

January 2025

Vermont League of Cities and Towns 2025 Legislative Priorities



Josh Hanford
Director, Intergovernmental Affairs
jhanford@vlct.org

Samantha Sheehan
Municipal Policy and Advocacy Specialist
ssheehan@vlct.org

What is VLCT?

Every city and town in Vermont, including yours, is a member of the Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT), the nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that was founded in 1967 to serve and strengthen Vermont local government. In addition to legislative advocacy, VLCT provides:

- Educational workshops for local officials
- Comprehensive insurance coverage for municipalities
- Confidential legal guidance from experienced municipal attorneys
- The Vermont Municipal Data Project
- Help for state agencies and legislative working groups



NEW Our Municipal Operations Support Team is funded by a \$1 million USDA RD grant to assist local officials with financial management, grant funding, ARPA, project development, and more

VLCT 2025 Legislative Priorities

Support municipalities in meeting the obligations and functions of today's local government and help them take action to solve the challenges of the 21st century.

2025

Support

Lower Property Taxes

Enable municipalities to raise local revenues and control expenses, avoid shifting state costs and obligations to local budgets.

Invest Locally

Provide reliable funding beyond competitive grants to municipalities to support the delivery of essential services, innovative programs, and the maintenance of public infrastructure.

Improve Accountability

Ensure transparency, fiscal responsibility, compliance, and equity across state and local government.

Action

Create Housing

Authorize new incentives and investment in infrastructure to support housing growth and create shelter, transitional housing, and services to address Vermont's homelessness crisis.

Promote Public Safety

Increase treatment options, law enforcement training opportunities, and judicial accountability.

Build Resilient Communities

Work across government silos to address flood resiliency, water quality, sustainable growth, and the impacts of climate change.



