



# VAPDA

VERMONT ASSOCIATION OF  
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES

## Regional Planning Commissions' FY27 Budget

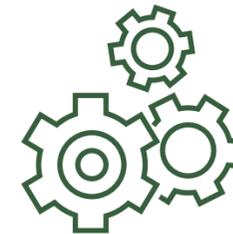
*Presented to:*

**House Committee on Commerce and  
Economic Development**

*February 18, 2026*

**Charlie Baker**, Executive Director, Chittenden County Regional  
Planning Commission

**Catherine Dimitruk**, Executive Director, Northwest Regional  
Planning Commission



**Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs) provide staff support and technical assistance to towns and the State.**



In the absence of county government, RPCs play a critical role in connecting communities with federal and state programs and dollars as well as a forum for towns to discuss and provide services jointly.

RPCs are political subdivisions of the State of Vermont created to serve all of Vermont's municipalities, uniquely positioned to **provide broad services to every Vermont municipality.**



**TRANSPORTATION  
PLANNING**



**LAND USE  
PLANNING**



**AND TECHNICAL  
ASSISTANCE IN  
ALL AREAS**



**WATER  
QUALITY**



**HAZARD MITIGATION &  
PREPAREDNESS**



**HOUSING**



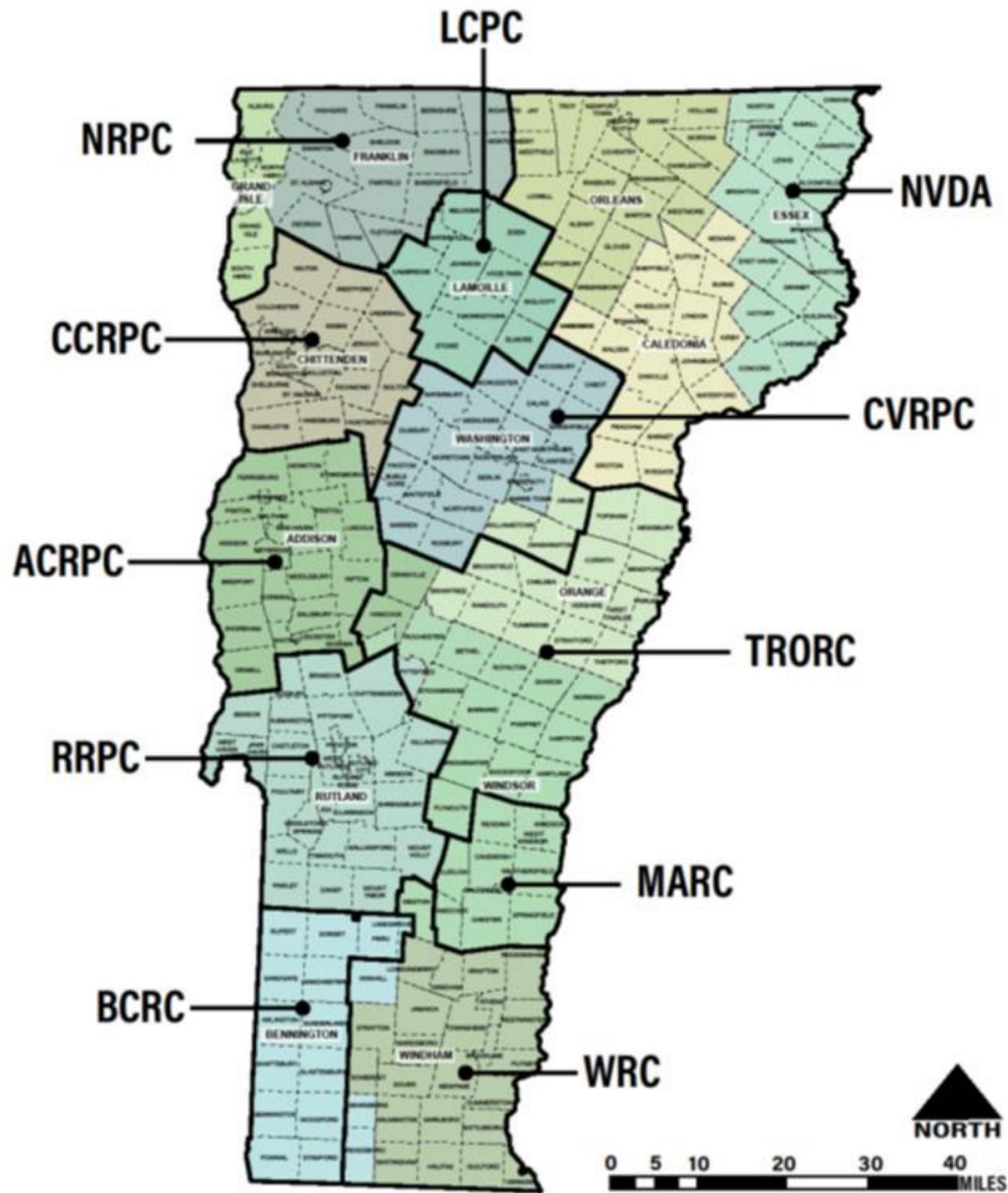
**BROWNFIELD  
ASSESSMENT &  
REMEDIATION**



**ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT**



**ENERGY  
PLANNING**



**STATE OF VERMONT  
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSIONS**

# Quick Facts / FY25 Highlights



Vermont has **11 RPCs** and **~135 staff** serving all of Vermont's municipalities.



**155 communities** received grant writing assistance from their RPCs, reducing the burden on limited town staff.



RPCs around the state provided **143 municipalities** with assistance in equity, environmental justice and healthy communities, up from 88 in FY2024.



Visit [VAPDA.org](https://VAPDA.org) for more information about each RPC in VT



# Governance



**Municipalities appoint representatives to each RPC Board. RPCs work for member municipalities.**



**RPC Boards approve budgets and set policy and program priorities, including regional plans.**



**Executive Committees of each RPC board are responsible for the oversight of the Executive Director.**



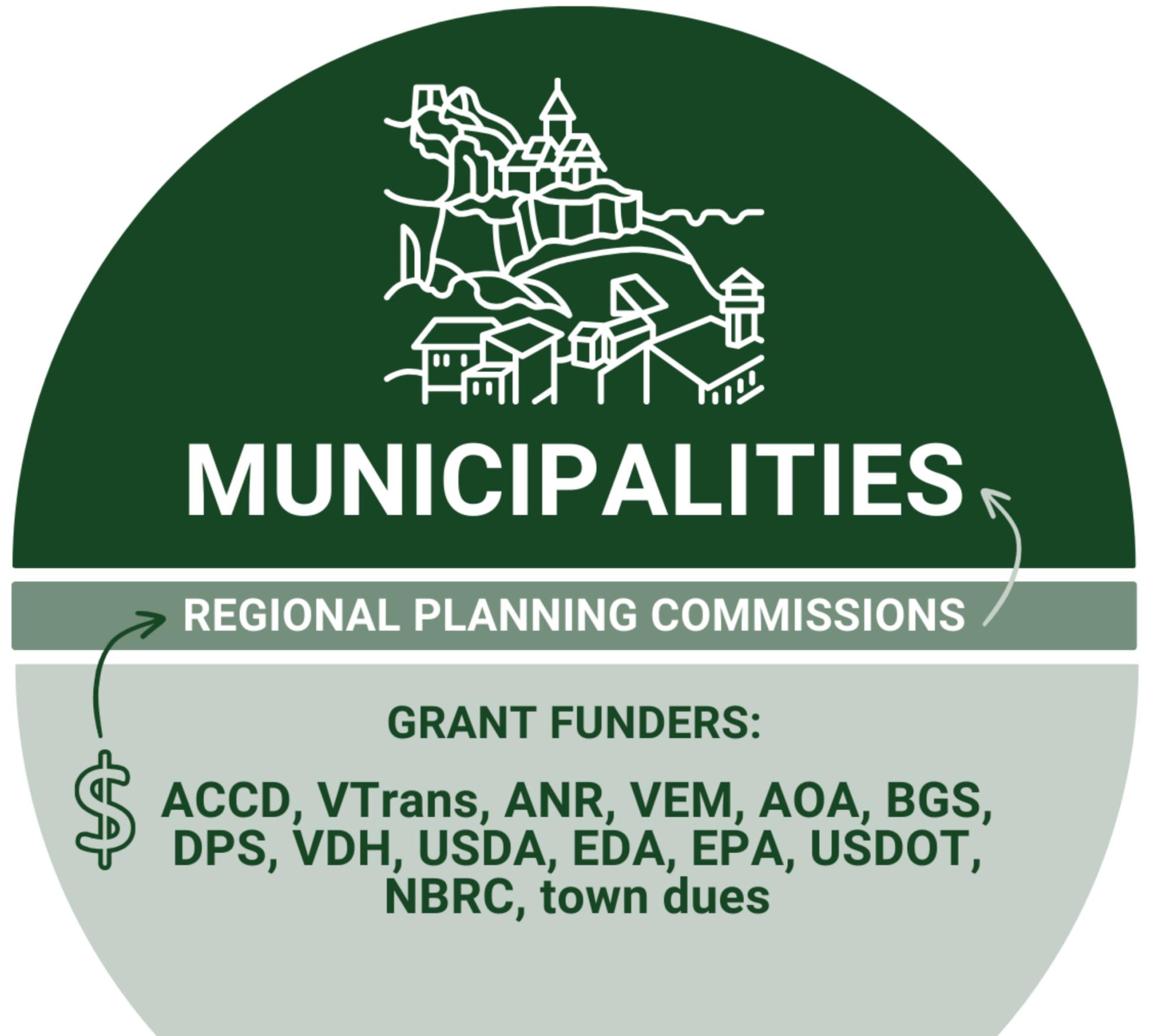
**Each RPC has committees to assist the RPC Board. Typical are Transportation, Permit/Regulatory, Regional Plan, Clean Water, Brownfields, etc.**

