



Regional Planning and Housing

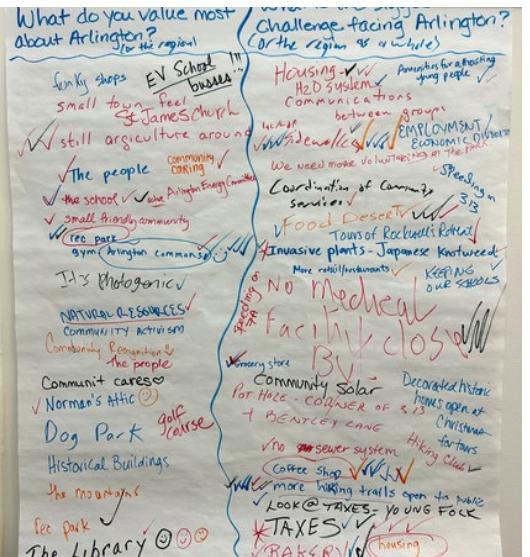
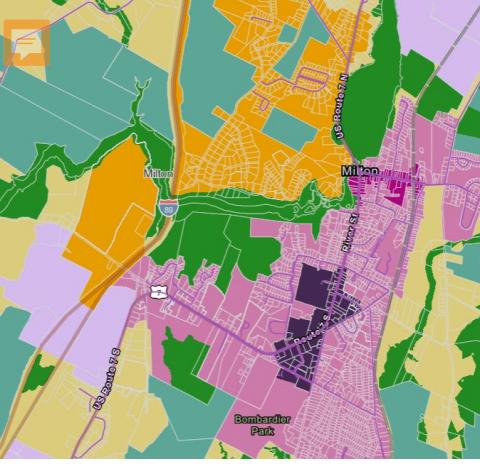
Presented to:

Senate Committee on Natural Resources
and Energy

January 28, 2026

Catherine Dimitruk, Executive Director, Northwest Regional Planning Commission

Devon Neary, Executive Director, Rutland Regional Planning Commission



11 New Regional Plans

Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs) are updating regional plans:

- Housing!
- Tier 1B, Act 250 partial housing exemption
- Align growth areas (town/region/state)

Land Use Review Board (LURB) reviews and approves regional plans, designation areas, Act 250 exemption areas, Tier 2 rules, and Tier 3 map and rules.



Statutory deadline of 12/31/2026 for RPCs to adopt an updated regional plan.

