



VAPDA

VERMONT ASSOCIATION OF
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES

Vermont's Regional Plan Maps

Presented to:

Senate Committee on Economic Development,
Housing and General Affairs

January 15, 2026

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New Regional Plan Requirements

PROCESS

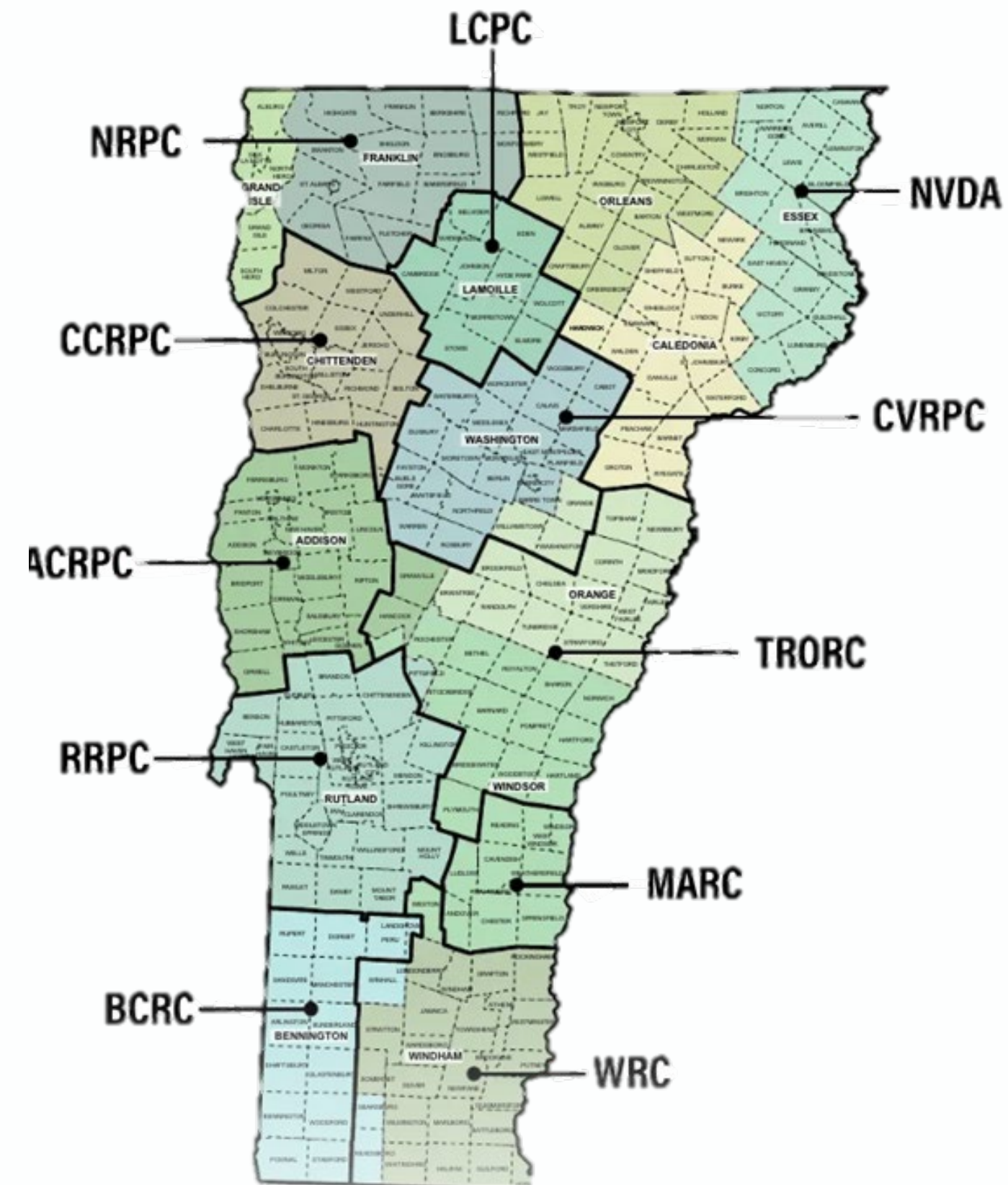
- Municipal engagement and meaningful participation
- Land Use Review Board approval of Regional Plan

PURPOSE

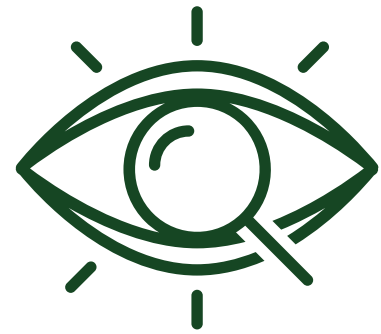
- Housing growth areas, substantial majority of target
- Includes climate resilience, mitigation and adaptation
- Considering impacts (environmental benefits & burdens) on communities
- More consistent regional plans

ELEMENTS

- New standard **Future Land Use map** requirements; 11 typologies of future land use areas
- New local and regional **housing targets**



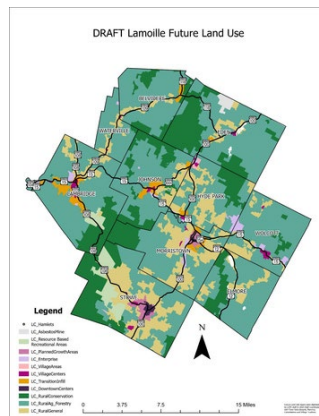
Regional Plans



Regional Plans are designed to **envision the future** .



