



**Northwest
Regional Planning
Commission**

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

**October 29, 2025
6:30 p.m. Meeting**

Via Zoom
Virtual link on page 2

Physical location:
NRPC Office, 75 Fairfield Street, St. Albans

- 1. Adjustments to the Agenda**
- 2. Welcome, introductions, opening remarks** –Peter Zamore, *Chair*
- 3. Opportunity for Public Comment**
- 4. Minutes of the September 2025 Meeting** (*action*)
- 5. Commission Reports:** written reports enclosed
 - Finance/Operations**– *Kirk Waite*
 - Personnel** – *Bob Buermann*
 - Executive Committee** – *Peter Zamore*
 - Project Review**– *William Irwin*
 - Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)** – *Barclay Morris*
 - Brownfields Committee** – *Megan Sherlund*
 - Regional Plan and Policy Committee**- *Lori Ruple*
 - Vermont Economic Progress Council (VEPC)** –*Barbara Murphy*
 - Green Mountain Transit**- *Bob Buermann/Catherine Dimitruk*
 - Healthy Roots Advisory Committee**- *Marietta Scholten*
 - Northwest Vermont Regional Foundation**- *Kirk Waite*
 - Office**-*Staff*

6. **Water Resources Program Overview** (*discussion*)
Dean Pierce, Senior Planner
7. **Town of Franklin** (*action*)
Plan and Policy Committee recommendation attached, page 13
 - Approval of the Town Plan
 - Confirmation of Planning Efforts
 - Determination of Energy Compliance
8. **FY 27 Municipal Assessment Rate** (*action*)
Finance Committee recommendation and municipal assessment policy attached, page 15
9. **Commissioner Announcements**

Meeting Access Information

Please try to join the meeting 5-10 minutes prior to the start time. If you have trouble connecting, please call 802-310-6797.

Join Zoom Meeting via video

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85610707355>

Join Zoom via phone

1(305)224-1968

1(309)205-3325

Meeting ID 85610707355

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1 **NRPC Board of Commissioners Meeting**
2 **September 24, 2025, at 6:30 PM**
3 **Hybrid Meeting (Zoom and Port Washington Room)**
4 **St. Albans Town Office, 398 Georgia Shore Road, Saint Albans Bay, VT**
5

6 **Board Member Attendance:** *See attached.* A quorum was present to conduct business.
7

8 **Staff:** Catherine Dimitruk, Kyle Grenier
9

10 **Other Attendees:** Kerrick Johnson, Commissioner, Vermont Dept of Public Service
11

12 **Welcome, Introductions, Opening Remarks**

13 Chair P. Zamore called the meeting to order at 6:36 PM followed by roll call.
14

15 **Adjustments to Agenda**

16 None.
17

18 **Opportunity for Public Comment**

19 None.
20

21 **Minutes of the July 2025 Meeting**

22 E. Nance made a correction on to the July minutes: corrected spelling of Ezra Klein.

23 *E. Nance motioned to approve July 30, 2025, minutes with correction. B. Morris seconded. Motion*
24 *carried.*
25

26 *Order of meeting adjusted to allow for delayed arrival of Commissioner Johnson.*
27

28 **Commission Reports:**

29 (written reports enclosed in board packet)
30

31 Finance/Operations – K. Waite reported that there was no meeting.

32 Personnel – B. Buermann reported that there was no meeting.

33 Executive Committee – P. Zamore reported highlights from the recent meeting.

34 Project Review – H. Demars highlighted projects reviewed at the recent meeting.

35 Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) – B. Morris reported that the TAC did not have a quorum
36 and held an informational meeting, highlighting a presentation of the Lamoille River Hydraulic
37 Modeling and suggested that it could be a presentation at a future Commissioners meeting.

38 Brownfields Committee – M. Sherlund reported approved funding for local projects and highlights
39 from the recent meeting.

40 Regional Plan and Policy Committee – L. Ruple reported that the committee incorporated recently
41 received feedback on the draft plan that would be reviewed later at tonight’s meeting.

42 Vermont Economic Progress Council (VEPC) – B. Murphy reported that the committee discussed
43 the new Community Housing and Infrastructure Program (CHIP).

44 Green Mountain Transit – C. Dimitruk gave a brief update related to the upcoming transfer of service
45 from GMT to Rural Community Transportation.