New Regional Plan Requirements



PROCESS

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

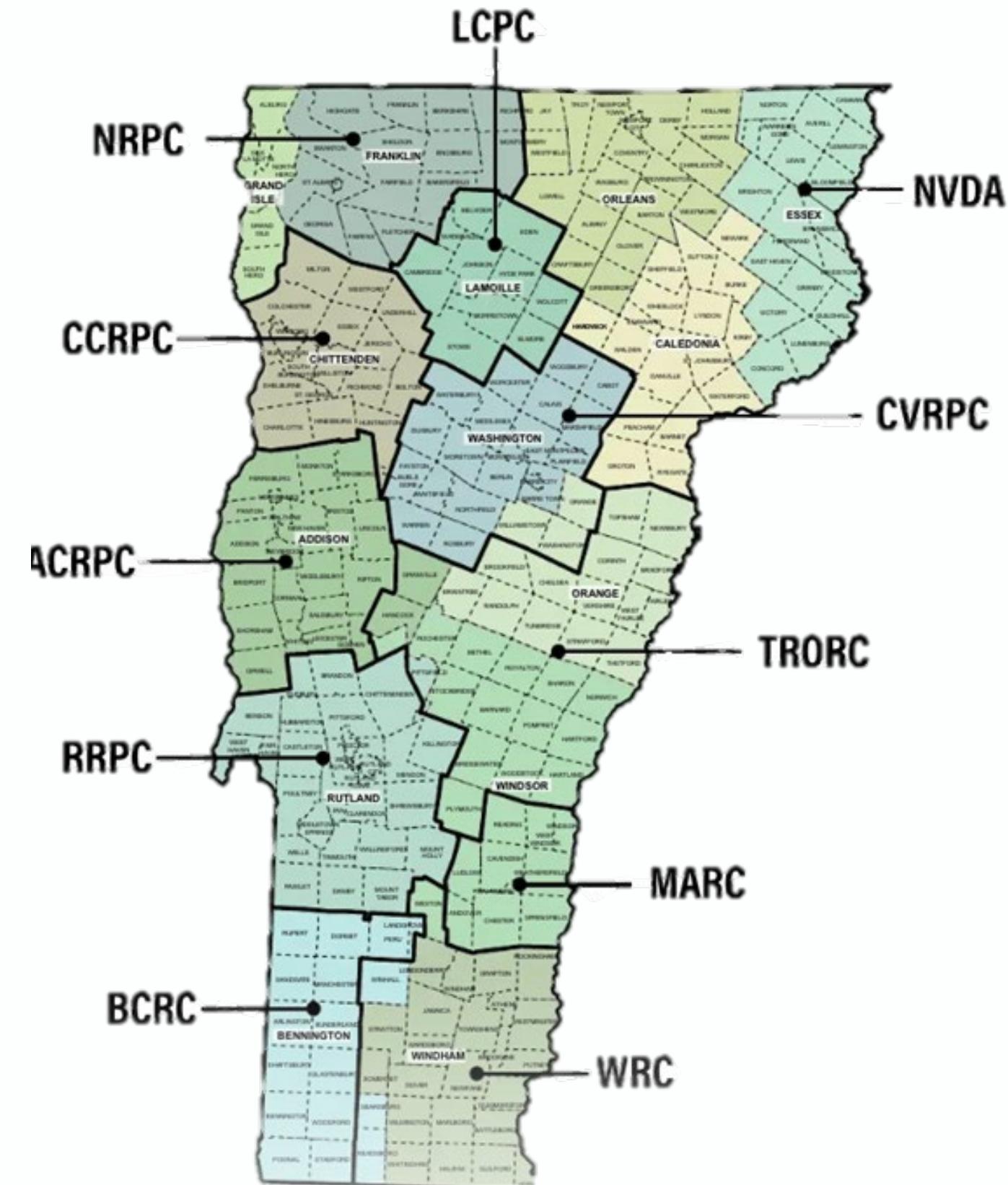
PURPOSE

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

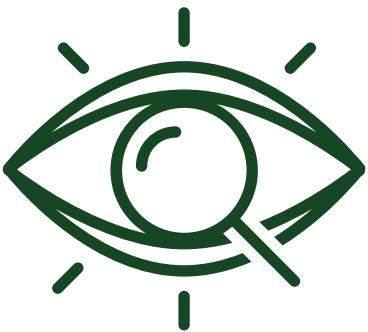


ELEMENTS

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



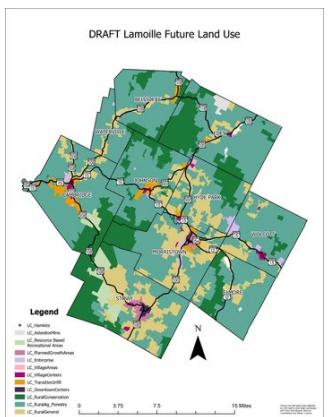