They are focused on **building vibrant , sustainable communities** and **encouraging housing** .



Future Land Use Maps are built on this work.

**FIGURE 5:
Vermont Planning Goals**



Regional Plan Schedule



Estimated timeframe for submission to LURB for **initial 60-day review** in date order

Rutland RPC | *Submitted September*

Northwest RPC | *Submitted early October*

Chittenden County RPC | *Submitted October*

Addison County RPC | January 2026

Lamoille County PC | January 2026

Mount Ascutney RC | February 2026

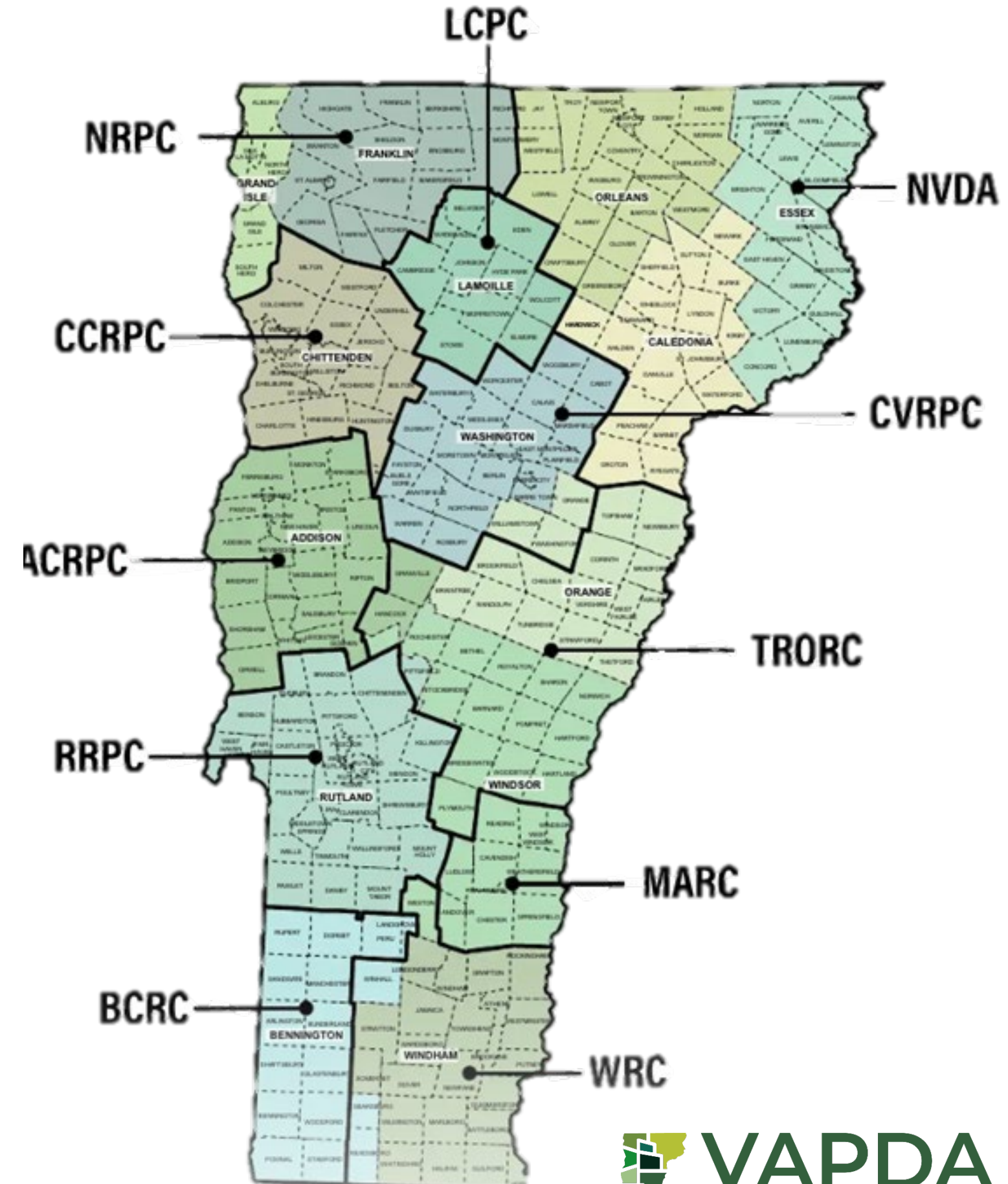
Northeastern Vermont DA | March 2026

Bennington County RC | April 2026