## Funding



RPCs have no general tax revenue. ~95% of RPC revenue comes from state and federal grants with ~5% from town dues.

RPCs operate as public sector consulting staff for member towns and state agencies – every hour of work gets billed to specific performance agreements.



**MUNICIPALITIES**

**REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSIONS**

**GRANT FUNDERS:**

**ACCD, VTrans, ANR, VEM, AOA, BGS,  
DPS, VDH, USDA, EDA, EPA, USDOT,  
NBRC, town dues**

# FY27 Budget Request

The primary source of funding of RPCs is the Regional Planning Grant Program funded by a statutorily set portion of the Property Transfer Tax (PTT).

In FY26, the State approved a budget of \$7,740,546.

The BAA for FY26 reduced this amount to \$7,641,435 (1.3% cut) due to decreased PTT revenue.

The Governor's recommended budget is \$7,838,580 (2.6% increase above the FY26 BAA amount).

- *We respectfully request the Committee's support of funding for the RPCs consistent with the Governor's recommendation and ask that the Committee make this one of your priorities.*





# State Policy and Implementation

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, energy, transportation, water quality, and more.



RPC Directors and senior staff are often asked to serve on many state councils and boards and are often called upon by state agencies to develop and implement statutorily-mandated programs with our member municipalities.



# Act 181 Implementation

1. Interim exemptions are in place. See map.
2. RPCs developed regional plan guidance 12/2024.
3. RPCs are on track for all 11 regional plans to be updated by December 2026.
4. Over 500 meetings with towns with 1,000s engaged.
5. RPCs are in process of submitting preliminary draft plans and maps to the LURB for informal review.



2025 Fall - RRPC, CCRPC, NRPC  
2026 Winter – LCPC, ACRPC, MARC, NVDA  
2026 Spring - BCRC, WRC, CVRPC  
2026 Summer - TRORC

# Planning and Zoning



In FY25, RPCs provided **195** 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 and makes compact settlements possible.



**235** municipalities have current municipal plans  
**207** municipalities have zoning bylaws  
**35** municipalities only have flood bylaws  
**18** municipalities have no bylaws



# Housing



In FY25, RPCs provided **140** municipalities with assistance to increase housing.

Some of these efforts were to update zoning to support increased densities in our centers.

Others were to provide guidance to property owners on ADUs and other infill housing.