46 Healthy Roots Advisory Committee – M. Scholten reported that the Abbey Group has been sold to
47 Whitsons Culinary Group. Communication will continue to identify opportunities for future
48 partnership with Whitsons Culinary Group.

49 Northwest Vermont Regional Foundation – K. Waite, no report.
50 Office – staff, no report.

51

52 **Featured Speaker: Kerrick Johnson, Commissioner, Vermont Dept. of Public Service**

53 Commissioner Johnson spoke about changes at the federal level which will impact Vermonters;
54 highlighting changes to solar programs will have significant impact. Johnson spoke about the
55 Sheffield-Highgate Export Interface (SHEI), noting the longstanding concerns related to the grid’s
56 capacity constraints. Johnson noted that updates within the coming year should lead to
57 meaningful solutions. Johnson also spoke about the current Vermont Dept. of Public Service’s
58 current initiatives, which include: affordability, grid resilience, adequate supply of power, cyber
59 security/threats.

60

61 **Regional Plan Presentation**

62 (discussion item) Draft plan available at <https://www.nrpcvt.com/sectiondraftsoftheplan/>

63

64 L. Ruple reported that edits received were incorporated into the draft before the board tonight. E.
65 Nance agreed that committee requested changes had been made. L. Ruple stated that the bulk of
66 changes were made to the Introduction and Land Use sections; dates, data and other detail
67 changes were also made.

68

69 L. McCall asked for clarification related to “Nursing Homes.” C. Dimitruk clarified that the region
70 has “Nursing Homes” and “Residential Care Homes.”

71

72 K. Waite asked for clarification related to ability to make changes after the draft plan is submitted to
73 the Land Use Review Board (LURB). C. Dimitruk stated that this submission constitutes a
74 preliminary review. NRPC will continue to incorporate edits and LURB staff comments into a final
75 draft, which is planned to come before the NRPC board in early 2026.

76

77 *B. Morris motioned to forward draft to the Land Use Review Board for preliminary review. B. Murphy*
78 *seconded.*

79 *B. Buermann requested to amend the motion to include giving Catherine Dimitruk the ability to*
80 *make simple editorial changes as recommended.*

81 *B. Morris and B. Murphy agreed. Motion carried.*

82

83 B. Morris recognized the staff effort, including the tremendous public outreach, that has made this
84 plan update possible.

85

86 **Commissioner Announcements**

87 C. Dimitruk announced that Greta Brunswick, Senior Planner, has been recognized as the 2025
88 Vermont Professional Planner of the Year, by the Vermont Planners Association.

89

90 E. Nance suggested that perhaps NRPC Commissioners share a short biography at future meetings
91 as a way to learn more about one another.

92

93 **Adjourn**

94 *Chair, P. Zamore adjourned the meeting at 8:26pm.*

FY26 NPRC Board of Commissioners- Meeting Attendance

Municipality	Board Member	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June
		7/30/25	No Meeting	9/24/25	10/29/25	No Meeting	TBD	1/28/26	2/25/26	3/25/26	4/29/26	5/27/26	6/24/26
Frkln Cty Youth	Vacant												
Gl Cty Youth	Amelia Demars	X		X									
Alburg Town	Alex McCracken	E											
Alburg Town	Danielle Choiniere	X		X									
Alburg Village	Vacant												
Alburg Village	Vacant												
Bakersfield	William Irwin	X		E									
Bakersfield	Linda McCall	X		X									
Berkshire	Josh Grims	X		E									
Berkshire	Claude Charron												
Enosburg Falls	Leonard Charron												
Enosburg Falls	Vacant												
Enosburgh Town	Jesse Woods												
Enosburgh Town	James Oullette (8/25)												
Fairfax	Barbara Murphy	X		X									
Fairfax	Nicholas Nadeau												
Fairfield	Julia Callan	X		X									
Fairfield	Chuck Verderber	E		X									
Fletcher	Michelle Frennier	E		E	E								
Fletcher	Lori Ruple	X		X									
Franklin	Yvon Dandurand	X		X									
Franklin	Wesley Kempton												
Georgia	Carl Rosenquist	X											
Georgia	Kirk Waite	X		X									
Grand Isle	Barclay Morris	X		X									
Grand Isle	Howard Demars	X		X									
Highgate	Jack Pelkey	X											
Highgate	Anna Comiskey	X		X									
Isle La Motte	Sylvia Jensen	E		X									
Isle La Motte	Mary-Catherine Graziano												
Montgomery	Leanne Barnard												
Montgomery	Mark Brouillette												
North Hero	Andy Alling	X		X									
North Hero	Mike Curtis	E											
Richford	Marissa Tessier												
Richford	Vacant												
Sheldon	Vacant												
Sheldon	Mathew Stebbins	X		X									
South Hero	Peter Zamore	X		X									
South Hero	Bob Buermann	X		X									
St. Albans City	Elisabeth Nance	X		X									
St. Albans City	Chip Sawyer	X		X									
St. Albans Town	Marietta Scholten	X		X									
St. Albans Town	Megan Sherlund	X		X									
Swanton Town	Nicole Draper	X		X									
Swanton Town	Nicholas Brosseau	X		X									
Swanton Village	Heidi Britch-Valenta	X		X									
Swanton Village	Damon Broderick	X		X									
	# Municipalities												