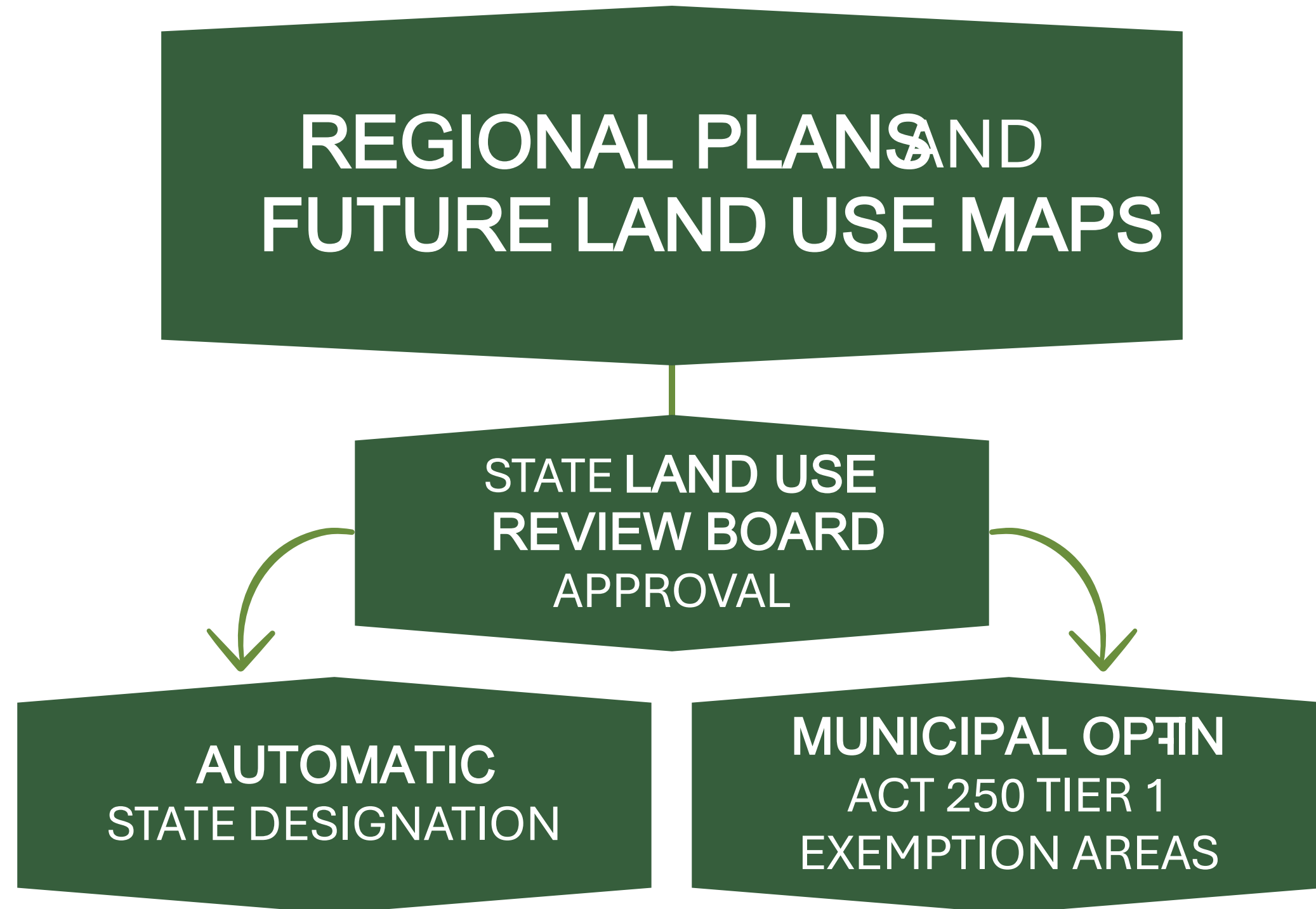
Windham RC | May 2026

Central Vermont RPC | May 2026

Two Rivers-Ottawa-Quechee RC | July 2026



Regional Plan Approvals



Tiers and Responsibilities

RPCs

Tier 1 (growth areas)

- ✓ RPCs mapping includes Tier 1B eligible areas
- ✓ RPC maps do not impact any local regulations
- ✓ RPC maps do not change the characteristics of parcels
- ✓ 1B provides 50-unit exemption; 1A provides full exemption

LURB

Tier 2 (everywhere else)

- ✓ Tier 2 is generally “status quo”
- ✓ Road rule – rulemaking by LURB

LURB

Tier 3 (critical natural resources)

- ✓ The Land Use Review Board (LURB) is responsible for Tier 3 mapping and rulemaking

