



**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**July 29, 2020**

**7:00 Meeting**

**Virtual Meeting**  
**Details Below**

**Meeting Agenda:**

- 1. Adjustments to the Agenda**
- 2. Welcome, introductions, opening remarks –Kirk Waite, *Chair***
- 3. Opportunity for Public Comment**
- 4. Minutes of the June 2020 Meeting (enclosed)**
- 5. Upper Lake Champlain Basin Plan, Karen Bates, Watershed Coordinator presentation and action item; draft comments enclosed**
- 6. Commission Reports: written reports enclosed**
  - Finance/Operations– *Harold Garrett***
  - Personnel – *Lori Ruple***
  - Executive Committee – *Kirk Waite***
  - Project Review – *Alisha Larocque***
  - Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) – *Harold Garrett***
  - Energy Committee- *Bob Buermann***
  - Brownfields Committee – *Laz Scangas***
  - Regional Plan and Policy Committee- *Lynn Douglas***
  - Vermont Economic Progress Council (VEPC) – *Al Voegele***
  - Green Mountain Transit- *Bob Buermann/Catherine Dimitruk***
  - Clean Water Advisory Committee- *Staff***
  - Healthy Roots Advisory Committee- *Brad Docheff***
  - Northwest Vermont Regional Foundation- *Staff***
  - Office-*Staff***

(over)

7. Enosburgh Town and Village, and North Hero  
Municipal Plan Approval and Confirmation- *action item*  
review summary enclosed
8. Communications Union District- *discussion item*
9. Commissioner Announcements- *discussion item*
10. Adjourn

If you have questions about how to participate in this virtual meeting or if you cannot attend please contact NRPC: 524-5958 or [AAdams@nrpcvt.com](mailto:AAdams@nrpcvt.com)

*In accordance with provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, the NRPC will ensure public meeting sites are accessible to all people or provide an opportunity to request accommodations. Requests for free interpretive or translation services, assistive devices, or other requested accommodations, should be made to Amy Adams, NRPC Title VI Coordinator, at 802-524-5958 or [aadams@nrpcvt.com](mailto:aadams@nrpcvt.com), no later than 3 business days prior to the meeting for which services are requested.*

#### **Meeting Access Information**

Please try to join the meeting 5-10 minutes prior to the start time.

If you have trouble connecting, please call 802-310-6797.

Access via phone or video

#### **Join Zoom Meeting via video**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84569894214>

#### **Join Zoom via phone**

1 (301) 715-8592

1 (312) 626-6799

Meeting ID 845 6989 4214

1 **BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING**  
2 **NORTHWEST REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**  
3 *June 24, 2020 Draft Meeting Minutes*  
4

5 The meeting of the Board of Commissioners was a virtual meeting held on Zoom.  
6

7 **ATTENDANCE:**

8 Commissioners: See attached. A quorum was present to conduct business.

9 Staff: C. Dimitruk, B. Remmers, A. Brunstad

10 Guests: M. Serrano  
11

12 Chair K. Waite called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.  
13

14 **ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA** – None.  
15

16 **WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, OPENING REMARKS**

17 K. Waite noted this was the third monthly board meeting via Zoom and they have all gone well.

18 K. Waite introduced NRPC’s new AmeriCorps VISTA member Mark Serrano who would be  
19 beginning his service at the end of August. C. Dimitruk explained that Emily Klofft—NRPC’s  
20 current VISTA member—will be joining the NRPC staff when her AmeriCorps VISTA service ends  
21 in August.  
22

23 **OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT** – None.  
24

25 **MINUTES OF THE MAY 2020 MEETING**

26 C. Dimitruk noted that B. Dubie needed to be added and marked as present on the attendance  
27 sheet for the May meeting.  
28

29 *Y. Dandurand motioned to accept the May meeting minutes with corrections. B. Morris*  
30 *seconded. The motion carried.*  
31

32 **COMMISSION REPORTS:**

33 Finance/Operations – H. Garrett reported the Finance/Operations Committee met on June 9<sup>th</sup>  
34 and the budget is later on the agenda. He reviewed the budget reports. B. Morris asked if about  
35 a reduction in Grants-in-Aid funding. C. Dimitruk replied that there is intention to continue  
36 funding for this program for FY 21 but it was not included in the state’s first quarter budget and  
37 therefore, not included in the NRPC budget for the time being. She noted that the FY 20  
38 Grants-in-Aid program was extended into October to give municipalities more time to finish  
39 projects this year.  
40

41 Personnel – J. Farnham thanked NRPC staff for persevering through these strange times and  
42 doing a great job under difficult conditions. The Personnel Committee and Executive Committee  
43 have preliminarily approved uniform annual bonuses for staff.  
44

45 Executive Committee – K. Waite noted the committee met on June 22<sup>nd</sup> and other than topics  
46 in preparation for this meeting, the only official action was to approve the Personnel  
47 Committee’s recommendation to do staff evaluations in August rather than June.

48  
49 Project Review – B. Irwin stated there was no June meeting but it is anticipated that the  
50 committee will meet in July.

51  
52 Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) – H. Garrett reported that the TAC met on June 11<sup>th</sup>,  
53 and the main agenda item was reviewing 2021 Transportation Planning Initiative work program.  
54 The board will vote on this later in the meeting.

55  
56 Energy Committee – No update.

57  
58 Brownfields Committee – No update.

59  
60 Regional Plan and Policy Committee – No update.

61  
62 Vermont Economic Progress Council (VEPC) – C. Dimitruk reported that A. Voegelé was unable  
63 to attend tonight’s meeting and while there is a council meeting tomorrow, no projects from  
64 the region will be on the agenda.

65  
66 Green Mountain Transit – C. Dimitruk reported the GMT board met last week to discuss the  
67 budget, review the municipal assessment rate and updated the staff smoking policy. K. Waite  
68 asked about any impact on the federal grant for purchasing additional electric buses. B.  
69 Buermann confirmed GMT has received two buses already and two more are coming. GMT  
70 applied for the next round funding but awards have not yet been announced.

71  
72 Clean Water Advisory Committee – No updates.

73  
74 Healthy Roots Collaborative Advisory Committee – B. Docheff reported the committee met on  
75 June 9<sup>th</sup>. The gleaning program is up and running and while COVID-19 has presented challenges  
76 and additional access issues, there has been a lot of creativity and collaboration to get over  
77 those obstacles. B. Docheff highlighted the online ordering website for farmers markets. He  
78 noted that the next meeting will focus on fundraising strategies to make up for the future  
79 shortfall due to Northwest Medical Center discontinuing their quarterly financial contributions  
80 effective October 1, 2020. B. Morris asked if the fundraising will go directly through NRPC or  
81 through the Northwest Vermont Regional Foundation. C. Dimitruk replied that donations so far  
82 have been able to come directly to NRPC but she would be examining how to utilize the  
83 foundation in the future.

84  
85 Northwest Vermont Regional Foundation – No updates.

86  
87 Office – B. Remmers noted she recently finished a mapping project with VTrans to record past  
88 road flooding damage in the Missisquoi Basin to support the web-based Transportation

89 Resiliency Planning Tool. The tool will help identify vulnerable road areas on state and town  
90 systems. This effort only included mapping past damages in the Missisquoi, but NRPC will use  
91 the new EDA disaster resiliency funding to expand this process for another watershed in the  
92 region.

93

94 C. Dimitruk reported NRPC staff are beginning to discuss reopening the office for partial activity  
95 after expiration of last executive order. Currently all staff are telecommuting except for  
96 occasional check-ins. There was a meeting with FEMA representatives to apply for  
97 reimbursement for extra expenses due to pandemic. This would be primarily for the Healthy  
98 Roots Collaborative because of extra hours and purchasing personal protective equipment.

99

#### 100 **ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND REPRESENTATIVES FOR FY 21**

101 Y. Dandurand reported that the nominating committee put forth the following slate of officers:

102 **Chair:** Kirk Waite

103 **Vice-Chair:** Bill Irwin

104 **Secretary:** Rowena Brown

105 **Treasurer:** Harold Garrett

106 **Chair-Personnel:** Lori Ruple

107 **Chair- Project Review:** Alisha Larocque

108 **Chair- Regional Plan and Policy Committee:** Lynn Douglas

109 **At-large member on Executive Committee:** Laz Scangas

110 **Youth Member to the Board of Commissioners:** Franklin County- Eagan Murphy, Grand Isle  
111 County- vacant

112

113 *K. Waite asked if there were any additional nominations from the floor. None were made.*

114 *R. Noel motioned to close nominations and direct the Secretary to cast a single ballot for the  
115 slate. T. Tatro seconded. The motion carried.*

116

117 J. Farnham reported the following nominations for board representatives:

118 **Vermont Economic Progress Council:** Albin Voegelé

119 **Green Mountain Transit:** Catherine Dimitruk (Franklin County), Bob Buermann (Grand Isle),  
120 Amanda Holland (alternate)

121

122 *K. Waite asked for any floor nominations for the Vermont Economic Progress Council and Green  
123 Mountain Transit. None were made. B. Irwin motioned to close nominations and direct the  
124 Secretary to cast a single ballot for the slate. J. Farnham seconded. The motion carried.*

125

#### 126 **FY 21 OVERALL WORK PROGRAM AND BUDGET**

127 C. Dimitruk gave a brief overview of the Work Program and Budget. The budget has a  
128 conservative approach in terms of both revenue and expenses. There are built-in contingencies  
129 for uncertainty about state funding including an assumed 20% decrease in state planning funds.  
130 For the Transportation Planning Initiative FY 21 contract beginning in October, it is assumed the  
131 state will be unable to cover the 10% match and the regional match will increase from 10% to  
132 20%.