**To produce more housing, assistance will be needed in:**

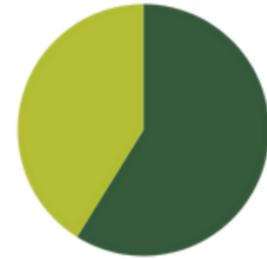


Making more funding/financing available to towns and/or developers for infrastructure.

The risk from permit appeals needs to be reduced, especially in Tier 1B Act 250 exemption areas



# Economic Development



**153 communities received economic development assistance from their RPCs in FY25, strengthening local economies.**

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

RPCs help build community infrastructure and guide development patterns in order to provide the foundation and public support for private economic development.



**Windham Regional Commission** developed a comprehensive Windham Region Outdoor Recreation Economy Inventory

**Northwest Regional Planning Commission** developed a "Trail Friendly Business" program for the Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail, now expanding to other trails



# Brownfields



**75 communities were able to assess or remediate polluted land with the support of RPCs in FY25.**

By assessing, remediating, and reinvesting in these properties with the help of RPCs, 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



**Northeastern Vermont Development Association** was awarded another EPA Brownfields Coalition Assessment Grant of \$1.2M, augmenting an active \$1M Revolving Loan Fund Grant capitalized in 2023. The 2023 grant and newly awarded 2025 grant have funded assessment activities at over 40 sites across the Northeast Kingdom, prioritizing projects that involve housing and the redevelopment of key sites in the region's downtowns.



# Transportation Planning



RPCs provided **215** municipalities with technical assistance in transportation, including:



TRAFFIC COUNTS



CULVERT INVENTORIES



ROAD EROSION INVENTORIES



A VARIETY OF OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES

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



**Rutland Regional Planning Commission** helped Marble Valley Transit streamline Rutland's fixed-route system from five routes to four, saving \$150,000 while cutting stops with under 2% loss of ridership.



# Clean Water & Infrastructure



**173 communities** took steps to improve their water quality in FY25 with assistance from RPCs.

Many of these improvements resulted from RPC assistance in the *Municipal Roads Grants-in-Aid Program* through the Vermont Agency of Transportation.



**ACRPC** funded Vermont Family Forests to reduce erosion control from forest roads at the Bristol Town Forest on Seth Hill in Lincoln. The project led to a reduction of 14.9kg/year of Phosphorus entering our waterways.



# Emergency Planning and Response



**With technical assistance from RPCs, 237 municipalities were able to improve their emergency preparedness and work to mitigate damage from disasters.**

RPCs play key roles in the mitigation and preparedness phases of emergency management. Through partnership with Vermont Emergency Management, VTrans, and the Agency of Natural Resources, RPCs assist municipalities by:

✓ PROVIDING STAFF TO THE STATE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER

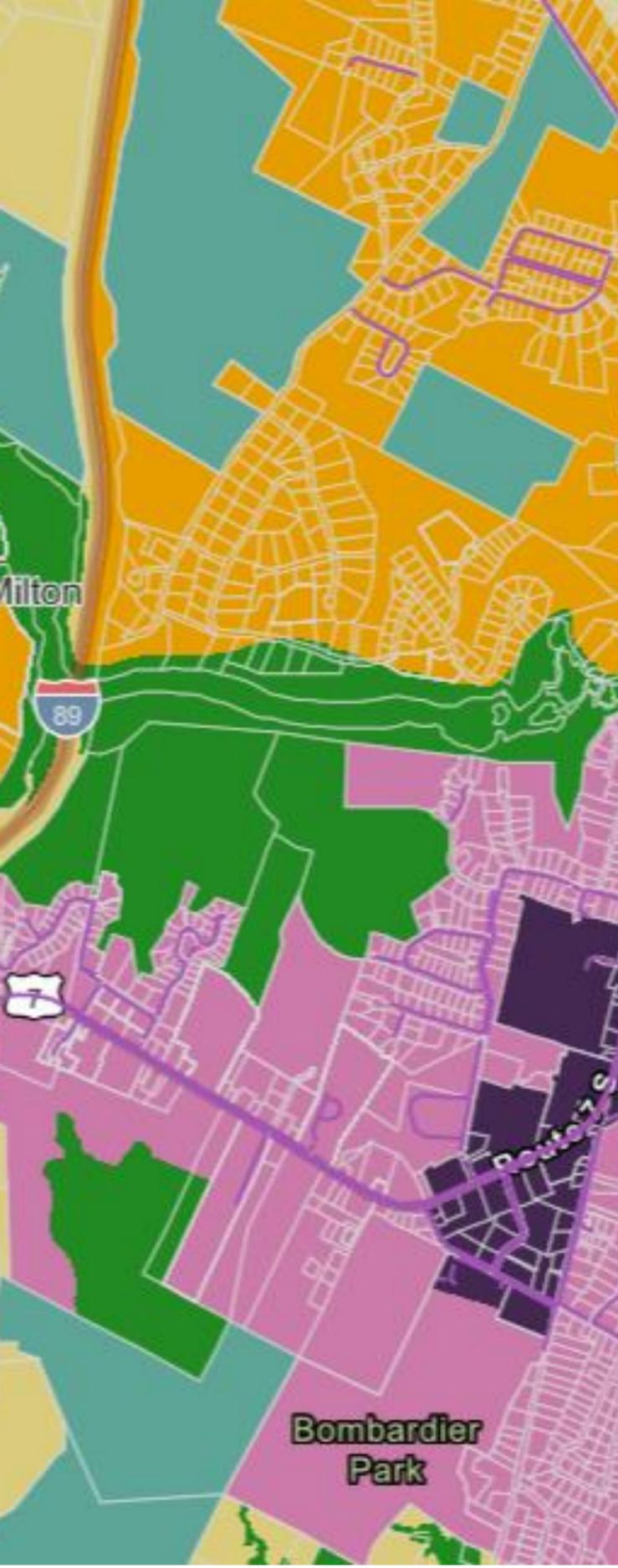
✓ SUPPORTING LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIRECTORS

✓ ASSISTING IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANS

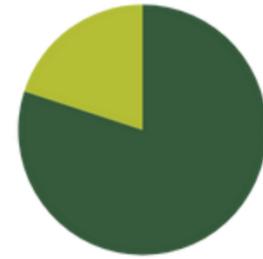
✓ UPDATING FLOODPLAIN AND RIVER CORRIDOR BYLAWS AND HAZARD MITIGATION PLANS REQUIRED BY FEMA

✓ ASSISTING MUNICIPALITIES DURING AND AFTER DISASTER EVENTS

✓ ...AND MORE



# Mapping



**208 communities received mapping services from Regional Planning Commissions in FY25, 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. Chances are the maps you see in a town office or road foreman's truck were created by an RPC.



RPCs provide GIS services to municipalities, state agencies, private entities and non-profits to support their projects, and ensure development and plans are driven by accurate data and sound analysis.



# Energy Planning & Implementation



In FY25, RPCs assisted **195** communities with energy planning and implementation.

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



In coordination with the Department of Buildings and General Services, the RPCs have supported the **Municipal Energy Resilience Program (MERP)**, which has provided energy capacity building mini grants to **176** municipalities, free energy assessments on over **600** municipal buildings, and awarded \$35.9 million in implementation funding to **126** municipalities.



# Partnerships

## RPCs support numerous collaborative efforts.

- RPCs work with RDCs on Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy & Economic Development Districts.
- RPCs provided initial start-up and some continuing support for Communication Union Districts.
- RPCs are serving as Clean Water Service Providers in the Lake Champlain basin.
- RPCs also support other collaboratives around public safety, energy, and other issues as needed with our municipalities.
- RPCs are one of the few entities that stay engaged for the months and years it takes to move a project from concept to implementation. Towns rely on us for this continuity.



**Bennington County Regional Commission** has supported the formation and work of the Southern Vermont Communications Union District (SoVT CUD), providing fiscal management and staff support for efforts to expand access to broadband in rural areas throughout the region. After several years of intensive organizational support during the funding and buildout of a fiber optic network that now reaches **99.3%** of previously unserved passings within the district, BCRC is now assisting the SoVT CUD with network oversight and sustainability planning for its next 10 years.



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## Thank you!

The Detailed VAPDA Annual Report

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For more information, visit: [\*\*VAPDA.org\*\*](https://www.vapda.org)