Consistent Regional Planning Across Vermont: Future Land Use Areas Categories



TIER 1B ELIGIBLE FOR DESIGNATIONS AND ACT 250 CHANGES

- Downtown Center
- Village Center
- Planned Growth Area
- Village Area



RURAL AREAS

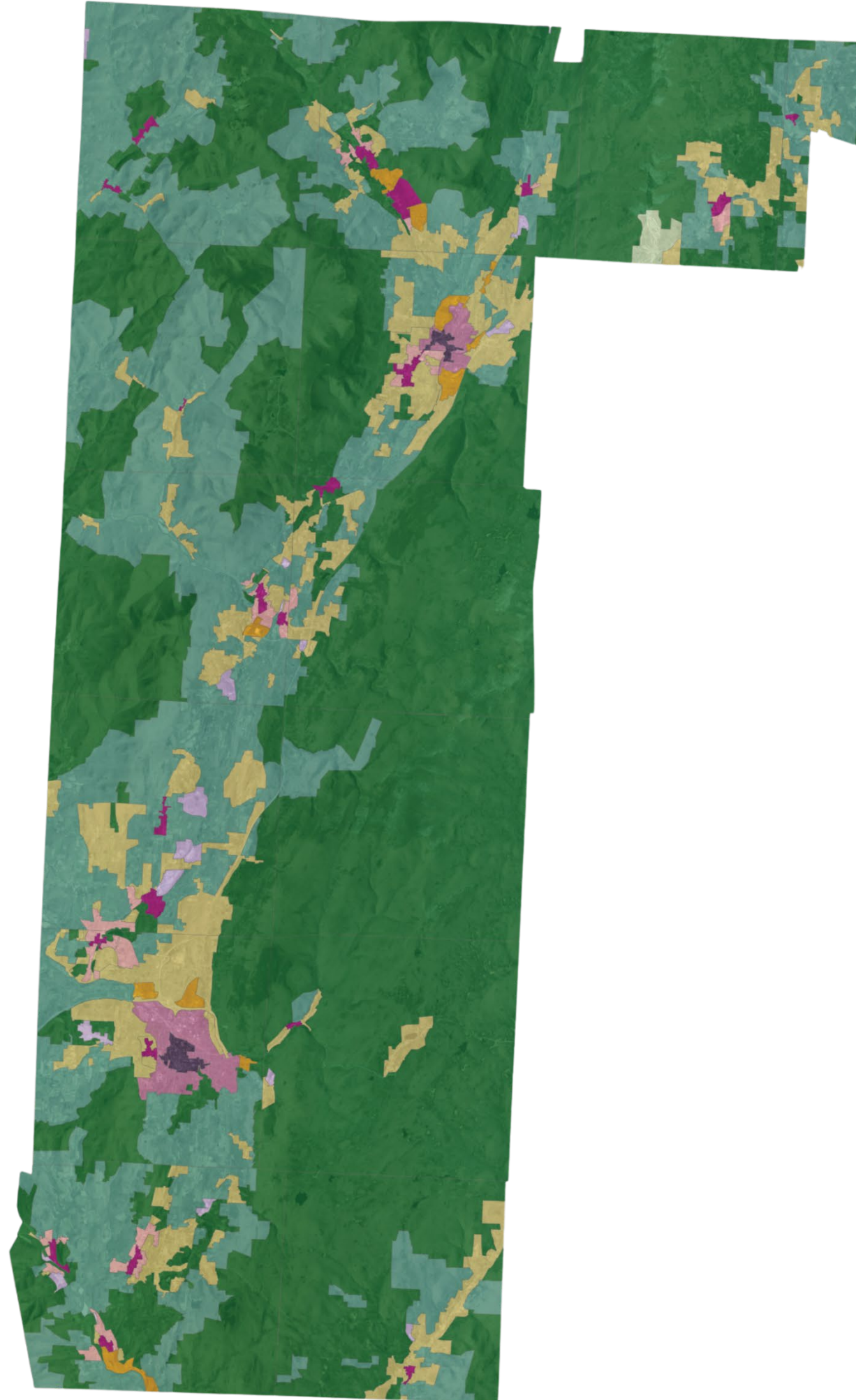
- Hamlet
- Rural General
- Rural Agricultural and Forestry
- Rural Conservation
(*NOT Tier 3*)