Regional Plans



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 | *Submitted January 2026*

Mount Ascutney RC | *February 2026*

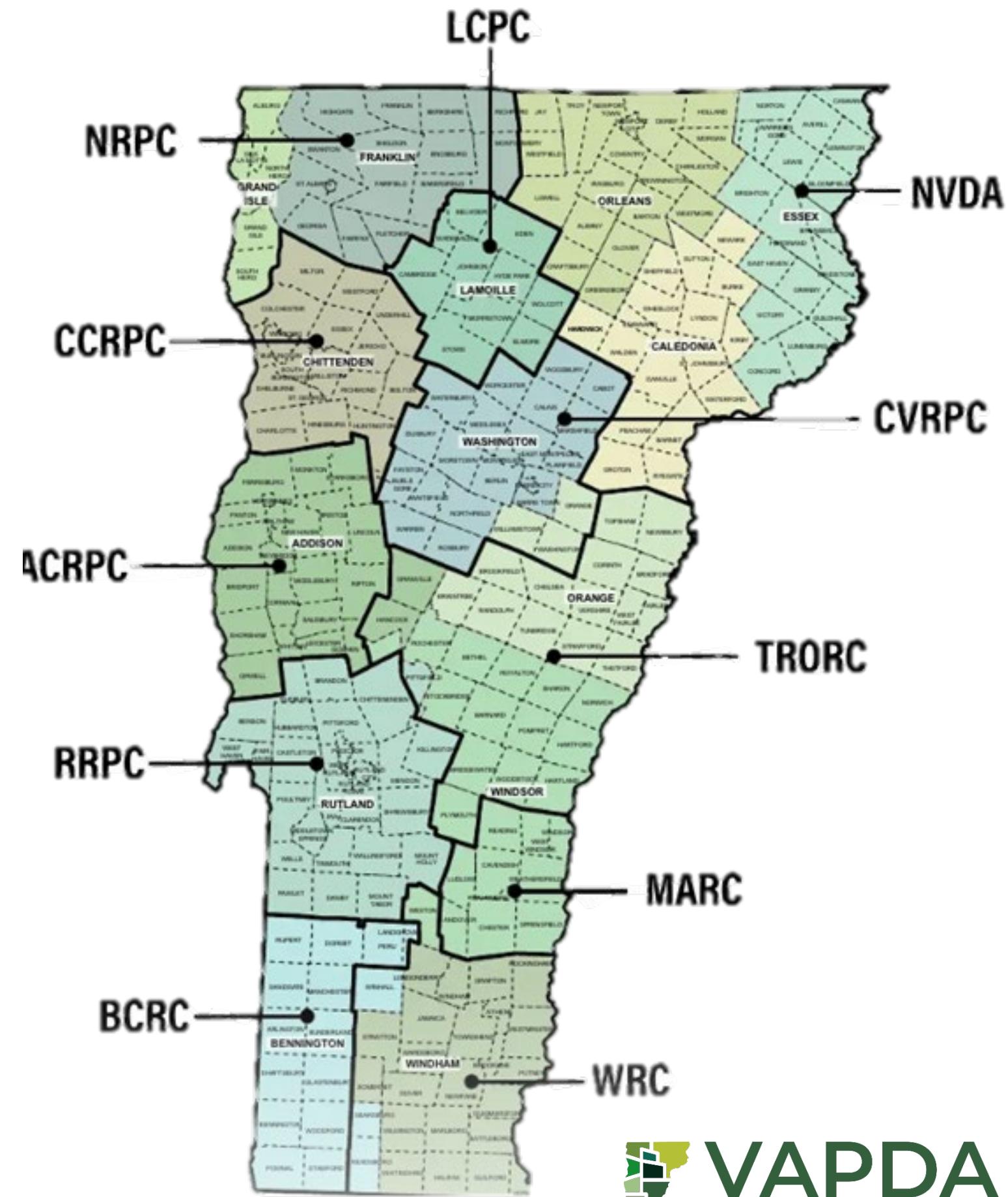
Northeastern Vermont DA | *March 2026*

Bennington County RC | *April 2026*

Windham RC | *May 2026*

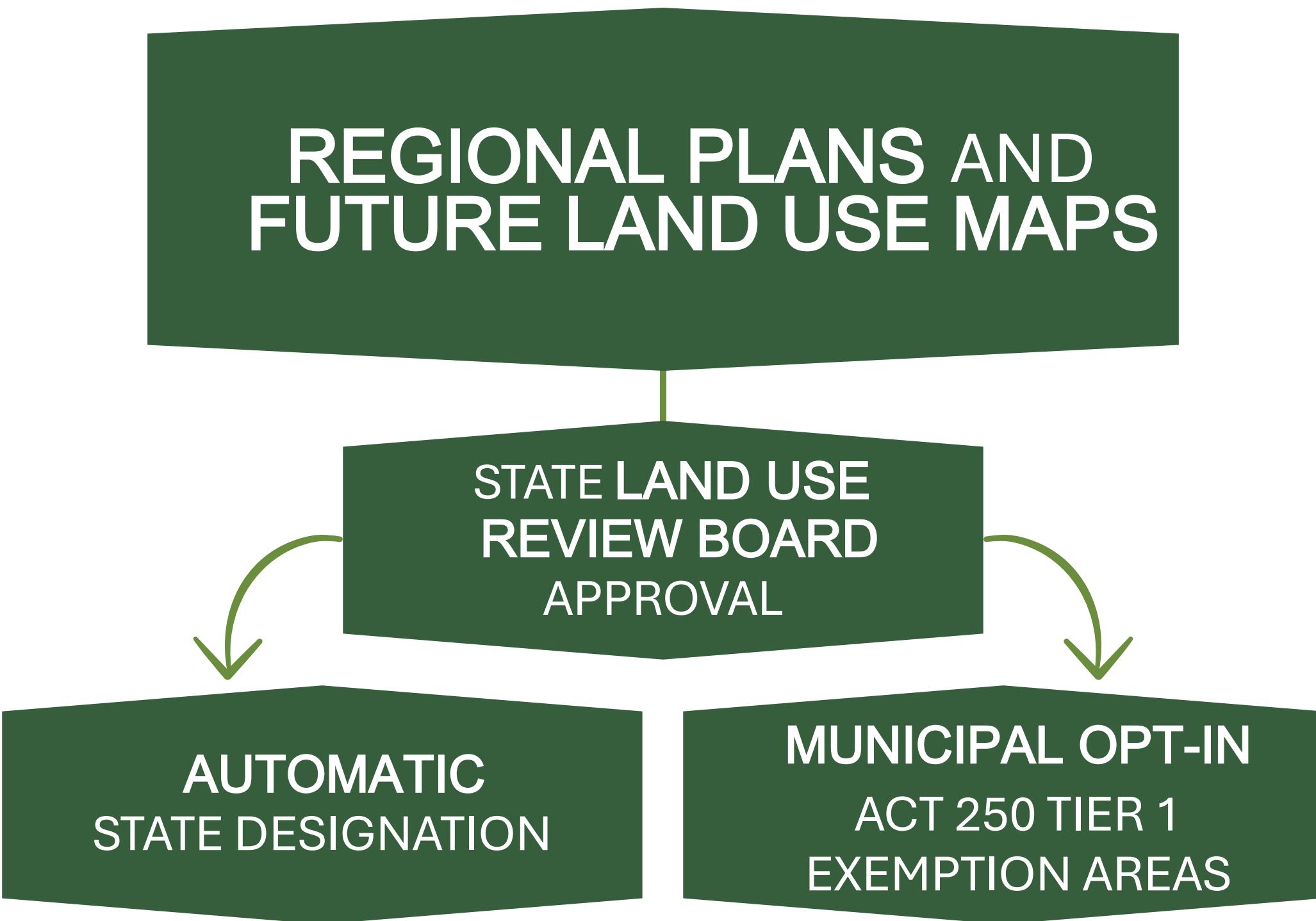
Central Vermont RPC | *May 2026*

Two RiversOttauquechee RC | *July 2026*





Regional Plan Approvals



Act 250 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



ELIGIBLE for TIER1B (Act 250) and DESIGNATIONS

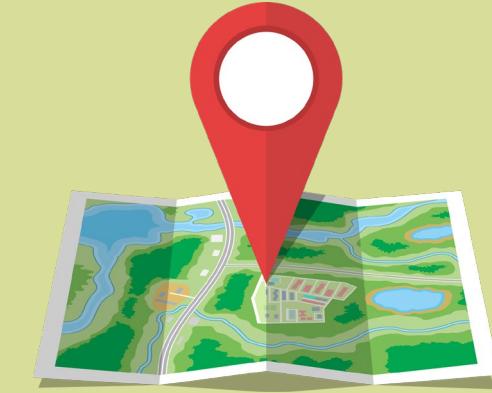
- Downtown Center
- Village Center
- Planned Growth Area
- Village Area