133  
134 There is the addition of two new grants from the Economic Development Administration (EDA).  
135 One is the disaster resiliency grant previously mentioned. The second is through the CARES Act  
136 where the six northern VT counties will receive \$400,000 over two years which can be directed  
137 toward recovery activities. The budget includes a new three-quarter position for two years to  
138 assist with these recovery activities. The budget also includes another position to fill a vacancy  
139 in the Healthy Roots Collaborative.

140  
141 K. Waite noted that even with the conservative budget in terms of revenue, it is showing a  
142 budget surplus at the end of the budget of \$34,000. K. Waite complimented the team that put  
143 work plan and budget together.

144  
145 *B. Buermann moved to approve the FY 21 Workplan and Budget. J. Farnham seconded. The*  
146 *motion carried.*

147  
148 **FY 21 TRANSPORTATION PLANNING INITIATIVE WORKPLAN AND BUDGET**

149 B. Remmers reported that the TAC recommended approval of the workplan at their June  
150 meeting and now approval by the full board was needed. K. Waite asked if there was any issues  
151 or areas of disagreement regarding the work plan brought up at the TAC meeting. B. Remmers  
152 said there was not.

153  
154 *J. Farnham moved to approve the FY 21 Transportation Planning Initiative workplan and budget.*  
155 *E. Nance seconded. The motion carried.*

156  
157 **FY 21 COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS**

158 K. Waite explained there was a description of all the committees in the board packet. If a  
159 member would like to add or change committees, let C. Dimitruk know via email or call. She will  
160 assume a committee member wants to remain on a committee if she does not hear from them.

161  
162 **COMMISSIONER ANNOUCEMENTS**

163 Y. Dandurand reported that the number of participants in Franklin for Green Up Day was down  
164 this year. There were 50 tires picked up and dropped off compared to hundreds of tires last  
165 year. H. Garrett let the board know that there will be no roadside mowing contracts by VTrans  
166 this year due to budget cuts.

167  
168 **ADJOURN**

169 *B. Morris motioned to adjourn. E. Nance seconded. The motion carried.*  
170 *The meeting adjourned at 7:48 PM*

Board of Commissioners  
FY 20  
Attendance

Town	Board Member	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	May	Jun	Total Absences
Frkin Cty Youth	Eagan Murphy	Excused		Excused	Excused			x	x			x	
GI Cty Youth	vacant		N			N				N			
Alburg Town	Alton Bruso		O		x	O		excused	excused	O			
Alburg Town	Terry Tatro	X		X	x			excused	x		x	x	
Alburg Village	Terry Tatro	X	M	X	x	M		excused	x	M	x	x	
Alburg Village	Vacant		E			E				E			
Bakersfield	Bill Irwin	Excused	E	Excused	x	E		x	x	E	x	x	
Bakersfield	vacant		T			T				T			
Berkshire	Vincent Hickey 9/2019		I	Excused	x	I		x	Excused	I	x		
Berkshire	Claude Charron	X	N	X	x	N		Excused	Excused	N			
Enosburg Falls	Leonard Charron	X	G	X		G			x	G	x		
Enosburg Falls	Sean Kio										x		
Enosburgh Town	Sean Kio										x		
Enosburgh Town	vacant												
Fairfax	Colleen Steen	X		X	Excused			x	x			excused	
Fairfax	Brad Docheff	Excused		X	Excused			x	x		x	x	
Fairfield	Alisha Larocque	X		X				x	excused				
Fairfield	Brian Dubie								x	x	x	x	
Fletcher	Lynn Douglas	X		X	x			x	x		x	x	
Fletcher	Lori Ruple	X		X	x			x	x		x	x	
Franklin	Yvon Dandurand	X		Excused	x			x	x		x	x	
Franklin	Wesley Kempton	X		Excused	x				x				
Georgia	Vacant	X											
Georgia	Kirk Waite	X		X	x			x	excused		x	x	
Grand Isle	Barclay Morris	X		X	x			x	x		x	x	
Grand Isle	Howard Demars	X		X	Excused			x	x		x	x	
Highgate	Vacant												
Highgate	Richard Noel	X		X	x			x	x		x	x	
Isle La Motte	Sylvia Jensen	X		X	Excused			x	excused				
Isle La Motte	Paul Hinman												
Montgomery	Charlie Hancock												
Montgomery	Vacant												
North Hero	Andy Alling							x	x		x	x	
North Hero	Vacant												
Richford	Rowena Brown	X		X	x			x	x		x	x	
Richford	Vacant												
Sheldon	Vacant												
Sheldon	Jeff Kane												
South Hero	Joe Farnham	X		X	Excused			x	x	excused	excused	x	
South Hero	Bob Buermann	X		X	x			x	x		x	x	
St. Albans City	Marty Manahan												
St. Albans City	Lazarus Scangas	Excused		X	x			excused	x			excused	
St. Albans Town	Sara Hadd	X		Excused	x			x	x		x	excused	
St. Albans Town	Albin Voegele	X		X	x			x	x		x	excused	
Swanton Town	Harold Garrett	X		X	x			x	x		x	x	
Swanton Town	Ross Lavoie				Excused								
Swanton Village	Elizabeth Nance	X		X	x			excused	x		x	x	
Swanton Village	Neal Speer	X		X				x	x				

# OF MUNICIPALITIES  
QUORUM = 12

18                      17                      15                      16                      16                      19                      16

**Northwest Regional Planning Commission**  
**Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual**  
July 2019 through June 2020

	<u>Jul '19 - Jun 20</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>\$ Over Budget</u>	<u>% of Budget</u>
<b>Income</b>				
4016 - EDA	50,188.06	70,000.00	-19,811.94	71.7%
4026 - Grants in Aid Pilot Program	2,288,391.24	5,331,874.00	-3,043,482.76	42.92%
4027 - Healthy Roots Gleaning Coord	54,898.79	10,000.00	44,898.79	548.99%
4030 - ACCD	246,174.44	259,131.00	-12,956.56	95.0%
4035 - VAOT	156,062.98	225,458.00	-69,395.02	69.22%
4038 - VT Dept of Health CDC-MRC	1,513.39	0.00	1,513.39	100.0%
4045 - Public Safety	73,709.25	69,851.00	3,858.25	105.52%
4047 - Municipal Assessments	60,576.00	60,576.00	0.00	100.0%
4050 - Municipal Contracts	32,727.25	53,500.00	-20,772.75	61.17%
4054 - Other State Grants	262,141.85	243,200.00	18,941.85	107.79%
4055 - Other Federal Grants	341,152.33	367,500.00	-26,347.67	92.83%
4056 - VANR	181,787.79	181,489.00	298.79	100.17%
4059 - RSEP-St. Albans Town & City	8,302.01	10,000.00	-1,697.99	83.02%
4080 - Misc. Income	70,208.98	60,000.00	10,208.98	117.02%
4600 - Interest Income	1,775.47	1,500.00	275.47	118.37%
<b>Total Income</b>	<u>3,829,609.83</u>	<u>6,944,079.00</u>	<u>-3,114,469.17</u>	<u>55.15%</u>
<b>Gross Profit</b>	3,829,609.83	6,944,079.00	-3,114,469.17	55.15%
<b>Expense</b>				
5010 - Salaries & Wages	627,286.12	589,600.00	37,686.12	106.39%
5015 - Employer Social Security	37,702.20	36,555.20	1,147.00	103.14%
5016 - Employer Medicare	8,817.46	8,549.20	268.26	103.14%
5020 - Fringe Benefits	111,255.41	117,018.00	-5,762.59	95.08%
5030 - Travel	12,237.46	11,900.00	337.46	102.84%
5040 - Advertising	2,198.05	4,350.00	-2,151.95	50.53%
5055 - Insurance-Liability	7,354.33	7,500.00	-145.67	98.06%
5060 - Library	204.80	0.00	204.80	100.0%
5080 - Meetings	9,278.77	15,500.00	-6,221.23	59.86%
5085 - Membership Dues	12,308.00	14,000.00	-1,692.00	87.91%
5090 - Technology and GIS	7,889.59	7,000.00	889.59	112.71%
5095 - Software	15,258.71	10,000.00	5,258.71	152.59%
5100 - Supplies & Furniture	35,629.48	13,700.00	21,929.48	260.07%
5660 - Postage	1,884.80	3,000.00	-1,115.20	62.83%
5680 - Printing & Copies	3,139.89	5,000.00	-1,860.11	62.8%
5700 - Telephone	7,467.67	6,300.00	1,167.67	118.53%
6300 - Professional Services	3,013,544.75	5,966,258.00	-2,952,713.25	50.51%
6400 - Building/Utilities	40,517.36	89,508.00	-48,990.64	45.27%
6560 - Payroll Expenses	1,295.50	0.00	1,295.50	100.0%
<b>Total Expense</b>	<u>3,955,270.35</u>	<u>6,905,738.40</u>	<u>-2,950,468.05</u>	<u>57.28%</u>
	-125,660.52			

**Open Invoices as of June 30, 2020 \$69,465.07**

Franklin County Industrial Dev Corp - outstanding mortgage  
NEFCU - outstanding mortgage