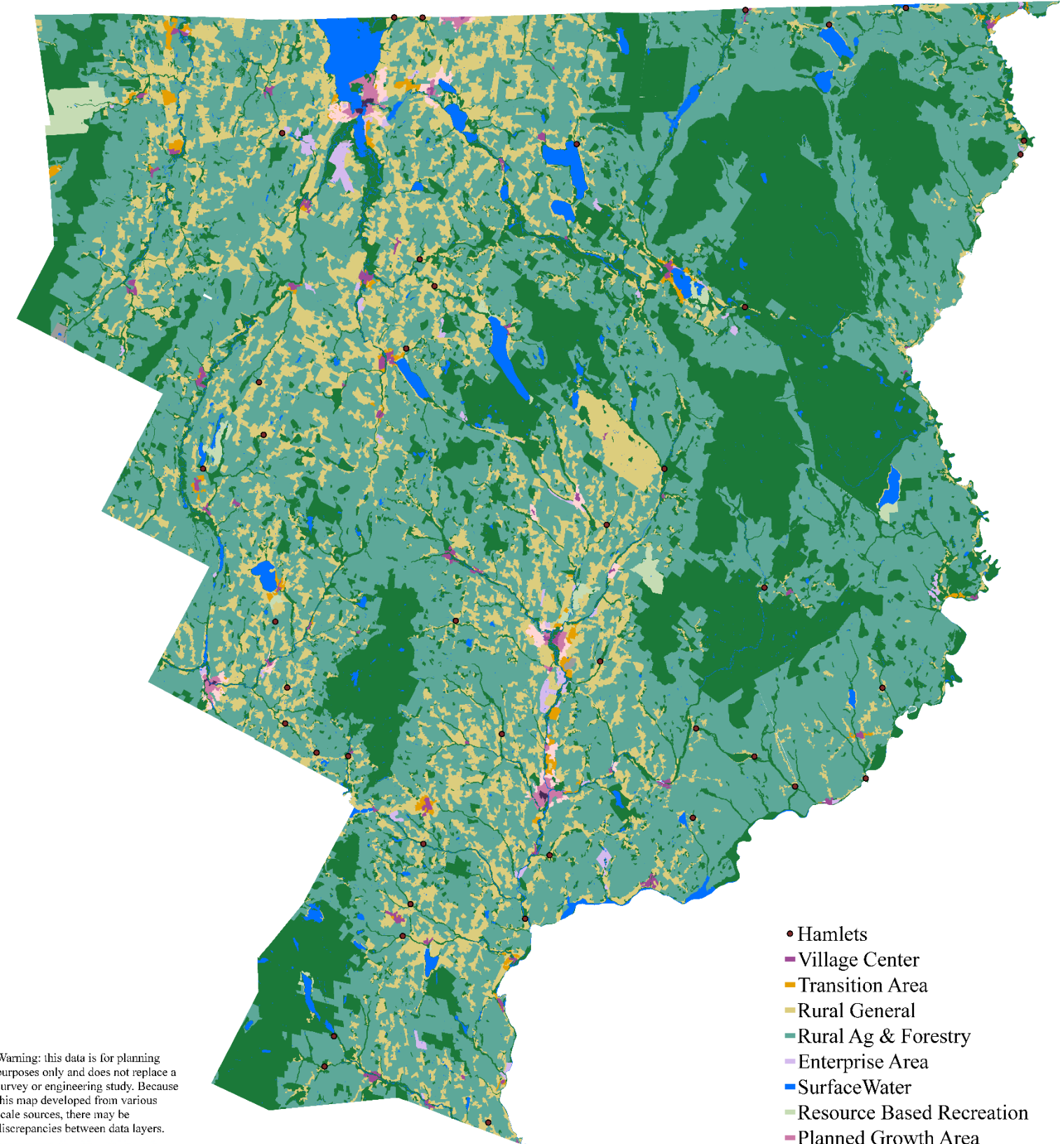
OTHER AREAS

- Transition
- Enterprise
- Resource-Based Recreation

Draft FLU Map Bennington County RC



Draft FLU Map of the Northeast Kingdom as of 12/9/2025



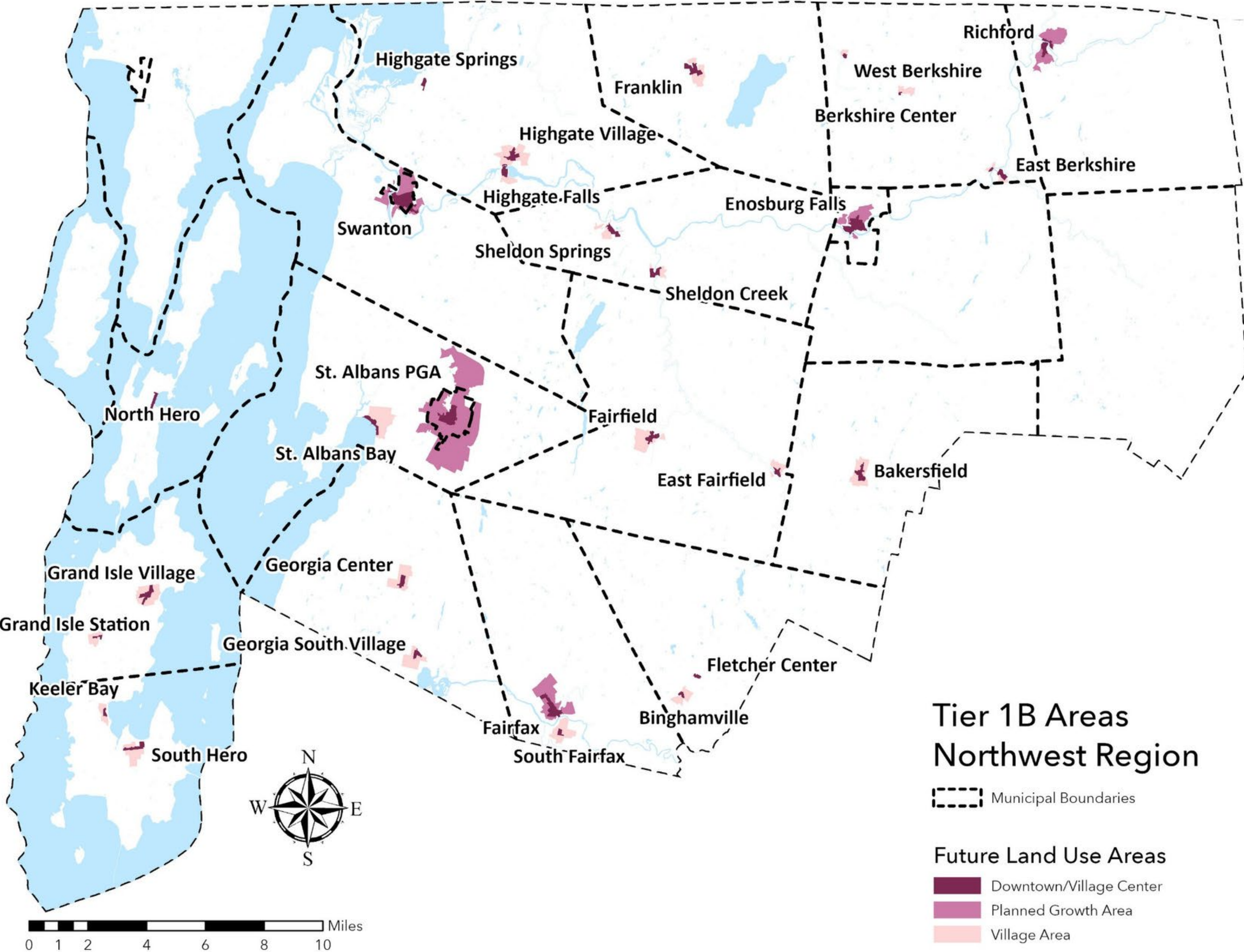
Warning: this data is for planning purposes only and does not replace a survey or engineering study. Because this map developed from various scale sources, there may be discrepancies between data layers.