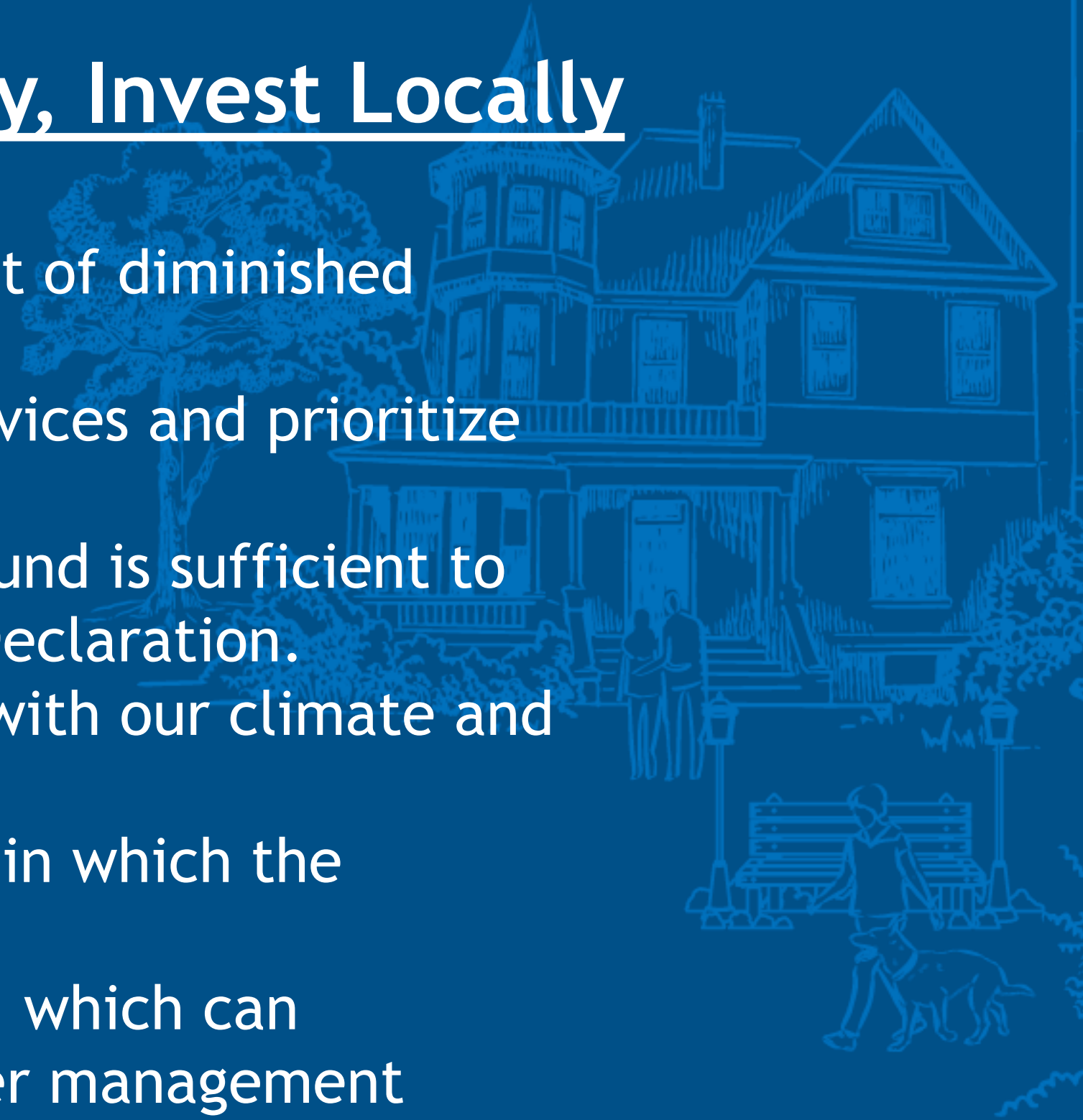
VLCT Transportation Committee Members

- Delsie Hoyt, West Fairlee Selectboard Chair, Chair
- Michael Hogan, Cabot Selectboard Chair, Vice Chair
- Christopher Baird, Mendon Road Commissioner
- Gary Briggs, Lunenburg Selectperson
- Marcey Carver, Bradford Planning Commission Chair
- Andy Watts, Essex Town Selectboard Vice Chair
- Nick Zaiac, Arlington Town Administrator
- Carole O'Connell, Newport City Planning Commission
- Chris Jolly, Town of Stowe Assistant Engineer



Transportation Priorities: Build Resiliency, Invest Locally

- Avoid cost shifting to municipal tax burdens in the event of diminished federal funding or challenged state budgets
- Adequately fund right-sized, efficient public transit services and prioritize the implementation of complete streets.
- Ensure that funding for the Town Highway Emergency Fund is sufficient to cover municipal costs regardless of a Federal Disaster Declaration.
- Diversify Transportation Fund revenue sources to align with our climate and safety goals
- Remit a portion of registration fees to the municipality in which the vehicle is registered.
- Build resilient infrastructure designed for intended use, which can withstand more extreme weather and meets stormwater management standards.