**Original Mortgage**

**\$98,323.86      \$130,000**  
**\$77,003.18      \$92,433.39**

## Northwest Regional Planning Commission

## Balance Sheet

As of June 30, 2020

	<u>Jun 30, 20</u>
<b>ASSETS</b>	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
1000 · People's Checking Account	32,477.69
1020 · People's Money Market Account	125,960.56
1035 · New England Federal Cr-1Year CD	43,879.01
1036 · New England Fed Cr-CD 5 Year	62,717.60
1040 · Union Bank	52,901.30
1080 · Petty Cash	9.05
Total Checking/Savings	<u>317,945.21</u>
Accounts Receivable	
1200 · Accounts Receivable	<u>69,465.07</u>
Total Accounts Receivable	69,465.07
Other Current Assets	
1400 · Prepaid Software	<u>606.84</u>
Total Other Current Assets	<u>606.84</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>388,017.12</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b><u>388,017.12</u></b>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	
2000 · Accounts Payable	<u>18,003.52</u>
Total Accounts Payable	18,003.52
Other Current Liabilities	
Payroll Liabilities	-62.32
2100 · Employee Health Ins. Payable	180.97
2106 · Dental Insurance Payable	-242.84
2110 · Choice Care	7,656.34
2111 · Direct Deposit Liabilities	0.05
2120 · Accrued Payroll	17,458.94
2130 · Accrued Vacation	29,002.45
2213 · VT Tax Withholding Payable	1,179.22
2215 · Retirement Payable	<u>4,213.09</u>
Total Other Current Liabilities	<u>59,385.90</u>
Total Current Liabilities	<u>77,389.42</u>
Total Liabilities	77,389.42
Equity	
3000 · Opening Bal Equity	270,000.00
3900 · Fund Balance	166,288.22
Net Income	<u>-125,660.52</u>
Total Equity	<u>310,627.70</u>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<b><u>388,017.12</u></b>



**To:** NRPC Regional Commissioners  
**From:** Amanda Holland, Regional Planner  
**Date:** July 23, 2020

**Re:** RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING CONFORMANCE OF THE DRAFT NORTHERN LAKE CHAMPLAIN TACTICAL BASIN PLAN WITH THE 2015-2023 NORTHWEST REGIONAL PLAN

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On May 21, 2020 the NRPC Clean Water Advisory Committee (CWAC) reviewed and recommended to the board the proposed staff review and recommendations for regional conformance with the Draft Northern Lake Champlain Tactical Basin Plan.

State statute requires the VT Department of Environmental Conservation to seek input from the regional planning commissions on basin plans. Statute also requires regional planning commissions to provide a written analysis and formal recommendation from their Board of Commissioners on conformance of the draft basin plan with the goals and objectives of the regional plan.

Enclosed is a copy of the draft memorandum that reviews the relative conformance of the Draft Northern Lake Champlain Direct Drainages Tactical Basin Plan dated July 2020 with the Goals, Policies, and Actions of the 2015-2023 Northwest Regional Plan and to provide additional recommendations.



**Date:** July 23, 2020

**To:** Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, Department of Environmental Conservation

**From:** Northwest Regional Planning Commission

**Re:** RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING CONFORMANCE OF THE DRAFT NORTHERN LAKE CHAMPLAIN TACTICAL BASIN PLAN WITH THE 2015-2023 NORTHWEST REGIONAL PLAN

The Northwest Regional Planning Commission has reviewed the *Draft Northern Lake Champlain Tactical Basin Plan, dated July 2020*. NRPC would like to commend ANR staff on the excellent analysis and presentation of all the known water quality data in the Draft Northern Lake Champlain Tactical Basin Plan.

The purpose of this memorandum is to analyze the relative conformance of the Draft Tactical Basin Plan with the relevant Goals, Policies and recommended Actions of the *Regional Plan* and to provide recommendations regarding project implementation and prioritization.

#### **BACKGROUND**

Northwest Regional Planning Commission has the opportunity to provide recommendations to the Agency of Natural Resources regarding tactical basin plans pursuant to the following sections of Vermont Statutes Title 10, Chapter 47, §1253(d)

- (2)(G) ... *the Secretary [of Natural Resources] shall: develop, in consultation with the regional planning commission, an analysis and formal recommendation on conformance with the goals and objectives of applicable regional plans.*
- (3)(D) ... *[the regional planning commissions are to] assist the Secretary in implementing a project evaluation process to prioritize water quality improvement projects within the region to assure cost effective use of State and federal funds.*

The Northern Lake Champlain Basin includes drainage from the following Franklin County and Grand Isle County towns: Alburgh, Fairfax, Fairfield, Georgia, Grand Isle, Isle la Motte, North Hero, St. Albans Town, St. Albans City South Hero, Swanton.

NRPC staff completed a review of the Draft Northern Lake Champlain Tactical Basin Plan, dated 5/7/2020 and staff then presented the review to the CWAC on 5/21/2020 for comment. Staff confirmed the review with the formal public draft, dated July 2020 and the then presented the review to the Board of Commissions on 7/30/2020 for review and approval. Based upon this process the NRPC presents these comments to the VT Agency of Natural Resources.

**CONFORMANCE WITH THE REGIONAL PLAN**

The Northwest Regional Plan has three main sections: Economic Region, Social Region and Physical Region. Each of these sections has goals and policies that are relevant to the draft tactical basin plan. The Regional Plan has six guiding principles, all of which are in conformance with the draft tactical basin plan:

- Provide more transportation choices.
- Promote equitable, affordable housing.
- Enhance economic competitiveness.
- Support existing communities.
- Coordinate and leverage state, local and federal policies and investment.
- Value communities and neighborhoods.

The following table details how the Tactical Basin Plan’s Objectives by Sector are in conformance with and supportive of specific Goals, Policies, and Actions of the 2015-2023 Northwest Regional Plan.

Draft Northern Lake Champlain Direct Drainages Tactical Basin Plan, Chapter 4. Objectives dated July 2020	Conformance with Goals, Policies, and Actions of 2015-2023 Northwest Regional Plan
<p><b>AGRICULTURE:</b> Conservation Practices that reduce sources of pollution from farm production areas and farm fields.</p>	<p><b>ECONOMIC REGION, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - Goal 1, Policy c:</b>                      1. Improve the health of citizens and businesses by supporting the region’s unique geography and landscape.                      c. Support efforts to ensure that the working landscape—including agriculture, forestry and value-added production—remains a key sector in the region’s economy.</p> <p><b>PHYSICAL REGION, LAND USE - Goal 2, Policy d:</b>                      2. Maintain healthy and diverse forest and conservation areas as well as a strong working landscape, including agriculture and forestry.                      d. Maintain all right-to-farm protections for agricultural operations that have acceptable agricultural practices.</p>
<p><b>COMMENT:</b> The strategies for the agricultural sector in the tactical basin plan are focused on providing outreach and educational resources for this sector as a means to aid compliance with regulations and encourage additional best management practice adoption. The continued support for these programs that aid producers in accessing funding and technical assistance as well as the partners that provide them is important to ensure that the working landscape remains a key feature of the region’s economy.</p>	
<p><b>DEVELOPED LANDS – STORMWATER:</b> Practices that reduce or treat polluted stormwater runoff from developed lands such as parking lots, sidewalks and rooftops.</p>	<p><b>PHYSICAL REGION, LAND USE - Goal 1, Policies a-c:</b>                      1. Ensure the region continues to be characterized by compact villages and growth centers separated by rural countryside and the working landscape.                      a. Support infill and redevelopment of designated growth centers or existing strip development areas over new commercial strip development.</p>

	<p>b. Locate intensive residential development primarily in areas within or related to designated growth areas.</p> <p>c. Ensure that residential development is clustered outside of growth centers, downtowns and villages in order to work with the landscape in terms of energy efficiency, protection of ecologically sensitive areas and conservation of farmland.</p> <p><b>PHYSICAL REGION, NATURAL &amp; CULTURAL RESOURCES - Goal 3, Policies b-d:</b></p> <p>3. Maintain or improve the quality of lakes, ponds, rivers, streams and groundwater.</p> <p>b. Ensure that development mitigates the anticipated effects on water quality through Low Impact Development techniques, such as limiting the amount of impervious surface on a site and incorporating adequate amounts of vegetation, trees and shrubs to aid in stormwater treatment.</p> <p>c. Improve surface water quality and protect it from point and non-point nutrient loading.</p> <p>d. Maintain and expand vegetative buffers of sufficient width as a tool for improving water quality and protecting habitat.</p>
<p><b>COMMENT:</b> Together the provided Land Use Goals and Policies help to implement Vermont’s statutory planning goal of compact villages and urban centers surrounded by rural countryside and working landscape. Because of the nature of Vermont’s historic development patterns, some of the areas already developed and identified for future growth (see Alburgh Village, St. Albans City and St. Albans Town on map 9 in the regional plan) are also located within or adjacent to river corridors and Lake Champlain. The tactical basin plan language states support for providing both regulatory and non-regulatory assistance to communities in identifying and implementing stormwater related BMPs; this support is critical to sustain our existing villages and centers.</p> <p>The tactical basin plan strategies focus on the management of stormwater as it pertains to existing development. Equal value should be placed on reducing stormwater impacts of new development. The progress made by the state to improve standards (updated stormwater manual) and lower the threshold to applicability should be mentioned in the plan as well as the importance of green infrastructure and low impact development techniques.</p>	
<p><b>DEVELOPED LANDS – ROADS:</b> Stormwater and roadside erosion control practices that prevent erosion and treat road-related sources of pollution.</p>	<p><b>PHYSICAL REGION, TRANSPORTATION - Goal 3, Policy a:</b></p> <p>3. Ensure the transportation network enhances residents’ overall quality of life, supports regional land use goals and expands economic opportunities.</p> <p>a. Ensure that construction and maintenance of the transportation network minimizes negative impacts on natural, cultural and scenic resources.</p>