0 4.5 9 18 Miles

- Hamlets
- Village Center
- Transition Area
- Rural General
- Rural Ag & Forestry
- Enterprise Area
- Surface Water
- Resource Based Recreation
- Planned Growth Area
- Groundwater Contamination
- Downtown Centers

	Acres	% of land area
Current Interim Exemptions	8051	1.8%
Proposed Tier 1B Eligible Areas	9691	2.1%



Collaboration with Selectboards and Planning Commissions



RPCs started from existing Regional Plans, Local Plans and local regulations and use a standard methodology



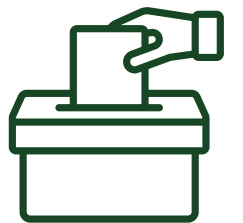
RPCs have conducted extensive outreach, meeting with every community – most multiple times



RPCs have attended **over 480** Planning Commission and Selectboard meetings – **so far**



Selectboard engagement happens throughout this "bottoms up" process building upon the towns' previous planning



Individual municipalities must vote to opt in to Tier 1B



Themes/Issues - Towns

- ✓ Housing needs are large, affordability is key
- ✓ Important that nothing changes local regulations
- ✓ Infrastructure needs are a limiting factor
- ✓ Interest in expanding village centers
- ✓ Benefits for Village and Planned Growth areas
- ✓ Desire for Tier 1B, some concerns about growth
- ✓ Preserving rural areas, support for local agriculture
- ✓ Concern about property rights, expanded Act 250 - Tier 3 & road rule
- ✓ Clarifying relation between regional and town plans
- ✓ Probable need for easier regional plan amendments
- ✓ Appreciation for the collaboration



Broad Public Outreach

RPCs have held **750+ events** and met 1,000's of Vermonters where they are:

- 

Community Centers
- 

Farmers Markets
- 

Libraries
- 

Schools
- 

Rural Senior Centers
- 

Mobile Home Communities
- 

Multilingual Focus Groups

Outreach has included public meetings, surveys, webinars, focus groups, posters, tabling at community events, email communication, online maps, and media (TV, radio, web, Front Porch Forum, social) – ensuring broad and inclusive participation .



Themes/Issues - Public

Thousands were engaged; these efforts were building on existing work in Vermont communities. Some things we learned:

- ✓ More housing needed (family and workforce) in growth areas – infrastructure to support
- ✓ More housing needed in rural areas
- ✓ Housing target concerns
- ✓ Clarity on designations
- ✓ Job growth to coincide with housing
- ✓ Transportation options
- ✓ Protecting waterways/flooding/resiliency and growing in places safe from flooding
- ✓ Conservation and fear of sprawl, implications of rural mapping
- ✓ Mixed views on whether it will help housing production