Other Transportation Policy Supported by VLCT

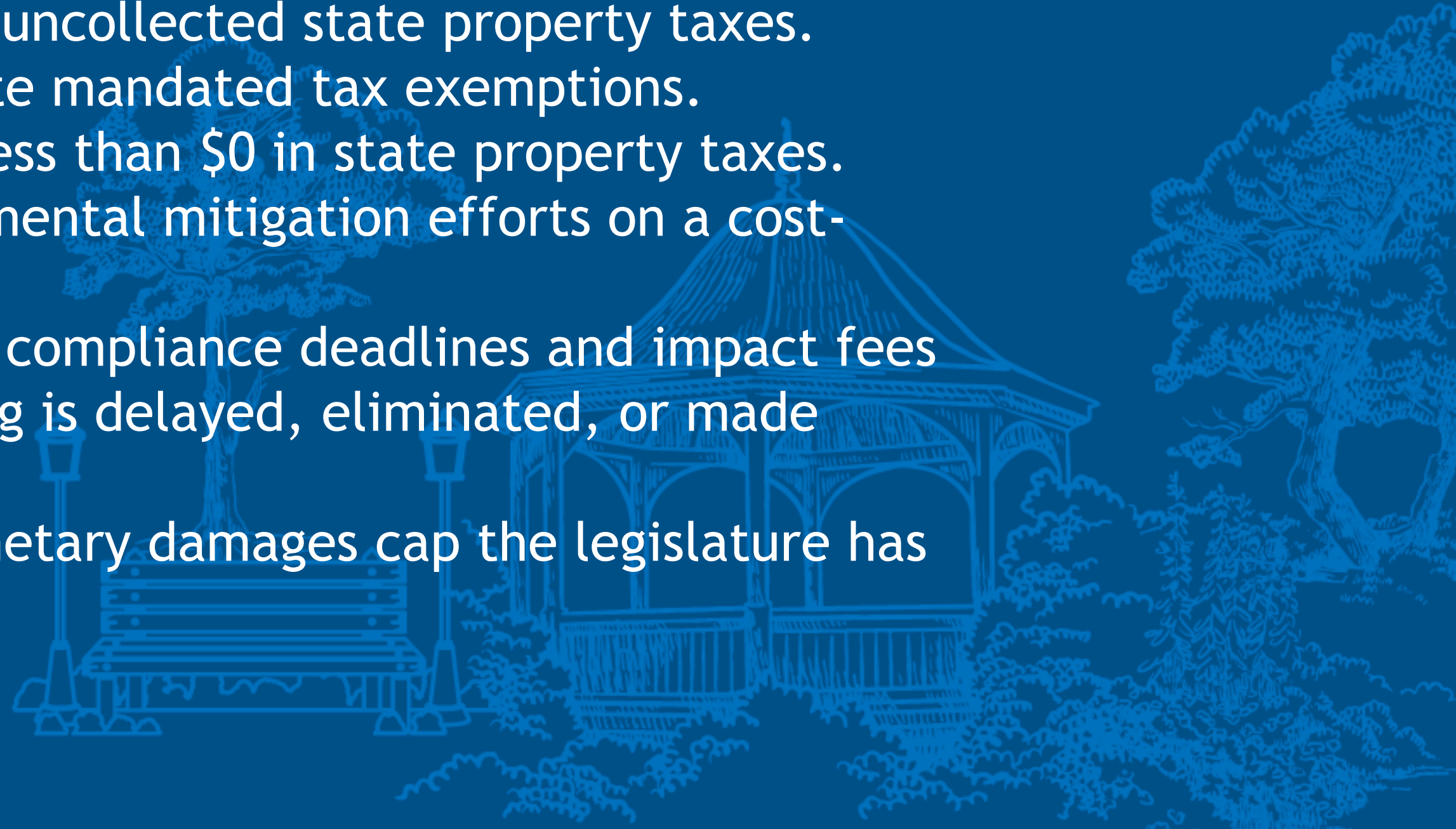
- Provide funding and technical support so town highways, culverts, and bridges are accurately rated for weights
- Secure funding for municipal transportation sufficient to pay for statutory obligations
- Authorize municipalities to set speed limits on roads below 25 m.p.h.
- Provide new funding to electrify vehicles and equipment and install charging infrastructure
- Provide incentives to municipalities to take over state highways
- Eliminate provisions in VTrans' master license agreements requiring municipalities to indemnify VTrans or the railroads
- Allow VTrans to enter into agreements with municipalities for use equipment
- Establish state tracking of municipal paving projects



Lower Property Taxes

Municipal property taxes account for 20-30% of Vermont homeowners overall tax burden.

- Modernize the state withholding formula for Local Options Taxes (LOT)
- Return the growing special Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) fund surplus to the municipalities that raised it.
- Hold municipalities harmless for uncollected state property taxes.
- Reimburse municipalities for state mandated tax exemptions.
- Ensure no property owner pays less than \$0 in state property taxes.
- Base implementation of environmental mitigation efforts on a cost-effectiveness analysis.
- Afford municipalities relief from compliance deadlines and impact fees when corresponding state funding is delayed, eliminated, or made competitive.
- Adopt for municipalities the monetary damages cap the legislature has already enacted for the State.



January 2025

Questions???



Josh Hanford
Director, Intergovernmental Affairs
jhanford@vlct.org

Samantha Sheehan
Municipal Policy and Advocacy Specialist
ssheehan@vlct.org