<p><b>COMMENT:</b> The tactical basin plan outlines recommendations and strategies to continue the current commitment of support to municipalities in meeting the Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP). This support is critical to ensure the municipalities have the resources they need to the transportation system minimizes impacts to natural resources. The plan also highlights the need for partners to provide assistance to private landowners in the maintenance of roads; this recommendation is crucial as it acknowledges an issue that has been identified by several municipalities. The link between public and private roadways will need to be addressed for the municipalities to effectively meet their requirements under the MRGP.</p>	
<p><b>WASTEWATER:</b> Improvements to municipal wastewater infrastructure that decrease pollution from municipal wastewater systems through treatment upgrades, combined sewer overflow (CSA) abatement, and refurbishment of aging infrastructure.</p>	<p><b>PHYSICAL REGION, INFRASTRUCTURE: WASTEWATER &amp; STORMWATER – Goal 2, Policies b-c:</b></p> <p>2. Residents, communities and businesses will have solid waste disposal, wastewater treatment systems and stormwater treatment methods that are cost-effective and environmentally sound.</p> <p>b. Creative inter-municipal and public/private partnerships that promote cost-savings for providing wastewater and stormwater treatment are encouraged.</p> <p>c. Long-range community facility plans and capital budgets will guide the creation, upgrade or expansion of wastewater and stormwater treatment systems.</p> <p><b>PHYSICAL REGION, NATURAL &amp; CULTURAL RESOURCES - Goal 3, Policy c:</b></p> <p>3. Maintain or improve the quality of lakes, ponds, rivers, streams and groundwater.</p> <p>c. Improve surface water quality and protect it from point and non-point nutrient loading.</p>
<p><b>COMMENT:</b> NRPC supports the position of the tactical basin plan to “employ flexibility in helping municipalities meet LC TMDL targets for their WWTF” with flexible compliance schedules and other measures as noted in the plan under this section.</p>	
<p><b>NATURAL RESOURCE RESTORATION:</b> Restoration of “natural infrastructure” functions that prevent and abate pollution. Natural infrastructure includes: floodplains, river channels, lakeshores, wetlands, and forest lands.</p> <p>Supported by the following Strategy sub-categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Forests,</li> <li>- Rivers,</li> <li>- Lakeshore, and</li> <li>- Wetlands</li> </ul>	<p><b>ECONOMIC REGION, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - Goal 1, Policy c:</b></p> <p>1. Improve the health of citizens and businesses by supporting the region’s unique geography and landscape.</p> <p>c. Support efforts to ensure that the working landscape—including agriculture, forestry and value-added production—remains a key sector in the region’s economy.</p> <p><b>PHYSICAL REGION, LAND USE - Goal 2:</b></p> <p>2. Maintain healthy and diverse forest and conservation areas as well as a strong working landscape, including agriculture and forestry.</p> <p><b>PHYSICAL REGION, NATURAL &amp; CULTURAL RESOURCES - Goal 1, Policies d and e:</b></p>

	<p>Goal 1. Protect significant natural resources, including air, wetlands, wildlife, lakes, ponds, woodlands, earth resources, open spaces, groundwater resources and wildlife habitat.</p> <p>d. Ensure that development in floodplain areas does not impede the flow of flood waters or endanger public health, safety and welfare.</p> <p>e. Locate and configure land development to avoid the fragmentation of and adverse impacts to natural areas, critical wildlife habitat and connectivity areas identified in the regional plan or local plans by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, or through site investigation.</p> <p><b><u>SOCIAL REGION, INFRASTRUCTURE-RECREATION - Goal 3, Policy 3c:</u></b></p> <p>3. Offer high-quality, sustainable recreational land, facilities and programs that meet the recreational needs of current and future generations.</p> <p>c. Promote the development of abundant opportunities for public access to the region’s waters and shorelines.</p>
<p><b>COMMENT:</b> The forestry section of the tactical basin plan contains a limited analysis of the status of forestry and forest blocks in the basin. The tactical basin plan states that a 5% reduction target is needed for the forestland sector in this basin with the focus on regulatory compliance with the AAMPs as well as voluntary implementation of BMPs. Given the important role forests play in the region as a part of the working landscape, the plan recommendations to provide resources to silvicultural operations is important to aid the viability of this sector of the regional economy. Two strategies in the basin plan refer to providing financial and technical assistance to landowners and loggers for the use of best practices. NRPC completed a <i>Forest Stewardship Plan</i> in 2014 that examined forestry blocks, production potential, ecological values and water resources in the region’s forests. The recommendations in the tactical basin plan are consistent with the Forest Stewardship Plan.</p> <p>The tactical basin plan should support a strategy similar to NRPC’s <i>Natural &amp; Cultural Resources Goal 1, Policy e</i> to protect the intact-forested landscape and significant wetland communities to reduce resource fragmentation. This is important to minimize future increases in phosphorus from the fragmentation of forested lands.</p> <p>In relation to rivers, the basin plan discusses protection strategies that are not in conflict with the regional plan provided the plan is not interpreted to prohibit development broadly in these areas in order to achieve a stable stream system. The basin plan should explicitly recognize this potential conflict and support municipalities in their efforts to plan for and regulate new development or re-development in these areas.</p> <p>The waters of the Lake Champlain are extremely important as a recreational resource, adding to the economy and the overall quality of life. The tactical basin plan however does not contain any strategies that are directly related to recreation. The tactical basin plan does contain several strategies that indirectly relate to recreation such as increasing water quality monitoring to improve the understanding of surface water conditions, support for the control aquatic invasive species, and educational programs for boaters (prevent invasive spread) and shoreline landowners (address erosion and stormwater) on opportunities for action. NRPC recommends that these identified monitoring and outreach strategies</p>	

continue to be supported with a DEC funding program given their tie to supporting recreational uses of our waters and shorelines.

## **PLAN CONFORMANCE CONCLUSION**

The draft Northern Lake Champlain Tactical Basin Plan dated July 2020 is in conformance with and supportive of the Goals, Policies, and Actions of 2015-2023 Northwest Regional Plan.

## **PROJECT PRIORITY AND IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS**

NRPC recommends that RPCs, through their Clean Water Advisory Committee be allowed to provide input to DEC's prioritization scoring system as intended by statute: Title 10, Chapter 47, §1253(d)(3)(D) ... [the regional planning commissions are to] *assist the Secretary in implementing a project evaluation process to prioritize water quality improvement projects within the region to assure cost effective use of State and federal funds.* This regional role can provide input on the co-benefits of projects that should also receive additional consideration in making funding decisions such as hazard mitigation, transportation improvement, aquatic organism passage, and/or listed in municipal comprehensive plans and capital plans. We look forward to being able to participate more fully as a partner in evaluating and scoring projects as required in Chapter 47 §1253(d)(3)(D).

NRPC recommends that more funding be allocated towards project development at this early stage so that in subsequent years it will be easier to determine which projects reduce the most phosphorous per dollar. At this stage of Basin Planning to achieve the Lake Champlain TMDL, many projects do not have clear scopes, costs, or phosphorus reduction estimates. As these are developed, NRPC will offer more additional comments regarding specific project priorities.

NRPC also recommends that for project implementation, priority be given to those projects that reduce the most phosphorus per dollar spent. Additional weight should be given to projects located in catchment areas and sub-basins with multiple high-priority reduction targets.

Thank you for your consideration of our recommendations.