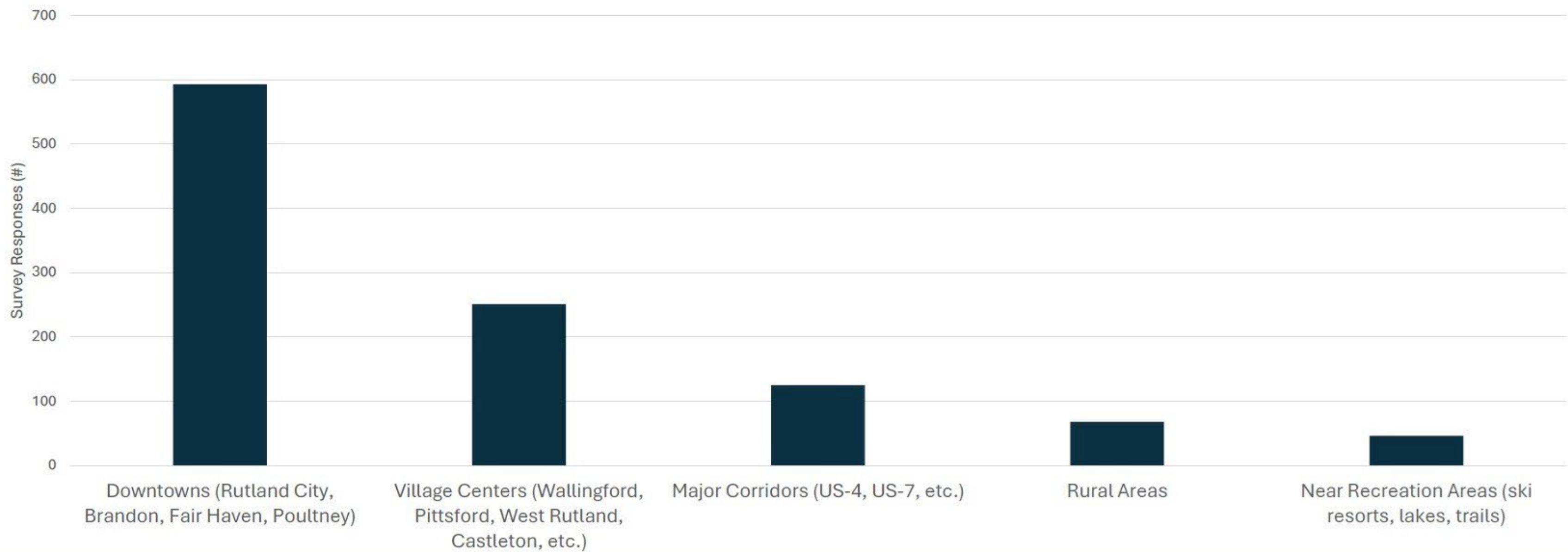


Rutland Regional Planning Commission Community Survey

Survey Results- Land Use



If the Region continues to grow, which areas would you like to see the most growth?



Shape Our Future Together

Local and Regional Housing Targets



All regional plans will have **local** and **regional** housing targets



Regional targets were developed by VHFA & decided upon by DHCD



Planning purposes only; demonstrates the need and sets a goal



Total additional home targets, 2025-2030 and 2025-2050

Region	2025-2030		2025-2050	
	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper
Addison County	1,296	1,978	4,103	8,088
Bennington County	1,453	2,188	4,483	8,836
Central Vermont	2,540	3,864	8,045	15,856
Chittenden County	7,301	10,537	15,783	47,407
Lamoille County	1,387	1,959	3,359	6,621
Mount Ascutney	1,207	1,781	3,750	7,391
Northeastern Vermont	2,836	4,193	9,014	17,768
Northwest Vermont	2,144	3,249	6,755	13,315
Rutland Regional	2,707	4,065	8,100	15,965
Two-Rivers Ottauquechee	2,424	3,640	7,692	15,162
Windham Regional	2,571	3,730	7,933	15,635
Vermont	27,867	41,185	79,018	172,044

2025-2030: “Lower” assume VT year-round households increase at the 2016-2019 average annual rate of 1.02%. “Higher” assume the 2019-2022 rate of 1.77%.

2025-2050: “Lower” based on population projection. “Higher” assume VT year-round households increase at the long-term annual average rate of 1.4%.

All targets include additional projected year-round households PLUS homes needed to normalize vacancy rates, eliminate homelessness, replace destroyed homes, and provide a margin to address Vermont’s 15% seasonal home rate.



Limited Infrastructure Impacts Pace and Scale of Housing Growth

Benefits of a new wastewater system

If it's built:

- Housing & Business Opportunities
 - Old Schoolhouse project can advance
 - MSI (Buck's) building, others can house many different types of businesses
- Nazarene Church
- Stores that offer more local, healthy food options
- Potential for more students in school
- Increased Flood Resiliency