QUORUM = 12

E= Excused ; X=Present

1:33 PM

10/20/25

Accrual Basis

Northwest Regional Planning Commission
Balance Sheet
As of September 30, 2025

	<u>Sep 30, 25</u>
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
1000 · People's Checking Account	666,903.63
1020 · People's Money Market Account	96,312.85
1035 · New England Federal Cr~1Year CD	48,379.92
1036 · New England Fed Cr-CD 5 Year	66,469.33
1037 · Lamoille CWSP	272,431.79
1038 · Missisquoi CWSP	464,685.67
1040 · Union Bank	288,805.59
1080 · Petty Cash	9.05
Total Checking/Savings	<u>1,903,997.83</u>
Accounts Receivable	
1200 · Accounts Receivable	-140,293.06
Total Accounts Receivable	<u>-140,293.06</u>
Other Current Assets	
Account for Credit Transfer	-2,300.00
1400 · Prepaid Expenses	260.00
Total Other Current Assets	<u>-2,040.00</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>1,761,664.77</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>1,761,664.77</u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	
2000 · Accounts Payable	160,430.51
Total Accounts Payable	<u>160,430.51</u>
Other Current Liabilities	
Payroll Liabilities	1,053.65
2100 · Employee Health Ins. Payable	657.94
2110 · Health Equity	2,668.54
2120 · Accrued Payroll	23,721.67
2130 · Accrued Vacation	54,824.68
2213 · VT Tax Withholding Payable	2,836.18

1:33 PM

10/20/25

Accrual Basis

Northwest Regional Planning Commission
Balance Sheet
As of September 30, 2025

	<u>Sep 30, 25</u>
2215 · Retirement Payable	11,685.34
2250 · Deferred Revenue	<u>1,104,175.91</u>
Total Other Current Liabilities	1,201,623.91
Total Current Liabilities	<u>1,362,054.42</u>
Total Liabilities	1,362,054.42
Equity	
Building Reserve	61,000.00
Equipment Reserve	20,000.00
Long Term Reserves	213,720.00
PAT Reserve	22,000.00
3900 · Fund Balance	328,302.09
Net Income	<u>-245,411.74</u>
Total Equity	<u>399,610.35</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u><u>1,761,664.77</u></u>

Northwest Regional Planning Commission
Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual
 July through September 2025