# Northern Lake Champlain Direct Drainages Tactical Basin Plan



**Burlington Waterfront, Lake Champlain**

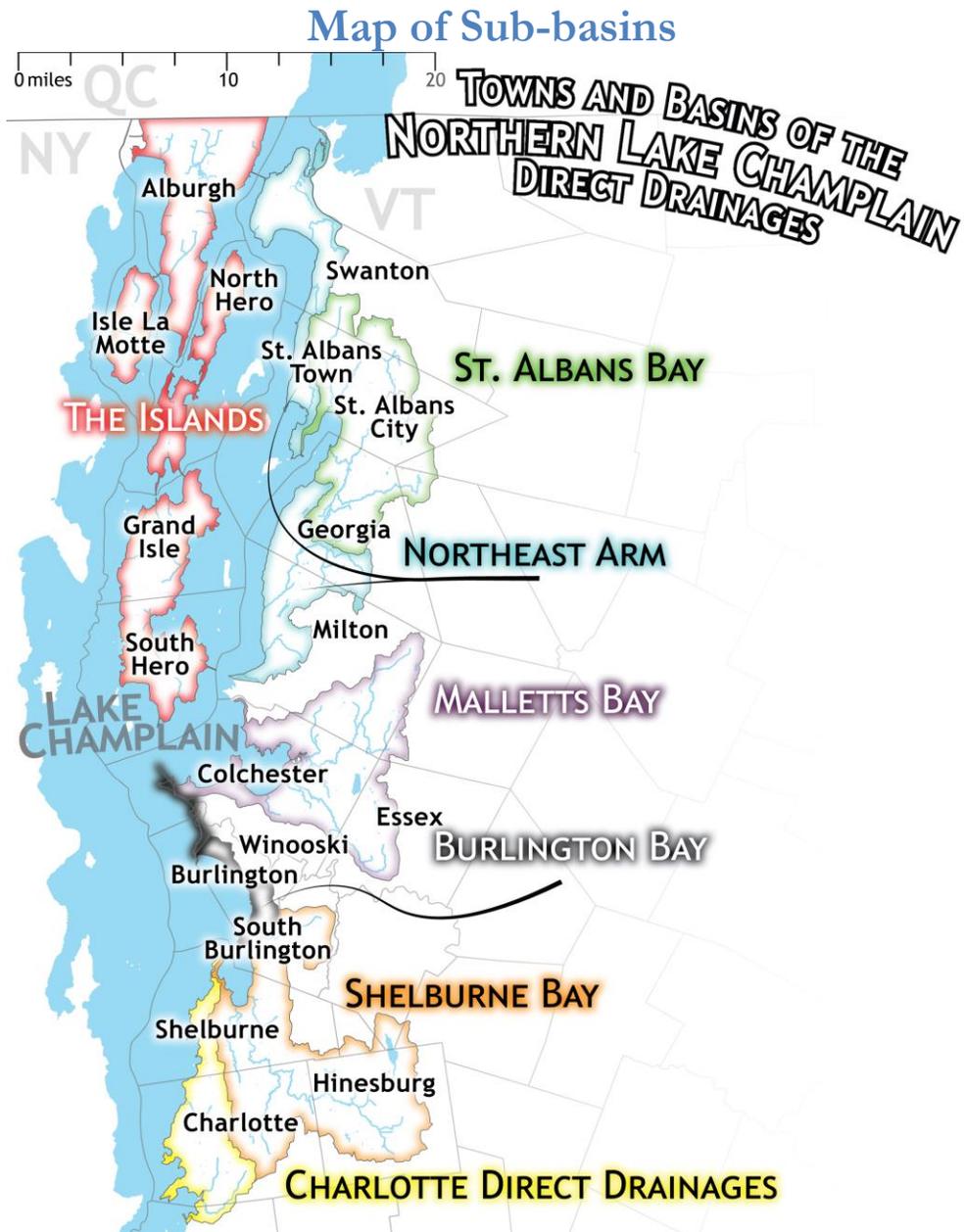
**July 2020 | Draft**

Tactical Basin Plan was prepared in accordance with 10 VSA § 1253(d), the Vermont Water Quality Standards, the Federal Clean Water Act and 40 CFR 130.6, and the Vermont Surface Water Management Strategy.

# Northern Lake Champlain Direct Basin Municipalities

Alburgh	Ferrisburgh*	St. Albans City	Williston*
Burlington	Georgia	St. Albans Town	Westford*
Charlotte	Grand Isle	St. George*	
Colchester	Hinesburg	Shelburne	
Essex Junction	Isle Le Motte	South Burlington	
Essex Town	Milton	South Hero	
Fairfield*	North Hero	Swanton	

\*Only a very small area of the municipalities is in the watershed and not included in map below.

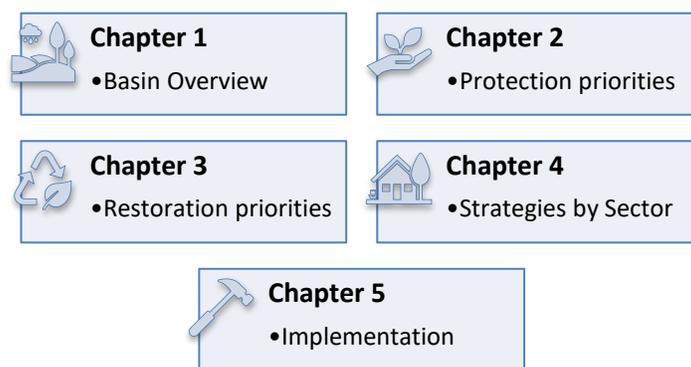


## Executive Summary

The Northern Lake Champlain Direct Drainages (Basin 5) Tactical Basin Plan is a water quality management plan to protect, maintain, enhance, and restore the quality of the basin’s surface waters. The overriding goal is for surface waters to meet or exceed Vermont Water Quality Standards. The [North Lake Basin assessments](#) report provides background to support the Plan’s actions including assessments of wetlands, lakes and rivers.

The Vermont Clean Water Act requires the development and adoption of Tactical Basin Plans for each of Vermont’s 15 river basins on a five-year rotational cycle. These plans integrate watershed modeling, water quality monitoring, sector-specific pollution source assessments, and stakeholder input to document geographically explicit actions. The Agency of Natural Resources is assisted in the implementation of the plans through a combination of state and federal funding sources, partner support (Appendix A) and the public rulemaking process for certain protection efforts.

The five chapters in this plan are a framework for understanding Basin 5’s unique characteristics and water quality issues, and where and how to implement projects to protect and restore water quality in the basin.



The surface waters in Basin 5 provide recreational and aesthetic opportunities, drinking water, agricultural irrigation, and habitat for plant and animal communities. Chapter 1 describes the surface water conditions, including: the predominant pollutants degrading these uses (phosphorus, sediment, pathogens, and toxins); as well as other stressors present in the basin (aquatic invasive species and altered flows.)

The main sources of the top three pollutants, elevated phosphorus, sediment, and pathogens include agricultural, urban and road runoff, and eroding river channels. Many actions taken to address these pollutants will also achieve required reductions in phosphorus loading to Lake Champlain (detailed pollution reduction targets, known as the Lake Champlain TMDL Phase II content, are provided in Chapter 3).

In Chapter 2, the plan describes management goals for Basin 5 surface waters and includes proposals for reclassification based on monitoring data that will contribute to efforts to protect surface waters, see below:

Waterbody	Town	Current Classification	Monitoring and assessment data suggests that surface water meets criteria for a different classification
Colchester Pond	Colchester	A2	B2 for all uses
Milton Pond	Milton	A2	B2 for all uses
Mud Creek	Alburgh	Class II Wetland	Class I Wetland
Sand Bar wetland	South Hero	Class I Wetland	NA
Trout Brook (section)	Milton	B2	B1 for aquatic biota
Malletts Creek Tributary 7	Milton	B2	Additional monitoring needed to confirm condition meets B1
North Shore Wetland	Burlington	Class I Wetland	NA
LaPlatte River Wetlands	Shelburne	Class I Wetland	NA

Chapter 3 includes Phase II content for the Lake Champlain Phosphorus Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) that augments Phase II content initially presented in the 2017 Basin 5 Tactical Basin Plan. The Phase II content established target phosphorus load reductions from the basin to Lake Champlain and includes high-resolution phosphorus load modeling and projected phosphorus reductions for smaller sub-watershed as well as by types of sources (wastewater treatment plants, developed lands stormwater, roads, forestry and agricultural). In addition, Chapter 4 describes progress made in developing associated regulatory programs as well as permittee compliance leading to the practices that will work towards meeting the phosphorus load allocations. The TMDL as well as the associated Phase I Implementation Plan both point to issuance of this plan as a component of the accountability framework.

Chapter 4 provides an overview of progress made to date and provides a guide for the next 5 years to address pollution from land use sectors contributing to water quality issues. Information from assessments in the basin and derived from public input have been compiled to guide the development of strategies for the following sectors: agriculture, developed lands—stormwater and roads, wastewater treatment facilities, and restoration of forest lands, lakes, rivers, and wetlands.

Chapter 5 includes a total of 40 strategies in the implementation table as well as a list of surface waters identified for water quality monitoring. Individual implementation projects are listed in the [Watershed Projects Database](#), which includes geographically explicit actions to protect, maintain, enhance and restore .

The strategies are supported by sector-based recommendations in Chapter 4 as well as the following strategies and identified focus areas summarized from the Chapter 5 Implementation Table:

Focus Areas (HUC12 in Bold)	Priority Strategies
<b>Agriculture</b>	
<b>Mud Creek, St. Albans Bay</b> (and Swanton shoreline), <b>Jewett Brook, Lake Champlain, LaPlatte River, Hoisington Brook,</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support outreach and technical and financial assistance for Best Management Practices and Required Agricultural Practices to reduce erosion off fields, manage stormwater off production areas, enhance riparian buffers, develop, and implement nutrient management plans. Promote adoption of stewardship practices through award program,</li> <li>• Continue nutrient management planning</li> <li>• Coordinate with agricultural service providers to provide cross training</li> </ul>
<b>Developed Lands – Stormwater</b>	
Stormwater impaired streams and those trending towards impairment: Allen, Munroe and upper LaPlatte. Malletts Bay: Smith Hollow and Crooked Creek; Islands: Keeler Bay Areas with high landslide potential,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and implement stormwater master plans, Flow Restoration and Phosphorus Control Plans</li> <li>• Support landowners to meet compliance with the Three-Acre General Permit</li> <li>• Encourage residential Best Management Practices with social marketing practices</li> <li>• Assist landowners in managing stormwater off private roads</li> <li>• Assist road crews and contractors in adopting winter ice management that results in reduced use of chlorides (also below)</li> </ul>
<b>Developed Lands – Roads</b>	
All town roads have a complete Road Erosion Inventory (REI) Private roads in priority HUC12s like LaPlatte River and Islands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete Road Erosion Inventories (REIs) and implement BMPs on high priority road segments.</li> <li>• Provide and support training for road crews on culvert replacements and maintenance of road BMPs</li> </ul>
<b>Wastewater</b>	
Hinesburg, South Burlington, Residential Septic health: Lake Iroquois, Lake Champlain Islands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support upgrades and optimize phosphorus removal from WWTF to meet TMDL allocation.</li> <li>• Promote proper septic system maintenance and explore opportunities for community wastewater.</li> </ul>
<b>Natural Resources – Rivers</b>	
All Rivers with following priorities: Jewett	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and implement river corridor remediation</li> </ul>

