



# Northwest Regional Planning Commission

**Northwest Regional Planning Commission**

2024 Year in Review



Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) strengthens the capability of municipalities.



In the absence of county government, RPCs play a critical role in connecting communities with federal and state programs.

RPCs are political subdivisions of the State of Vermont, uniquely positioned to provide broad services to every municipality:



TRANSPORTATION PLANNING



LAND USE PLANNING



AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IN ALL AREAS



WATER QUALITY



HAZARD MITIGATION & PREPAREDNESS



HOUSING



BROWNFIELD ASSESSMENT & REMEDIATION



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

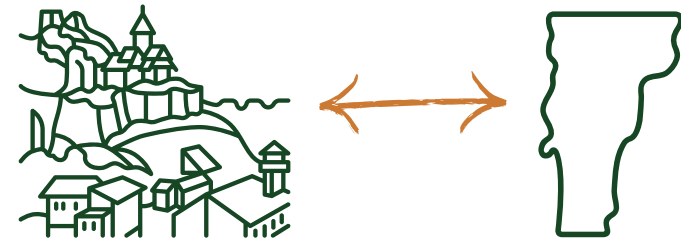


ENERGY PLANNING



# State Policy

RPCs are a critical resource for the state in policy deliberations and implementation.



RPCs are a direct link between municipalities and state government and are often called upon to support policy development and implementation in the areas of housing, economic development, brownfields, energy, transportation, water quality, and more.



NRPC participated in legislative discussions around Act 181, to ensure changes to Act 250 and the state designation program would be beneficial to our communities



# Regional Planning

NRPC coordinates community plans with regional plans and provides key insights for communities through regional studies.



This region-wide perspective enables a broader understanding of the trends and regional dynamics that drive planning and investment decisions.

## NORTHWEST REGIONAL PLAN

2023 - 2031

Adopted by the Board of Regional Commissioners: July 26, 2023

Effective: August 30, 2023

Photo: David Justice



NRPC adopted a new energy plan, which has received approval from the Department of Public Service. The plan has goals around energy conservation and climate resilience and gives NRPC added input in the utility permitting process.

# Housing

NRPC is the host organization for Housing For All, a program aimed at increasing the quality and quantity of housing in the region.

Housing For All is funded by the State of Vermont and the Boston Federal Reserve.



NRPC launched a duplex and accessory dwelling unit pilot project which provides contractor assistance and mini grants to homeowners that want to add a housing unit.



# Economic Development

Strong local economies arise from comprehensive land-use planning and united development efforts.

NRPC helps build community infrastructure and guide development patterns to provide the foundation and public support for private economic development.

NRPC maintains the Northern Vermont Economic Development District, serving the 6 northern counties of VT.



NRPC provides project management services to two communities in the region who are planning to build wastewater facilities with ARPA funds.



# Brownfields



7 communities were able to assess or remediate polluted land at 11 sites with the support of NRPC in FY24.

By assessing, remediating, and reinvesting in these properties communities can achieve a variety of benefits:

 INCREASE LOCAL TAX BASES

 EXPAND LOCAL HOUSING AND COMMERCIAL PROPERTY STOCK

 IMPROVE PUBLIC HEALTH

 ENCOURAGE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

 CREATE JOBS



**Highgate and Swanton Village** are working to assess and develop cleanup plans on brownfields sites for housing development. **NRPC is funding** a Corrective Action Plan at the Highgate Village Core where Cathedral Square plans to develop 30 units of senior housing. The Village of Swanton just received the archeological clearance necessary to finalize their Corrective Action Plan at the 6 South River site tentatively planned for a 3-unit Habitat for Humanity project.

# Clean Water



15 communities took steps to improve their water quality in FY24 with assistance from NRPC.

NRPC serves as the Clean Water Service Provider (CWSP) for the Missisquoi and Lamoille Basins.

In that role, we help Vermont move closer to achieving phosphorous reduction targets.

Targets were established in the “Lake Champlain TMDL” submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.



As a CWSP, NRPC has contracted for 22 projects – 11 in each basin – representing over 320 kilograms of phosphorus reduction.





# Planning & Zoning

In FY24, NRPC provided 22 municipalities with planning and bylaw assistance.

Maintaining clear and up-to-date plans and bylaws creates a strong, guiding vision for communities. This clear vision ensures smooth permitting at state and local levels.

NRPC serves as zoning administrator for two municipalities.



**Isle la Motte** adopted their first municipal plan, NRPC helped secure a grant for assistance and helped draft the plan.

**5 municipalities** received assistance to modernize their bylaws to reduce barriers to housing, funded by a Bylaw Modernization Grant from the Department of Housing and Community Development.

# GRAND ISLE ROADS



## Mapping

23 communities received mapping services from NRPC in FY24, assisting in a variety of municipal operations and plans.

Mapping and data analysis is a key component to planning, enabling a deeper understanding of the various dimensions that RPCs assist communities in.



NRPC provides all communities with annual updates to road atlases, used by public works and emergency/rescue services



# Transportation Planning

NRPC provided **23** municipalities with technical assistance in transportation, including:

- ✓ TRAFFIC COUNTS
- ✓ CULVERT AND ROAD EROSION INVENTORIES
- ✓ MUNICIPAL PROJECT MANAGEMENT
- ✓ A VARIETY OF OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES

RPCs help coordinate the Transportation Planning Initiative (TPI), a statewide initiative for public involvement in improvements to Vermont's transportation system and for the development of region-wide transportation plans.