	Jul - Sep 25	Budget	\$ Over Budget	% of Budget
Income				
4016 · EDA	0.00	319,900.00	-319,900.00	0.0%
4026 · Grants in Aid Pilot Program	0.00	5,000.00	-5,000.00	0.0%
4030 · ACCD	0.00	680,429.00	-680,429.00	0.0%
4035 · VAOT	46,840.15	390,528.00	-343,687.85	11.99%
4044 · Shared Services	10,542.87	104,600.00	-94,057.13	10.08%
4045 · Public Safety	0.00	56,181.00	-56,181.00	0.0%
4047 · Municipal Assessments	70,439.00	70,440.00	-1.00	100.0%
4050 · Municipal Contracts/Community	30,978.78	154,353.00	-123,374.22	20.07%
4054 · Other State Grants	22,905.30	56,917.00	-34,011.70	40.24%
4055 · Other Federal Grants	375,691.72	404,850.00	-29,158.28	92.8%
4056 · VANR	9,603.14	320,098.00	-310,494.86	3.0%
4058 · Clean Water Service Provider	193,874.66	1,468,329.00	-1,274,454.34	13.2%
4059 · RSEP-St. Albans Town & City	4,038.73	13,000.00	-8,961.27	31.07%
4080 · Misc. Income	23,071.00	69,183.00	-46,112.00	33.35%
4600 · Interest Income	592.55	3,500.00	-2,907.45	16.93%
Total Income	788,577.90	4,117,308.00	-3,328,730.10	19.15%
Expense				
5010 · Salaries & Wages	262,834.38	1,146,490.00	-883,655.62	22.93%
5015 · Employer Social Security	15,998.23	71,082.00	-55,083.77	22.51%
5016 · Employer Medicare	3,741.53	16,624.00	-12,882.47	22.51%
5020 · Fringe Benefits	80,767.73	285,474.00	-204,706.27	28.29%
5030 · Travel	9,564.80	21,720.00	-12,155.20	44.04%
5040 · Advertising	2,505.20	7,500.00	-4,994.80	33.4%
5055 · Insurance-Liability	0.00	14,000.00	-14,000.00	0.0%
5080 · Meetings	4,928.79	16,550.00	-11,621.21	29.78%
5085 · Membership Dues	3,795.00	15,000.00	-11,205.00	25.3%
5090 · Technology and GIS	10,570.28	13,250.00	-2,679.72	79.78%
5095 · Software	4,815.47	49,700.00	-44,884.53	9.69%
5100 · Supplies & Furniture	8,309.00	95,100.00	-86,791.00	8.74%
5660 · Postage	0.00	4,025.00	-4,025.00	0.0%
5680 · Printing & Copies	1,176.67	14,000.00	-12,823.33	8.41%
5700 · Telephone	5,269.99	22,000.00	-16,730.01	23.96%
5800 · Bank Service Charges	42.00	200.00	-158.00	21.0%
6300 · Professional Services	608,924.94	2,246,137.00	-1,637,212.06	27.11%
6400 · Building/Utilities	9,701.63	62,042.00	-52,340.37	15.64%
6560 · Payroll Expenses	1,044.00	4,500.00	-3,456.00	23.2%
Total Expense	1,033,989.64	4,105,394.00	-3,071,404.36	25.19%
	-245,411.74			

Open Invoices as of September 30, 2025 \$140,293.06

Franklin County Industrial Dev Corp - outstanding mortgage \$66,115.28 original mortgage \$130,000

Committee and Staff Reports – October 2025

Committee Chair/Appointee	Meeting Date	Next Meeting Date	Main Agenda Items/Topics
Executive <i>Peter Zamore</i>	9/16/25	10/21/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Plan update and discussion of NADO RPC evaluation report
Finance/Operations <i>Kirk Waite</i>	10/20/25	TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed the FY27 Municipal Assessment Rate proposal and recommended its approval at the board meeting. Discussed recent building upgrades and the FY25 audit schedule.
Personnel <i>Bob Buermann</i>	none	TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No meeting
Project Review	9/10/2025	10/8/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No meeting.
Plan and Policy <i>Lori Ruple</i>	10/8/25	TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed the Franklin Town Plan for regional approval and confirmation Discussed the timeline for adopting the Regional Plan
Transportation Advisory Committee <i>Barclay Morris</i>	10/9/2025	11/13/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voted to change meeting start time to 6:00pm Discussed topics for the November Meeting which will include the transportation legislative roundtable.
Brownfields Adv. Committee <i>Megan Sherlund</i>	none	TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No meeting.
VT Economic Progress Council, Barbara Murphy	10/22/25		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board retreat No regional projects, discussion of new CHIP program.
Green Mountain Transit <i>Bob Buemann, Catherine Dimitruk</i>	10/21/25	11/18/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopted budget amendment. Approved ADA fares on College St. shuttle.