Focus Areas (HUC12 in Bold)	Priority Strategies
Brook, Stevens Brook Mil River, LaPlatte River, See Table 18 for dams	<p>projects including shoreline reforestation, floodplain restoration, dam removal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist towns with culvert replacement to improve geomorphic compatibility with streams</li> <li>• Provide outreach to communities on floodplain and river corridor protections.</li> <li>• Identify river corridor and wetlands easements, and riparian area restoration</li> </ul>
<b>Natural Resources – Lakes</b>	
Lake Iroquois, Lake Champlain shoreline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restore forest cover on shorelands, improve septic system performance, reduce erosion from shoreland residential properties and roads</li> <li>• Support aquatic invasive species spread prevention and management efforts.</li> </ul>
<b>Natural Resources – Wetlands</b>	
<p><b>Class I Wetland Candidate: Mud Brook</b>  <b>Priority</b>  <b>Conserve: Wetlands adjacent to Vermont Wildlife Management Areas</b>  <b>Restoration: see the <a href="#">DEC RCPP Wetland Restoration Site Prioritization Map</a></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct studies on potential Class I candidates and support local outreach to municipalities and landowners to gauge interest in supporting Class I designations.</li> <li>• Provide technical support for parties interested in submitting petitions.</li> <li>• Support wetland restoration and conservation</li> </ul>
<b>Natural Resources – Forests</b>	
High TP loading watersheds in Phase II plan including <b>Mill River, Malletts Creek, LaPlatte River</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and remediate erosion from logging roads and landings with high erosion potential.</li> <li>• Provide outreach, technical assistance, and workshops on Acceptable Management Practices and Current Use Program</li> <li>• Support forestland conservation and skidder bridge program.</li> </ul>

# What is a Tactical Basin Plan?

Tactical basin plans (TBPs) are developed in accordance with the [Vermont Surface Water Management Strategy](#) (VSWMS) and the [Vermont Water Quality Standards](#) (VWQS) to protect, maintain, enhance, and restore the biological, chemical, and physical integrity of Vermont’s water resources<sup>1</sup>. The basin specific water quality goals, objectives, and strategies aim to protect public health and safety and ensure public use and enjoyment of Vermont waters. As a result, these plans can be considered a strategic guidebook for the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) and watershed partners to protect and restore Vermont’s surface waters.

The tactical basin planning process allows for the issuance of plans for Vermont’s fifteen basins every five years, as required by statute 10 V.S.A. § 1253. Updating a basin plan includes the following steps (Figure 1):

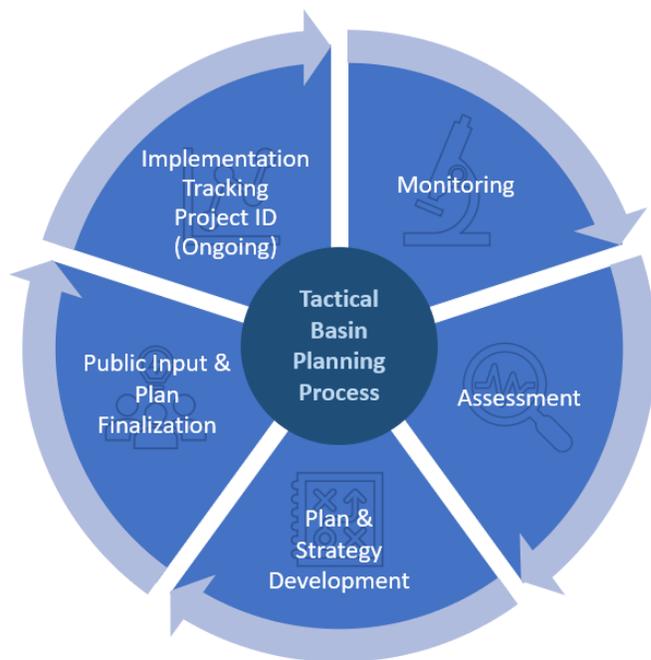


Figure 1. Five-year tactical basin planning process and outcomes

1. monitoring water quality and summarizing existing information,
2. assessing and analyzing water quality data,
3. identifying strategies and projects to protect and restore waters; and
4. seeking public comment.

Throughout the entire five-year planning cycle, plan implementation, tracking, and project identification occurs.

Based on surface water monitoring and assessment results, the plans identify opportunities for protection through special state designations as well as conservation of the natural landscape.

Plans also identify opportunities for restoration through reduction of pollutants and stressors. When appropriate, the plans set out the pollutant reductions needed to restore water quality through development of Total Maximum Daily Loads.<sup>2</sup> In the Chapter 5. Implementation Table, strategies,

<sup>1</sup> The TBPs also incorporate the U.S Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) 9-element framework for watershed plans (Environmental Protection Agency, 2008) and meet obligations of the Vermont Clean Water Act

<sup>2</sup> Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) establish a pollution reduction budget for phosphorus, that requires the reduction of pollutants through regulatory programs as well as voluntary restoration opportunities. See Chapter 3 for detailed explanation.

including education and outreach opportunities as well as protection and restoration actions, are identified along with eligible federal and state-funding sources and partners willing to assist in implementation of actions.

Watershed partners assist the ANR in the development of the plan as well as implementation. Northern Lake Champlain Direct Drainages (North Lake Basin) planning benefits from the participation of at least 9 groups. They provide volunteer-collected data to augment the Agency's assessment data and they participate in development of strategies during the planning process (see Appendix A, Table 21). In the next rendition of the North Lake Basin Plan, partners roles will be formalized as an outcome of [Act 76 of 2019](#), which is further described at the end of Chapter 3.

Projects completed to meet the Plan's strategies, described in Chapter 5's Implementation Table, are tracked via the online [Watershed Projects Database](#) (WPD). The WPD is continuously updated to capture project information from the planning process, projects identified by assessments or watershed partners. The WPD is continuously updated to capture project information from the TBP process, on the ground assessments, and emerging projects due to natural and anthropogenic events.

ANR's [Clean Water Portal](#) is an online platform that houses a variety of clean water tools to assist with project planning, searching existing projects, funding opportunities. Tools on the portal used for watershed planning include:

- Clean Water Project Explorer
- Watershed Projects Database (WPD) Search
- Water Quality Project Screening Tool
- Funding Opportunities Tool
- Stormwater Treatment Practice (STP) Calculator
- Clean Water Dashboard

## **Committee and Staff Reports, July 2020**

### **Finance/Operations – Harold Garrett**

The Finance Committee did not meet.

### **Personnel Committee- Joe Farnham**

The Committee did not meet. Interviews are underway for the Healthy Roots Coordinator position.

### **Executive Committee- Kirk Waite**

The Committee will meet in August, date to be determined.

### **Project Review – Alisha Larocque**

The committee meeting was rescheduled from July 8<sup>th</sup> meeting to July 29<sup>th</sup>, prior to the board meeting. Agenda items included a Perrigo Nutritionals proposed expansion plan and the St Albans Pool Act 250 proposal.

### **Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) – Harold Garrett**

The committee did not meet.

### **Energy Committee- Bob Buermann**

The committee did not meet.

### **Brownfields Committee – Laz Scangas**

The committee met on July 20 and approved funding for a Phase 2 Assessment at 64 Lower Weldon, the former diesel generation plant currently owned by Green Mountain Power. The funding is conditioned on St. Albans City gaining site access either through agreement or purchase of the site, which they plan to develop into an underground stormwater treatment facility. We are awaiting sampling results for assessments completed at 200 Bridge Street, Fonda and the Young Landfill. Phase 1 Assessments are delayed at the 60 Noyes St in Richford and the Enosburgh National Guard Armory. The NRPC revolving loan fund award was increased to \$200,000 in supplemental funds from the US EPA which can be used for cleanup at the Fonda site in addition to other sites in the region.

### **Regional Plan Committee- Lynn Douglas**

The committee did not meet.

### **Vermont Economic Progress Council (VEPC) – Al Voegele**

Report to be provided.

### **GMT- Bob Buermann/Catherine Dimitruk**

The GMT Board met 7/21. The Board extended hazard pay, reviewed financial reports and elected officers.

### **Clean Water Advisory Committee- Staff**

The committee did not meet.

### Transportation

- The Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail (MVRT) Marketing and Wayfinding project, including installation of signage and new kiosks continues. Project deliverables and drafts are posted on the project's website ([www.mvrailtrail.org/mvrtproject.php](http://www.mvrailtrail.org/mvrtproject.php)), including a new trail logo. It is anticipated that this signage will be installed before the end of the year.
- NRPC serves as the Municipal Project Manager for several transportation projects. Current project highlights include:

- ~ Franklin culvert- The Request for Proposals for design engineering services was released on July 1. It is anticipated that an engineering firm will be selected and under contract by August 24<sup>th</sup>.
- ~ Montgomery bank stabilization-staff is moving forward with to contract with Dubois & King to provide design services for this project.
- ~ Swanton MVU Sidewalk- The Town received four proposals from engineering firms. It is anticipated that a design firm will be selected by mid-August.
- Bridge B1 on VT Route 104a over Arrow Head Lake in Georgia will be closed from July 15-August 19, 2020 for the bridge replacement project. More information can be found at <https://resources.vtrans.vermont.gov/factsheet/default.aspx?pin=18B265>
- Staff provided technical assistance to the Town of Franklin on the Gallop Rd /Richards Rd intersection and staff begin reviewing the preliminary paving plans for VT Route 120 in Franklin and Sheldon.
- Staff coordinated a Road Safety Audit Review for the VT Route 104/VT Route 128/McNall Rd intersections in Fairfax which was held on July 21<sup>st</sup>.