RURAL AREAS

- Hamlet
- Rural General
- Rural Agricultural and Forestry
- Rural Conservation

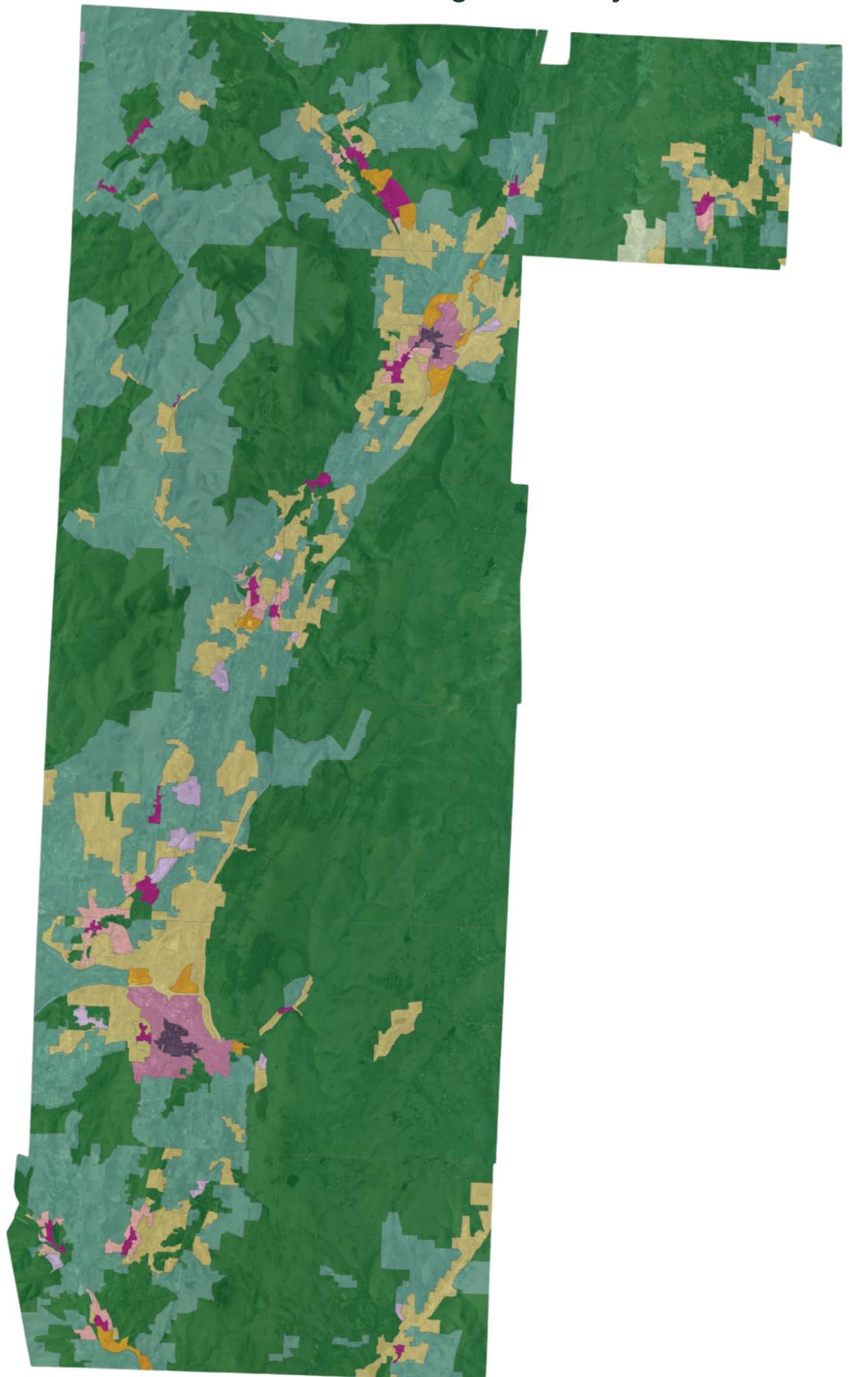
(Not Tier 3)