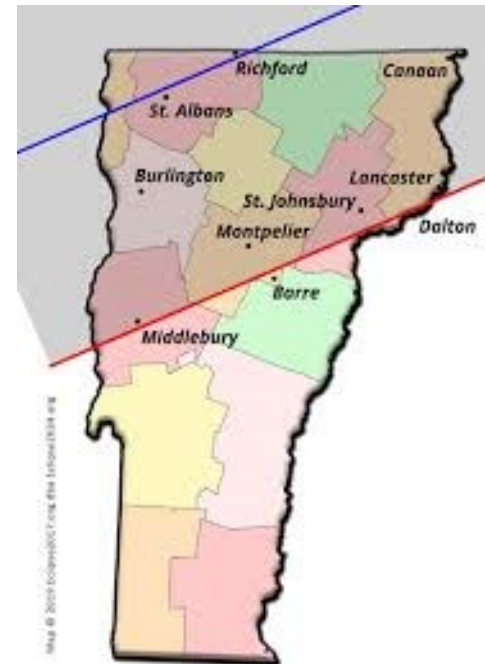


NRPC received an \$877,000 grant from the U.S Environmental Protection Agency for an active transportation initiative. The grant will provide critically needed capacity and technical resources to move active transportation plans forward in places that have been left out of traditional grant sources.



# Emergency Planning & Response

With technical assistance from NRPC, **23** municipalities were able to mitigate disasters and improve their emergency preparedness in FY24.



NRPC supported municipalities with public safety and transportation planning for the April 8, 2024, Total Solar Eclipse Event. Staff participated in public safety and event planning meetings by request with North Hero, Grand Isle, Alburgh, St. Albans City, St. Albans Town, Swanton Village and Swanton Town.

- ✓ PROVIDING STAFF TO THE STATE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER
- ✓ SUPPORTING LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIRECTORS
- ✓ ASSISTING IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANS
- ✓ UPDATING FLOODPLAIN AND RIVER CORRIDOR BYLAWS AND HAZARD MITIGATION PLANS REQUIRED BY FEMA
- ✓ ASSISTING MUNICIPALITIES DURING AND AFTER DISASTER EVENTS
- ✓ ...AND MORE



# Energy Planning & Implementation

With assistance from NRPC, **3** communities drafted new energy plans and **12** municipalities received assistance with energy plans or projects.

With a focus on sustainability and affordability, Vermont communities face significant roadblocks and opportunities in the clean energy transition. NRPC assists communities by helping develop comprehensive local and regional energy plans that integrate land use, transportation, natural resources, and energy project implementation.



Municipal Energy Resilience Program: 14 communities received assistance for energy efficiency evaluations for 28 buildings. NRPC also assisted 13 communities with applications for implementation funds. 8 communities were awarded a total of \$2,515,005.

# Partnerships

NRPC support numerous collaborative efforts around economic development, prevention, public safety, energy, and other issues as needed with our municipalities.

- Northwest Vermont Regional Foundation
- Northern Vermont Economic Development District
- Communications Union District
- Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail
- Lamoille Valley Rail Trail



NRPC and the Northwest VT Rail Trail Council launched a new interactive map for the Missisquoi and the Lamoille Valley Rail Trails. The interactive map features Trail Friendly Businesses in towns that border the trails, and amenities along the trail. To check out the new interactive map, visit <https://www.mvrailtrail.org/>.

# Thank you!



Northwest  
Regional Planning  
Commission

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RESOURCES & PUBLICATIONS

REGIONAL DATA

## Staff

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## LIST OF MEMBERS

Alburgh Town – Alex McCracken & vacant seat

Alburgh Village – vacant seats

Bakersfield – William Irwin & Linda McCall

Berkshire – Claude Charron & Joshua Grims

Enosburg Falls – Leonard Charron & Jesse Woods

Enosburgh – Jesse Woods & vacant seat

Fairfax – Sarah Hadd & Barbara Murphy

Fairfield – Julia Callan & Chuck Verderber

Fletcher – Lori Ruple & vacant seat

Franklin – Yvon Dandurand & Wesley Kempton

Georgia – Carl Rosenquist & Kirk Waite

Grand Isle – Howard Demars & Barclay Morris

Highgate – Jack Pelkey & vacant seat

Isle La Motte – Mary Catherine Graziano & Sylvia Jensen

Montgomery – Leanne Barnard & Mark Brouillette

North Hero – Andy Ailing & Michael Curtis

Richford – Marissa Tessier & vacant seat

St. Albans City – Elisabeth Nance & Chip Sawyer

St. Albans Town – Marietta Scholten & Megan Sherlund

Sheldon – vacant seats

South Hero – Bob Buermann & Peter Zamore

Swanton Town – Nicole Draper & Harold Garrett

Swanton Village – Heidi Britch-Valenta & Neal Speer

Franklin County Youth Member – vacant seat

Grand Isle County Youth Member – vacant seat



For more information, visit:

[www.nrpcvt.com](http://www.nrpcvt.com)