### Emergency Management

- COVID-19 response / recovery support for state, municipalities and regional partner organizations. The Federal Declaration (FEMA DR4532) was made on 4/8/2020 and remains open. The Governor's Executive Order extended the current state of emergency through 8/15/2020.
  - ~ Participating in a range of state briefings and disseminating relevant information as needed to communities and partners topics.
  - ~ Continue to answer variety of questions for communities regarding range of COVID-19 topics including implementing Governor's Executive Orders, food distribution, ACCD, AHS and CDC guidance, participating in bi-weekly HEOC/SEOC/Local EMD calls, etc.
  - ~ Administrative support for NWVT Medical Reserve Corps volunteers
  - ~ Provided maps for non-profits and volunteers related to COVID-19 related activities.
- Assisted Swanton Town and Village with finalizing 2020 Local Emergency Management Plan.
- Achieved FEMA approval for Mitigation Plans for Bakersfield, Fairfield, and Highgate.
- Assisting communities of Fletcher, Richford and Swanton Town and Village with finalizing FEMA Hazard Mitigation Plans.
- Staff applied for a Supplemental Emergency Management Performance Grant to assess public Wi-Fi hotspots in the region. The goal is to deliver at least 2 public Wi-Fi hotspots per community.

### GIS

- Worked on a display for the Sheldon Historical Society showing locations and history of past post offices.
- Continued to work on updating each municipality's Road Atlas and the Community Maps.

### Municipal Planning

- Staff provided technical assistance to Berkshire, Enosburg Falls, Fairfield, North Hero, Sheldon, South Hero, Fletcher and Richford.
- Staff continued to provide grant management assistance to the Town of Alburgh and Alburgh School District for a project funded through a Vermont Community Development Planning Grant and a Northern Border Regional Commission grant for the child care facility. This month NRPC staff managed a contract for architectural services and other pre-development planning. In addition, staff provided technical assistance on fundraising and the search for a child care center director. A grant application to Let's Grow Kids was submitted on July 20.
- Staff is assisting the Town of Berkshire and the Town of Fairfield complete an update to their Municipal Plans. Staff is working with the Fairfield Planning Commission to conduct public outreach this summer. Staff are assisting the Town of Berkshire with the plan adoption process.

- Staff continued to work on the Highgate Wastewater Management and Water Supply Feasibility study. The Steering Committee meets next on July 28 to review 60% plan designs for providing wastewater management and water supply from the environmental consultant.
- Staff continued to work with the Old White Meeting House Steering Committee to prepare an application for a September Vermont Community Development Program (VCDP) planning grant for improvements to the Old White Meeting House in South Hero.
- Staff met with the North Hero Village Master Plan project Steering Committee to review design alternatives for the July public workshop; this project is supported by a municipal planning grant and will explore streetscape and pedestrian improvements. The community open house will be held from July 22 to August 5 through a virtual website
- Staff assisted the Towns of Enosburgh, Fairfax and Montgomery to establish a Northwest Communications Union District (CUD). Staff continue to provide support coordinating the CUD and assisting municipalities who wish to join the District.

### Energy Planning

- Staff developed a guide to the Energy Action Network's Energy Dashboard and distributed it to municipal planning commissions.
- Staff shared an opportunity with communities to sign up to host a Button Up event this fall.
- Staff will be working with Efficiency Vermont and VECAN partners to host an online webinar for municipalities to encourage the formation of local energy committees.
- Staff is looking for opportunities to do public outreach on Efficiency Vermont programs.

### Water Quality

- The Clean Water Service Provider proposal review committee has recommended NRPC be assigned as the Clean Water Servicer Provider for the Lamoille River Basin and the Missisquoi Bay Planning Basin.
- The Northern Lake Champlain Tactical Basin Plan (Basin 5) has been released for public comment until August 3rd. A copy of the plan and information on how to comment is available at <https://dec.vermont.gov/water-investment/watershed-planning/tactical-basin-planning/basin5>.
- Staff is continuing to work with grantees of the Design Implementation Block Grants (previously Clean Water Block Grants). Project highlights include:
  - ~ Highgate Elementary School began construction the end of June and will be wrapping up the construction of the project by end of July; this project is constructing three underground stormwater chambers as a part of a parking lot reconstruction.
  - ~ Staff have contracted with Trudell to design two stormwater projects in the Town of Richford and expect to meet with the Town Highway staff to begin the project in August.
  - ~ Additional documentation was submitted for the Wetlands Permit for St Albans City's stormwater design project at the SASH/Nason Street location.
  - ~ Staff are finalizing contracting for the City of St. Albans to begin work on designing stormwater treatment at Lemnah Drive as identified in the City's Flow Restoration Plan.
- Staff are working on a redesign for the Franklin County Stormwater website ([www.fcsvt.org](http://www.fcsvt.org)) and anticipate switching to the new website by end July.

### Northern Vermont Economic Development District (NVEDD) and Community/Economic Development

- NVEDD is done in partnership with Lamoille County Planning Commission, Lamoille County Industrial Development Corporation, Northeastern VT Development Association, Franklin County Industrial Development Corporation and Grand Isle Economic Development Corporation. Staff applied for an FY21 EDA Planning Grant continuation to support the work of NRPC and NVEDD partners. We are awaiting final approval for the supplement CARES Act funding which will provide support for three new recovery coordinators within the District.

- Staff is administering contracts with 20 Northern Border Regional Commission Economic and Infrastructure Development Investment Program grantees. FY20 NBRC grants were due June 1 and several applications from the region were submitted.
- NRPC has begun work on the EDA Disaster Resiliency Grant and

#### Municipal Grants in Aid (GIA) Project

- Staff is coordinating the transition of the program from the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources to the Vermont Agency of Transportation for FY21. Due to statewide budget uncertainty, the amount of funding for the FY21 program is unknown, but likely to be reduced from the previous year.
- Staff is also coordinating with ANR staff to ensure successful implementation of the FY20 program and mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on the construction of projects. The deadline for FY20 construction projects has been extended until October 15, 2020.
- Staff is coordinating the FY21 Grants-In-Aid equipment purchase grant program. Letters of Intent for FY21 equipment purchase grants were released to sister RPCs on July 21. Municipalities with their majority area in the Winooski, Passumpsic and Otter Creek watersheds are eligible.
- 40 of 215 projects have invoiced for construction to date for the FY20 program.

#### Healthy Roots Collaborative

- We are continuing work on the The Abbey Group's *Farmers to Families Food Boxes* project. We are delivering 150 boxes of mixed produce, 320 mixed dairy boxes and 150 gallons of milk each week. We have added Northwestern Medical Center as a drop site and are working with Bridges to Health and Migrant Justice to coordinate volunteers and move boxes directly to farm workers. It is anticipated that a second bid will be awarded by USDA for September and October. HRC continues to be paid \$3/box for distribution and procurement work on this project and we have secured food from five of our farms for this project. Currently we are working on volunteer recruitment for this program.
- The Healthy Roots Advisory Committee nominated Emily Alger, Executive Director of South Hero Land Trust, as the new chair of the committee.
- Connecting food producers and buyers continues to be a top priority for Healthy Roots. Since February, Healthy Roots has connected 16 producers to new markets. These markets include retail outlets, bakeries, a juice bar, farm stands and aggregated CSAs.

#### Northwest Vermont Communications Union District

Staff is assisting municipalities with the formation of a Communication Union District in an effort to bring high-quality, high-speed and reliable internet access to communities in Franklin and Grand Isle Counties.

Communications Union Districts were established in Vermont Statute to address the need for bringing broadband services to communities that are currently unserved or underserved.

- Staff, working with Vermont Public Service Board and Enosburgh Economic Development, met with Selectboards in Enosburgh, Fairfax and Montgomery to provide information and answer questions regarding the formation of the NW Vermont Communications Union District. All boards passed a resolution to form the District on July 20, 2020. More information may be found here: <https://publicservice.vermont.gov/content/vermont-communications-union-districts>

#### Office and Building

The office remains largely closed and all staff are primarily working remotely. The Director or other staff member goes to the office regularly to collect mail and complete administrative tasks.

## **Working Communities Challenge Overview and Update July 2020**

NRPC partnered with many regional organizations and municipalities a few months ago to participate in a grant competition called the Working Communities Challenge (WCC) coordinated by the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston (FRBB), State of Vermont, and others. The WCC was created to support efforts that build healthy and strong economies and communities in rural VT – especially efforts that benefit low income residents. It encourages regional partnerships and focuses on the following core elements as a foundation for the work of participating communities: collaborative leadership, community engagement, learning orientation, systems change, and diversity. Our team, the Northwest Team, represents Franklin and Grand Isle counties, and NRPC is the lead organization.

The competition is divided into a planning phase and an implementation phase; our team was one of eight teams to receive a \$15,000 planning grant to work toward the \$300,000 implementation funds which would be used over the span of three years. The implementation phase application is due September 30th, 2020, and four of the teams will receive the implementation funds.

Our team is approaching this challenge by focusing on the Formidable Four workforce barriers: child care, substance use, housing, and transportation. Our goal during the planning phase is to determine what part(s) of the Formidable Four our team can make systemic change in and where we need to focus to have the best impact. We have found that access to technology and connectivity issues are also a formidable challenge, and we are looking at how to incorporate that into our efforts.