NRPC has a YouTube channel for Board meetings, trainings and select committee meetings.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1JLkE8lwP-Vjd-5RYRaQjQ>

Staff Reports:

Transportation

- Attended the October Transportation Planning Initiative monthly meeting hosted by CCRPC. Team toured the Winooski Main Street reconstruction project, received an update on the status of the Winooski/Burlington bridge, and visited the site; and took a walking tour of the Champlain Parkway in Burlington's south end.
- Attended ANR's Municipal Day (daylong event of informational trainings for municipalities) and presented alongside VTrans Planning Staff on Transportation Planning insights from the state, RPC and local levels.
- Franklin Grand Isle transportation workgroup meeting. Discussed NRPC's Transportation Needs Assessment updates. Caleb Grant from Rural Community Transportation provided some details about the upcoming rural transfer and offered to collaborate with the Transportation Needs Assessment survey.
- Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail Management Plan stakeholder meeting. NRPC, VHB (consultant) and VTrans staff discussed the existing Master Licensing Agreement between NRPC and VTrans and its future role within the long-term management goals for the trail.

- Beebe Spur (Rail Trail in Newport/Derby) stakeholder meeting. NRPC was identified as a resource with significant rail trail council related experience and has joined a team to help create a new and robust Beebe Spur council and subsequent management plan development.
- Attended the St. Albans Town Route 7 North Shared Use Path final presentation. VHB presented a preferred alternative to connect the St. Albans City north sidewalk terminus via a shared use path along Rt 7 to the St. Albans Town northern town line. If built, the path will serve as a bike and pedestrian connection to existing essential shops and services.
- Completed traffic counts in Enosburgh (Chester A Arthur Rd.) and Georgia (Georgia Shore Road).
- Meeting with St. Albans Town staff to discuss Better Connections grant application to study Georgia Shore Road intersections at Lake Road and Church/Little County/Patten Crosby Roads. Also discussed traffic calming possibilities on Lake Road.
- Completed Road Erosion Inventories (REIs) and associated reports for Swanton, Isle La Motte, Fairfield
- Completed grants-in-aid pre-construction assistance for all NRPC-contracted towns. Assisted with close-outs in North and South Hero.
- NRPC serves as the Municipal Project Management (MPM) for many local transportation projects. Recent activities and/or milestones include:
 - *Longley Bridge Road Streambank Restoration (Montgomery)*- . Provided coordination assistance to the Town of Montgomery regarding its final request for reimbursement from VTrans.
 - *US 2-Featherbed Lane Scoping (South Hero)*- Coordinated and attended third project team meeting. Provided feedback to consultant regarding draft improvement alternatives and helped build awareness of project alternatives meeting.
 - *Sidewalk Scoping Study (Richford)*- Report finalized, supporting closeout.
 - *Sidewalk Scoping Study (Sheldon)*- Local Concerns meeting scheduled for November 4, 2025, 6:00pm – Sheldon Fire Station.
 - *Montgomery Center Streetscape Design and Implementation (Montgomery)*- Project received NEPA clearance and will continue to the rights-of-way phase once additional project funding is identified.

Emergency Management

- Attended *Montpelier-for-a-Day* Public Safety Meeting in Grand Isle with Governor Scott, DPW Secretary Morrison and VTrans Secretary Flynn to discuss various challenges for first response agencies.
- Held Grand Isle County Mutual Aid Association / REMC Annual Meeting and held elections.
- Met with VEM and RPCs to review programs including, mitigation program funding and local training opportunities.
- Released the draft Montgomery Hazard Mitigation Plan for public comment.
- Filed the Enosburgh Falls Village Hazard Mitigation Plan with FEMA following local adoption.
- Continued working under EDA resiliency grant for hazard mitigation projects along the Lamoille River involving mitigation projects for transportation and water supply infrastructure.

GIS

- Finishing the updates to the 2025 E911 Community maps.
- Provided final zoning maps to the town of Highgate.
- Working on online zoning maps of all the municipalities in the Region.
- Worked on updating the St. Albans City Plan maps.

Brownfields

- Managed active task orders for assessment or cleanup planning on the following sites:
 - Highgate Village Core. Provided support to the Town of Highgate on redevelopment and cleanup planning, including supporting submission of a BRELLA application, Section 106 compliance and coordinating cleanup planning work with the consultant.
 - 124 First Street, Swanton Village. Scheduled meeting to review draft CAP with the Village, developers and the state for October 23.