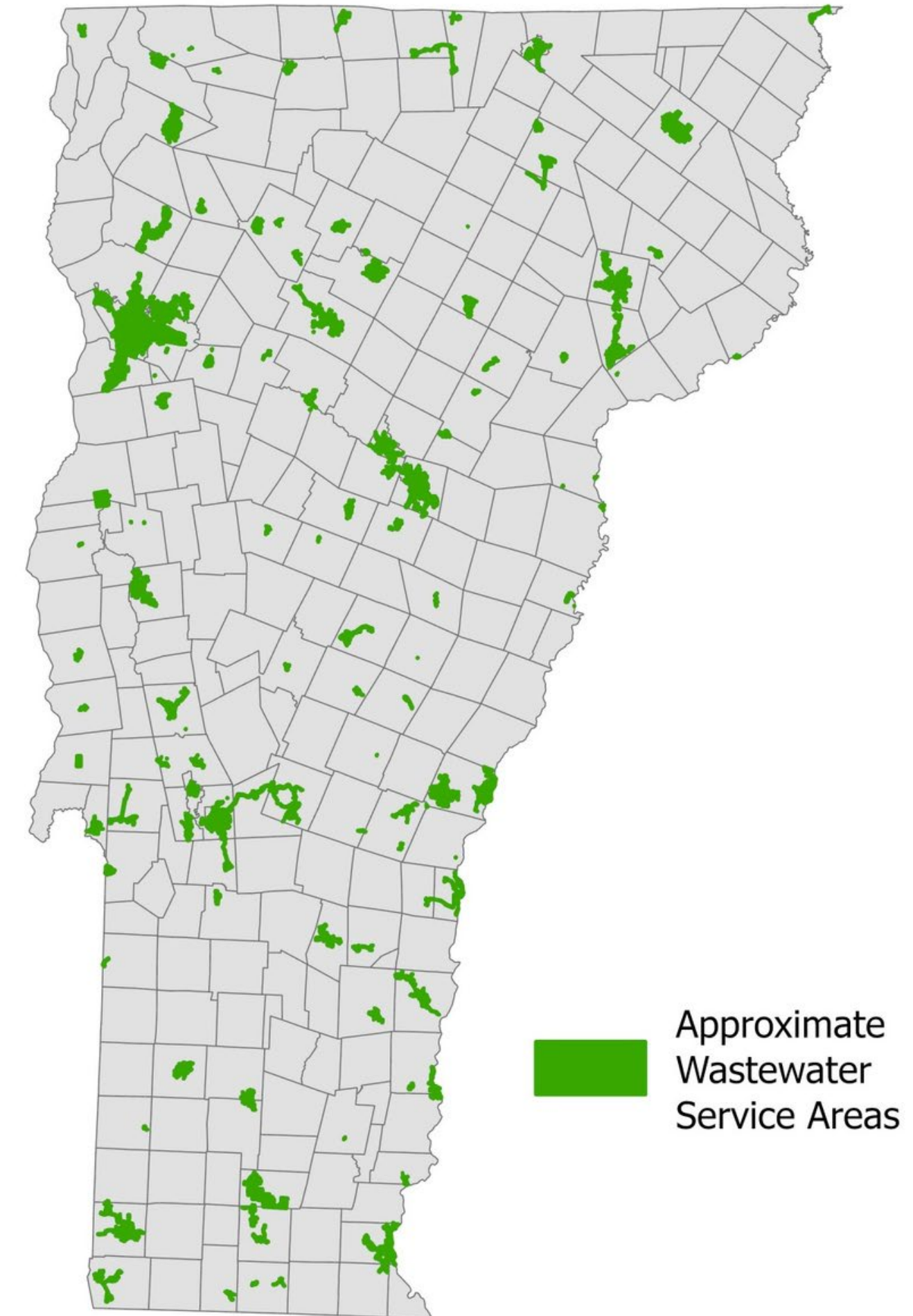
If it's not built:

- Loss of housing, population, tax base, and revitalization opportunities
- Loss of available grant funding



Wolcott Community Wastewater Project

Date:
March 12, 2024



Draft RPC Tier 1B Eligible Areas

Draft **Tier 1B eligible areas** are about the same as the interim exemptions in terms of land area but adapted to fit each municipality.

~ 2.2% of the State. May need statutory fix.

Legacy designations were 0.3% of the State.

RPC	% of region eligible for Tier 1B - DRAFT	Acres eligible for Tier 1B - DRAFT
Addison County RPC	3.3%	15,304
Bennington County RC	2.6%	9,411
Central Vermont RPC	0.8%	4,284
Chittenden County RPC	10.5%	36,395
Lamoille County PC	2.5%	7,767
Mount Ascutney RC	2.0%	4,050
Northeastern VT Dev. Assn.	0.6%	7,616
Northwest RPC	2.1%	9,691
Rutland RPC	2.4%	13,894
Two Rivers-Ottauquechee RC	1.5%	12,120
Windham RC	1.3%	7,951
Statewide Average/Total	2.2%	128,483
Statewide Acreage		5,898,880
Interim Exemption Total	2.3%	135,622

Issues to Consider Addressing

- Clarification of statutory language around centers and planned growth and village areas to provide needed space for meeting housing targets – potentially losing 10-20% of potential 1B areas
- Create a simplified regional plan amendment and Tier 1B map amendment process
- Clarification on benefits of designation
- Appeals –require appeal to specify what doesn't comply; stop de novo appeals in favor of specific alleged non-compliance.
- Water/wastewater – consider Rep. Olson's draft bill
- Opportunities to streamline other permitting processes in DEC and SHPO
- Reduce opportunities for corporations to buy homes as investments
- Explore ways to make it easier for developers to obtain condo financing
- Consider possibility of treating apartment building sales similar to mobile home parks where residents could purchase



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Thank you! Questions?

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For more information, visit: **VAPDA.org**