We created a Formidable Four survey through SurveyMonkey to gather perspectives and ideas regarding these workforce challenges from other organizations and service providers in our region; respondents provided many ideas and insights that will help us to refine our mission. We are currently creating a survey for the general public about the Formidable Four that will be online, on paper, and distributed strategically to gather the voices of those we seek to serve. In both of these surveys, we will collect contact information from respondents interested in participating in a series of “focus group” Zoom calls. In these calls we are planning to have discussions about the Formidable Four and focus areas/ideas the team determines based on our conversations and survey results. We are also deciding on additional methods of community outreach and other creative ways to install the WCC core elements into our work.

Due to COVID-19, the FRBB gave each team an additional \$5,000 for planning and allowed us to repurpose some of our planning funds for COVID-19 response. Our team is giving all the food shelves in Franklin and Grand Isle counties \$500-\$750 to purchase and distribute basic needs for their communities. Basic needs being personal hygiene items, cleaning supplies, diapers, etc. – basic day-to-day needs that people require even more now. For example, the food shelf at the Richford NOTCH Clinic used the funds to create “hygiene kits,” and the Fairfield Community Center Food Shelf will be purchasing \$15 gas cards. The food shelves will also help us to distribute the general public survey.

# Municipal Plan Review Tool

## Town & Village of Enosburgh

This form addresses the statutory requirements of the State of Vermont for town plans, as cited in the Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act, Title 24 V.S.A Chapter 117 (the Act). It includes the 12 required elements found in § 4382 of the Act; the four planning process goals found in § 4302(b), the 14 specific goals found in § 4302(c); and the standard of review found in § 4302(f), which covers consistency with goals and compatibility standards.

During the Regional approval and confirmation process, specified in § 4350 of the Act, the regional planning commission is required to assess town plans and the process whereby they are developed according to the criteria of the Act. Sections of relevant statute are quoted at each question.

<b>Required Elements § 4382</b>		Met	Not Met
1	Statement of Objectives, Policies, Programs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Land Use Plan and Map	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Transportation Plan and Map	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Utility and Facility Plan and Map	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Rare Natural Resources/Historic Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Educational Facilities Plan and Map	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Implementation Program	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Compatibility Statement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Energy Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Housing Element	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Economic Development Element	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Flood Resiliency Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 <b>State Planning Goals § 4302</b>		 Met	 Not Met
1	Compact village centers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Economy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Natural and Historic Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Quality of air, water, wildlife, forests, and other land resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Efficient use of Energy and Renewable Energy Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Recreation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Agriculture and Forest Industries	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Use of Resources and Earth Extraction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Safe and Affordable Housing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Public Facilities and Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	Child Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	Flood Resiliency	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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# Municipal Plan Review Tool

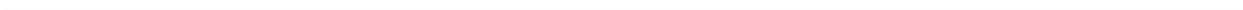
## North Hero

This form addresses the statutory requirements of the State of Vermont for town plans, as cited in the Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act, Title 24 V.S.A Chapter 117 (the Act). It includes the 12 required elements found in § 4382 of the Act; the four planning process goals found in § 4302(b), the 14 specific goals found in § 4302(c); and the standard of review found in § 4302(f), which covers consistency with goals and compatibility standards.

During the Regional approval and confirmation process, specified in § 4350 of the Act, the regional planning commission is required to assess town plans and the process whereby they are developed according to the criteria of the Act. Sections of relevant statute are quoted at each question.

<b>Required Elements § 4382</b>		Met	Not Met
1	Statement of Objectives, Policies, Programs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Land Use Plan and Map	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Transportation Plan and Map	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Utility and Facility Plan and Map	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Rare Natural Resources/Historic Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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12	Flood Resiliency Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>State Planning Goals § 4302</b>		Met	Not Met
1	Compact village centers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Economy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Natural and Historic Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Quality of air, water, wildlife, forests, and other land resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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12	Public Facilities and Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	Child Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	Flood Resiliency	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>





## MEMORANDUM

To: Selectboards, Trustees, City Council, Managers and Administrators, Municipal Clerks  
From: Catherine Dimitruk, Executive Director  
CC: NRPC Board of Commissioners, Legislators  
Date: 7/15/2020  
Subject: Northwest Vermont Communications Union District

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The Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) is assisting with the formation of a Communication Union District in an effort to bring high-quality, high-speed and reliable internet access to communities in Franklin and Grand Isle Counties. Communications Union Districts were established in Vermont Statute to address the need for bringing broadband services to communities that are currently unserved or underserved. The formation of the “Northwest Vermont Communications Union District” (NWCUD) will enable communities to have representation and effect decisions of the District including planning, contracting, building and managing infrastructure that will provide high-speed internet service. The benefits are many including accessing online education opportunities for all ages, telehealth which connects patients with medical providers, connecting rural businesses with clients and employers with employees.

### **Communications Union District**

A Communications Union District (CUD) is formed by two or more municipalities for the purpose of building communications infrastructure under the authority of 30 V.S.A § 3051. CUDs plan, contract, build, and manage the infrastructure that will provide high speed internet. They are governed by a board that consists of 1 representative from each member municipality.

### **Formation of a CUD**

Typically, CUDs are formed by vote at Town Meeting Day. However, due to the pressing need for the expansion of communications infrastructure as a result of COVID-19, the Legislature passed and the Governor signed H.958 to allow municipalities to form a CUD by a vote of the governing body at a regular open meeting during the state of emergency. After the formation of the CUD, additional municipalities can join the CUD through vote by the governing body.

### **Benefits of a CUD**

Forming a Northwest CUD will ensure that member municipalities benefit from the CARES Act funding the state plans to make available for broadband expansion. Specifically, it is expected that the State will provide additional funding to the Broadband Innovation Grant program which provides up to \$60,000 for broadband feasibility studies and business plans. Other state and private funding sources are also likely to be available to CUDs.

The following is a summary of frequently asked questions regarding CUDs:

**What do we gain by joining NWVT Communications Union District?**

Your municipality gets a seat at the table as critical regional infrastructure is designed and built.

**What's the cost to be a part of the CUD? What's the risk to the taxpayer and municipalities?**

There are no direct costs to the taxpayer or the municipality. A CUD may ask a municipality to provide space for a communications plant used to store fiber optic cable, electronics and other assets required to operate the network.

Membership in a CUD poses no financial risk to the municipality or individual taxpayers, by state statute, meaning taxpayer dollars will not be used and if the CUD fails no liability falls to the member municipalities or taxpayers. The state statute (specifically – § 3056. Limitations; taxes; indebtedness and § 3083. Dissolution) make it quite clear that the taxpayer and towns may not be held liable in any way for the debts of the CUD. All fiber assets and built infrastructure of the CUD are liable to seizure. (30 V.S.A. Chapter 82; see web address below).

**How much will it cost to build the network?**

We won't know the estimated cost of the network until we know which municipalities are in the CUD and a network design has been engineered. NRPC will work with the CUD to apply for grant funds to develop a business plan and conduct the initial network engineering for the CUD. Building a network is expensive but community based broadband projects like this qualify for large grants and very low interest loans. Vermont has also set aside a portion of the CARES Act recovery funds specifically for CUDs.

**How will the money be raised and by who?**

The CUD will be responsible for raising funds to build and operate the network through grants, loans, and bonds. In the next year there will be nearly \$20 Billion in grants available through federal and state organizations like the FCC, USDA, EDA and Vermont Connectivity Fund. We will be well positioned to apply for these funds once the CUD is formed. Public private partnerships are also possible and other CUDs in the state have partnered with private operators to target and build new infrastructure.

**How would the CUD governance be handled?**

Once two municipalities vote to form a CUD, an initial organizational meeting must be held within 90 days. The Northwest Regional Planning Commission is available to assist in the organizational meeting.

By statute, the district is governed by a Governing Board made up of one representative, and one or more alternates, from every member town. Each town delegation gets one vote on CUD decisions, with majority ruling in most cases. The CUD has the ability to establish an Executive Committee that could be delegated certain powers. This would be established in the bylaws as adopted at the CUDs first public meeting.

**How can a municipality join the district?**

After the formation of the CUD, additional municipalities can join through vote by governing body at any time at an Open Meeting of the governing body.

**Can a municipality withdraw from the CUD?**

A municipality can withdraw through the same means in which they joined the CUD. All assets in the municipality that are built by the CUD remain an asset of the CUD. Customers within that municipality can still receive internet services.

**What's next after a municipality votes to join a CUD?**

Each municipality appoints a resident and an alternate to serve on the CUD board. That board will work to develop a feasibility plan for building the network and raise funds for construct and management.

**Are there any reasons why a municipality would not want to join?**

The primary burden on a town will be to identify one or two residents interested in representing its residents on the CUD board. One reason not to join would be if a municipality does not foresee being able find representatives. Another reason might be to allow the town to pursue its own broadband solutions independently. However, nothing about joining the CUD precludes this from happening.

This is an exciting opportunity and the need could not be more urgent. NRPC anticipates two municipalities will be voting to form a CUD in the coming weeks. We will notify communities within the region when this occurs. We will also be establishing a website for the CUD as a resource to distribute information such as membership, meetings, agendas, minutes, etc.

More information about CUDs can also be found on the [Department of Public Service Website](#). If your municipality is interested in potentially joining the CUD, or if you have questions about this initiative, please contact Catherine Dimitruk, Executive Director at [cdimitruk@nrpcvt.com](mailto:cdimitruk@nrpcvt.com) or 802-310-6797.