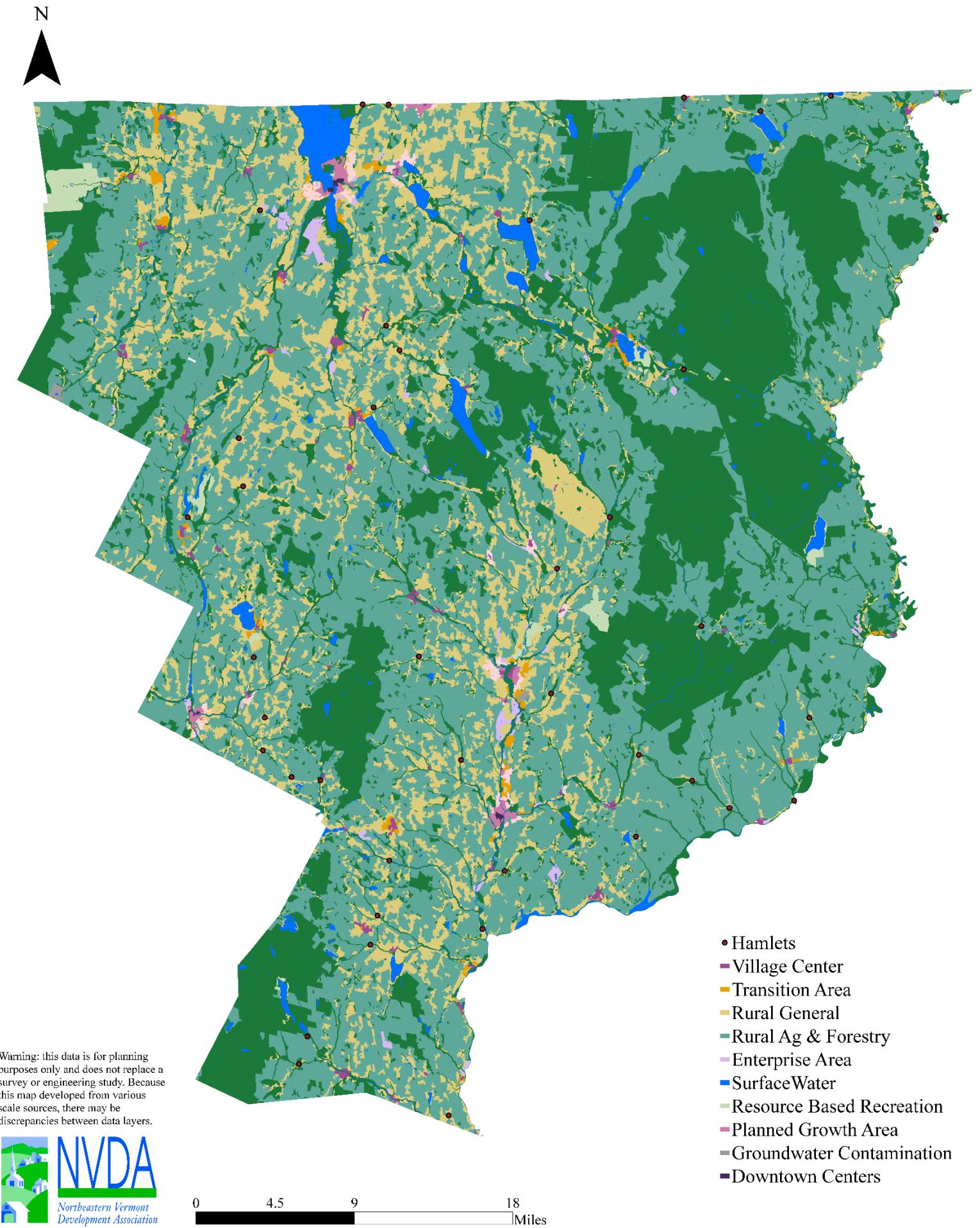
OTHER AREAS

- Transition
- Enterprise
- Resource-Based Recreation

Draft FLU Map
Bennington County RC

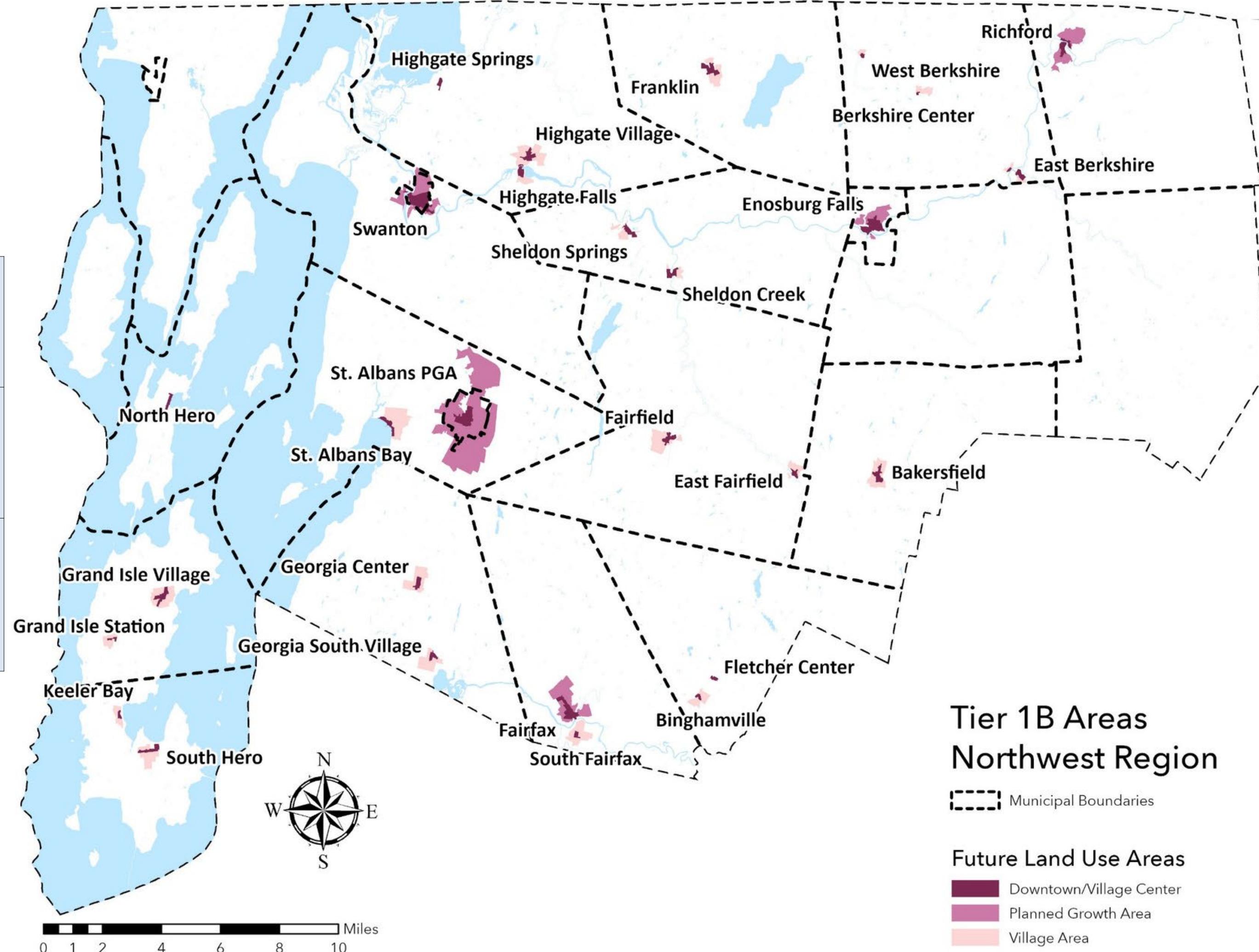


Draft FLU Map of the Northeast Kingdom as of 12/9/2025





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



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.

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



Broad Public Outreach

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



Community Centers



Libraries



Rural Senior Centers



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**.



Farmers Markets



Schools



Mobile Home Communities



NRPC 2026
to
2034 New

Regional Planning

Tax Credits for Businesses
Landlords of property in the Regional Plan may be eligible for improvements. Local benefits to help with...

Easier Housing Development
Require Act 250 permits in downtown areas map...

Building More Homes
Many new homes we...

Take Care of our Water
