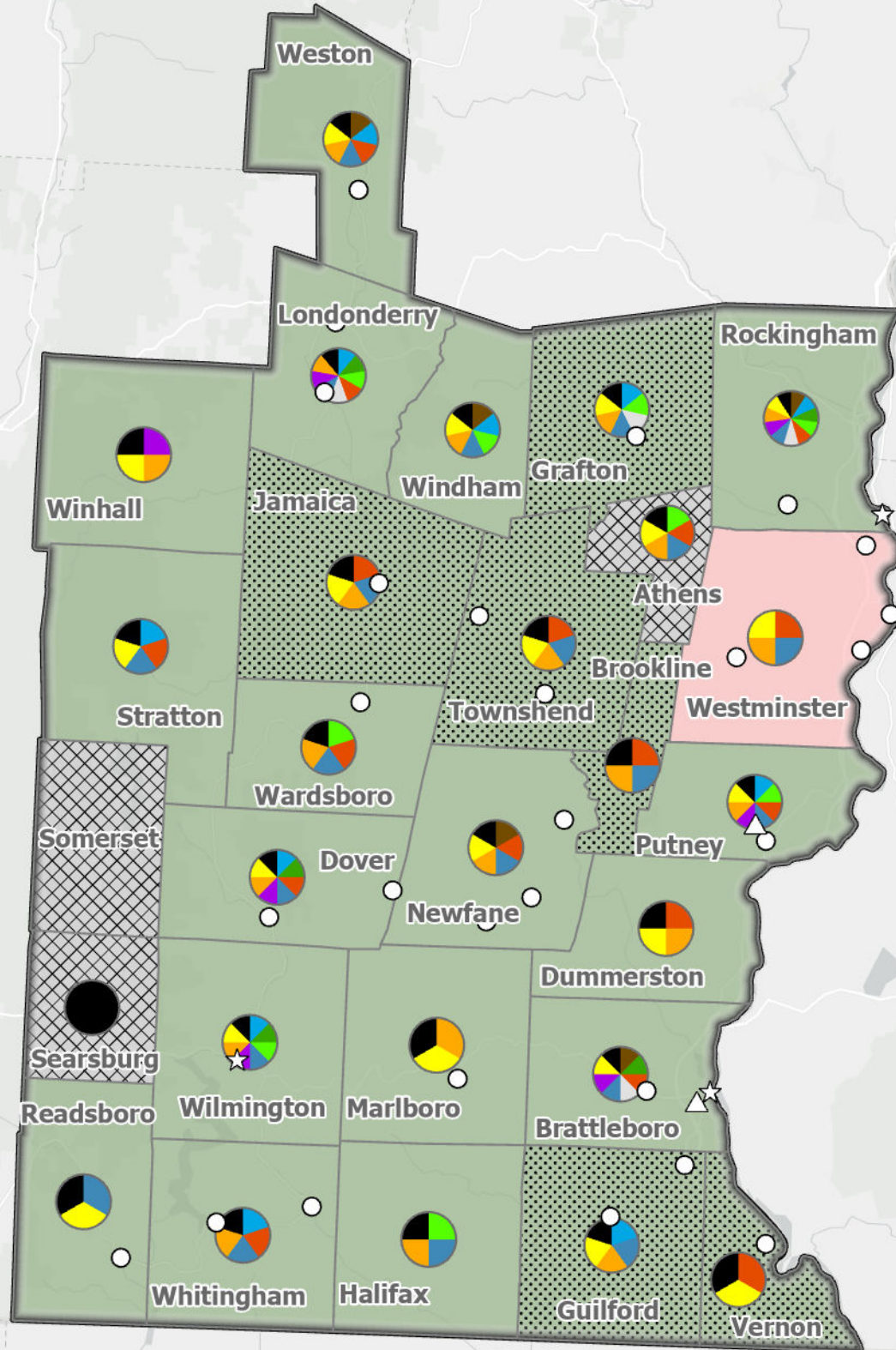
The WRC has an audit on an annual basis, and a single audit as required by Federal rules. Audits and financial statements can be found on the [WRC Finance Committee webpage](#).

The WRC has adopted a [Municipal Services Policy](#) that is intended to provide guidance for the Commission in the delivery of professional services to member municipalities. It describes technical assistance available to member towns as part of the commission's core activities, and the opportunities for expanded service when funded as a special project.

‘AT WORK’ MAP

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

WRC At Work-FY2025



Legend

- RPC Boundary**
- Municipal Plan Status by Municipal Boundary**
- Current
 - Expired
 - No Town Plan

- Zoning Status by Municipal Boundary**
- Adopted
 - Flood Only
 - None
- State Designations**
- Designated Village
 - Designated Growth Center
 - Neighborhood Development Area
 - New Town Center
 - Designated Downtown

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

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