

1 H.5

2 Introduced by Representative Bongartz of Manchester

3 Referred to Committee on

4 Date:

5 Subject: Conservation and development; land use; regional planning

6 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to require the
7 Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies to study various
8 issues related to improving and coordinating effectiveness between municipal,
9 regional, and State planning.

10 An act relating to a study on strengthening regional plans and their
11 implementation

12 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

13 Sec. 1. REGIONAL PLANNING REPORT

14 (a) On or before December 15, 2023, the Vermont Association of Planning
15 and Development Agencies shall report on statutory recommendations to better
16 integrate and implement municipal, regional, and State plans, policies, and
17 investments by focusing on regional future land use maps and policies.

18 (b) The recommendations shall address how to accomplish the following:

19 (1) Aligning policies and implementation between municipalities,
20 regional planning commissions, and State entities to better address climate

1 change, climate resiliency, natural resources, housing, transportation,
2 economic development, and other place-based issues.

3 (2) Building upon municipal and regional enhanced energy plans and
4 their implementation.

5 (3) Evaluating place-based policy and project decisions by the State,
6 regional planning commissions, and municipalities related to implementing
7 regional future land use maps and policies and recommending changes to
8 which of those governmental levels those decisions should occur, if necessary.

9 (4) Ensuring that State agency investment and policy decisions that
10 relate to land development are consistent with regional and local plans. The
11 investments assessed should include, at a minimum:

12 (A) drinking water;

13 (B) wastewater;

14 (C) stormwater;

15 (D) transportation;

16 (E) community and economic development;

17 (F) housing;

18 (G) energy; and

19 (H) telecommunications.

20 (5) Achieving statewide consistency of future land use maps and
21 policies to better support Act 250 and 30 V.S.A. § 248.

1 (6) How Act 250 and 30 V.S.A. § 248 could better support
2 implementation of regional future land use maps and policies.

3 (7) Better support implementation of regional future land use maps and
4 policies in the State designation program under 24 V.S.A. chapter 76A.

5 (8) Improving the quality and effectiveness of future land use maps in
6 regional and municipal plans through changes to 24 V.S.A. chapter 117
7 including:

8 (A) future land use map area delineations, definitions, statements,
9 and policies;

10 (B) existing settlement definitions and their relationship to future
11 land use maps;

12 (C) the role of regional plans in the review and approval of municipal
13 plans and planning processes; and

14 (D) a review mechanism to ensure bylaws are consistent with
15 municipal plans.

16 (c) The report should also discuss how best to implement the
17 recommendations including the following:

18 (1) how best to phase in the recommendations;

19 (2) how to establish a mechanism for the independent review of regional
20 plans to ensure consistency with statutory requirements;

1 (3) what guidance and training will be needed to implement the
2 recommendations; and

3 (4) what incentives and accountability mechanisms are necessary to
4 accomplish these changes at all levels of government.

5 (d) The Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies shall
6 consult with the Agency of Transportation, the Agency of Natural Resources,
7 the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, the Department of
8 Public Service, Vermont Emergency Management, the Natural Resources
9 Board, the regional development corporations, the Vermont League of Cities
10 and Towns, statewide environmental organizations, and other interested parties
11 in developing the report and shall summarize comments.

12 (e) The Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies shall
13 submit the report to the following committees: the Senate Committees on
14 Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs, on Government
15 Operations, on Natural Resources and Energy, and on Transportation and the
16 House Committees on Commerce and Economic Development, on Energy and
17 Technology, on General, Housing, and Military Affairs, on Government
18 Operations, on Natural Resources, Fish, and Wildlife, and on Transportation
19 on or before December 15, 2023.

1 (f) The Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies shall
2 be funded in FY 2023 and FY 2024 for this study through the regional
3 planning grant established in 24 V.S.A. § 4306.

4 Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

5 This act shall take effect on passage.