Regional Plan helps take care of water resources while supporting new and...

Timeline for the Northwest Regional Plan
The Northwest Regional Plan is currently working on a land use map...

Learn More and Get Involved

Visit <https://www.nrpcvt.com> to explore updates to the Regional Plan and open houses schedule.

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.

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

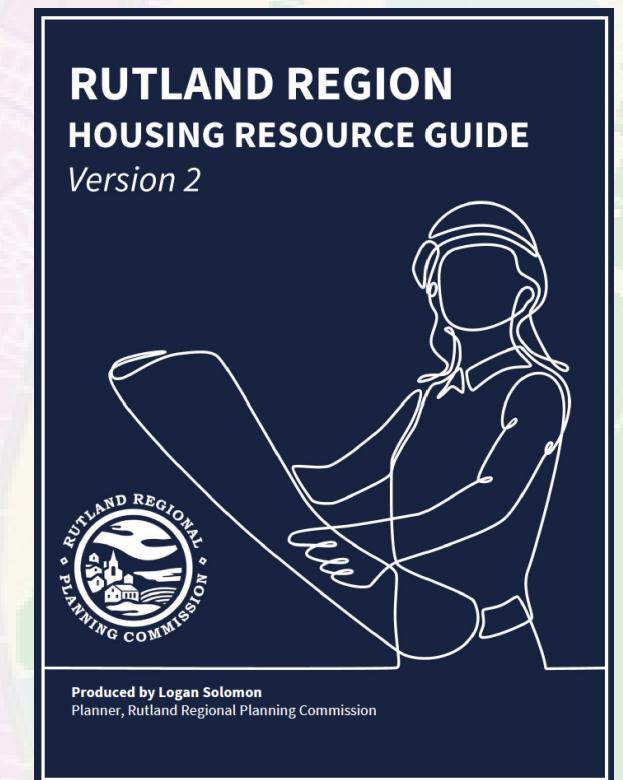
Regional Housing Navigators

Each RPC tailored the work to meet their region's needs. FY 23/24

Dedicated staff or temporary staff focused on housing:

-  Accessory Dwelling Unit training, handbook and pilot project
Started by Addison County Regional Commission
-  Technical Assistance to large multi-unit projects
-  Promising Properties Evaluation and action plans
-  Multi-town housing coalitions, and local housing committees
-  Navigation assistance for brownfields redevelopment sites
-  Housing Resource Guide

Guide to
Creating
Accessory
Dwelling Units





Limited Infrastructure Impacts Pace and Scale of Housing Growth

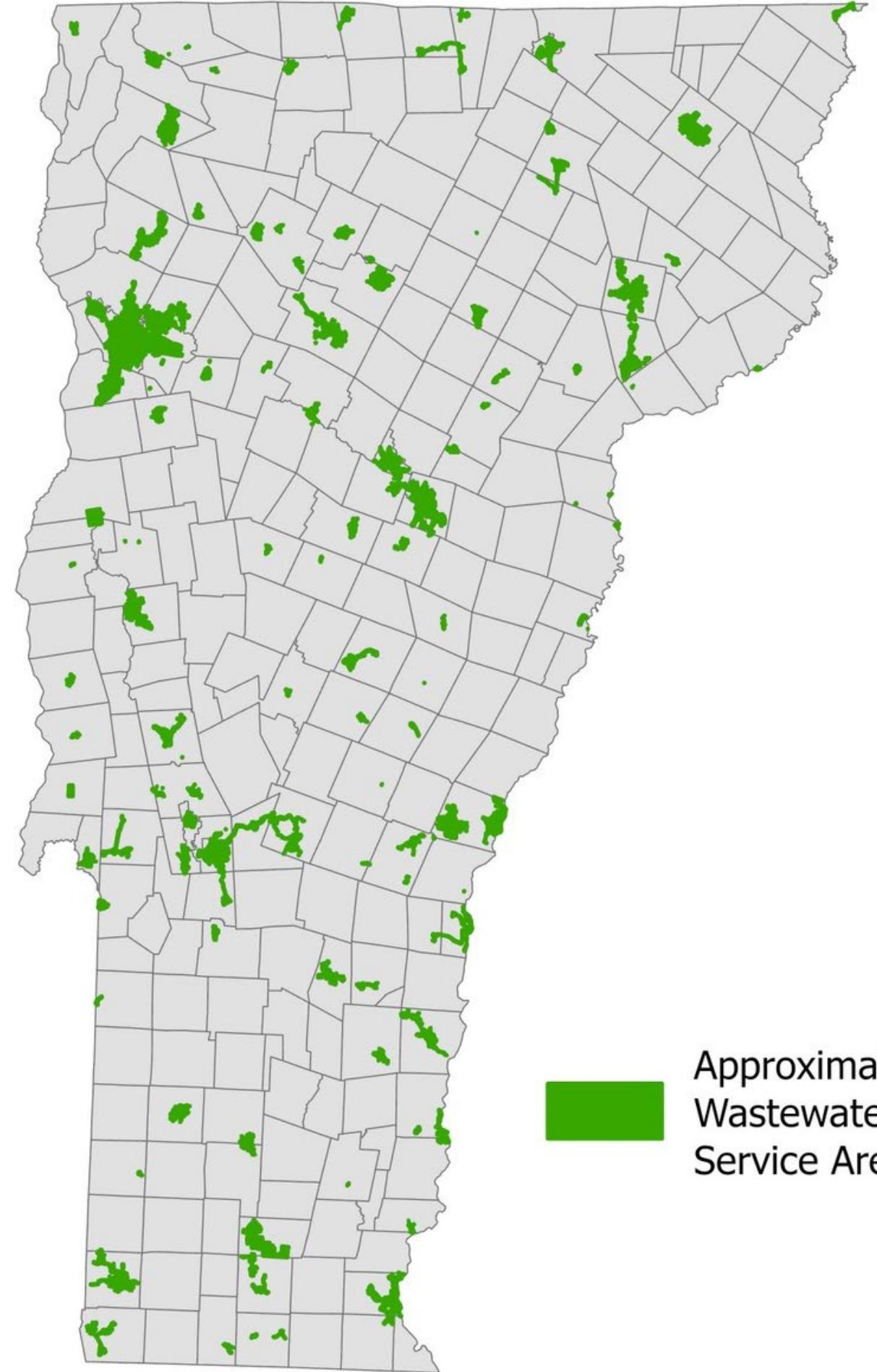
Benefits of a new wastewater system

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



Issues to Consider Addressing

- Clarification of statutory language around centers and planned growth and village areas to provide needed space for meeting housing targets
- 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



Thank you! Questions?

Catherine Dimitruk, Executive Director, Northwest Regional Planning Commission

Devon Neary, Executive Director, Rutland Regional Planning Commission



For more information, visit: VAPDA.org