- 20 LaSalle Street. Issued task order for supplemental assessment. Coordinated funded sources for CAP and assessment.
- LaPointe Auto, Highgate. Received request for supplemental sampling.
- Revolving Loan Fund- Started work to close out 2010 RLF grant. Reviewed and approved funding request for Edgar May Health and Recreation Center in Springfield. Coordinated the anticipated receipt of final requisitions for the Champlain Transmission site.

Municipal Planning

- Continued to work with Bakersfield Planning Commission on the municipal plan update. Distributed a survey and coordinated a public outreach event for November.
- Drafted several chapters for the St. Albans City Plan Update.
- Coordinated regional approval and confirmation of the Town of Franklin 2025 Municipal Plan.
- Worked with town staff and planning commissions to submit applications for FY26 Municipal Planning Grants (Sheldon, North Hero, South Hero and Berkshire).
- Met with the Fairfax Planning Commission to kick-off a comprehensive Town Plan update funded by a Municipal Planning Grant.
- Provided Sheldon and North Hero with zoning services, DRB and PC clerk services, and E911 Coordination services to Sheldon.
- Continued support to the Town of Highgate's village wastewater project with project management assistance, including reviewing property owner outreach. Attended a meeting for the proposed Cathedral Square senior housing project to discuss the project's issues and opportunities with state officials, including the need for water supply.
- Finalized a draft of the Fairfield Development Regulations intended to address farmland fragmentation and other concerns raised by town residents.
- Attended a quarterly meeting with other RPCs about assistance to municipalities in reviewing draft FEMA flood hazard area maps and ensuring flood hazard regulations are compliant.
- Supported Fairfield in hiring an architect to develop schematic designs for the Fairfield Common School Restoration project, funded by a municipal planning grant. Attended a site visit and prepared an agenda and meeting minutes for the Common School Working Group.
- Supported the Town of South Hero with project coordination for its community wastewater project, including project timelines and deliverables.

Regional Planning

- Submitted the Regional Plan to the Land Use Review Board for preapplication review. Began coordinating a site visit with the Land Use Review Board in November.
- Continued meeting with Selectboards to discuss Tier 1B Act 250 jurisdiction and the municipal resolution to opt in.
- Participated in information sharing with other RPCs regarding ongoing outreach and mapping work.
- Updated the NRPC Housing Dashboard with new housing units permitted in 2024 and complete as of 2025. <https://www.nrpcvt.com/regional-data/>.
- Participated in a working group with DHCD and other RPC staff to develop statewide GIS data submission guidelines for municipal zoning data.

Climate & Energy

- Continued assisting municipalities in the implementation of Municipal Energy Resilience Program (MERP) construction projects with technical assistance and ongoing communication with the Department of Buildings and General Services (BGS).
- Continued work on Regional Navigators Program to provide technical assistance on energy related issues to Swanton Village and Isle La Motte.
- Attendance of and coordination with Saint Albans Transportation Working Group and Walk Bike Saint Albans

- Continued work on Energy Efficiency and Climate Block Grant collaboration with Saint Albans City for creation of an enhanced energy plan, execution of a Transportation Needs Assessment, and partnership with Northwest Career and Technical Center to create a mobile clean technology learning unit
- Coordination for annual WindowDressers build in partnership with Saint Albans Energy and Climate Committee.

Water Quality

- In role as the regional Clean Water Service Provider (CWSP) for Lamoille and Missisquoi basins we:
 - Hosted two successful Basin Council meetings and facilitated the review and approval of seven funding requests in the Missisquoi Basin. Launched ninth funding round in the Lamoille basin.
 - With support of our attorney, prepared site access easements required for Sleeper Pond Dam removal project as precondition for drawdown of CWSP funds.
 - Commented on DEC proposal to modify Cost Rate Method used to distribute project funding and set phosphorus reduction targets in all CWSP basins.
 - Completed numerous quarter-end administrative tasks and prepared for review of 'Year 4' contract with revised phosphorus reduction targets.
- As part of Regional Water Quality/Tactical Basin planning work, staff:
 - Prepared newsletter article regarding start of Tactical Basin Plan update process, which has been shared as model for other DEC partner organizations.
 - Represented region at monthly Basin 5 BWQC and monthly Missisquoi partners meetings.
- As part of NRPC-led work under banner of Regional Stormwater Education Program (RSEP) /Franklin County Stormwater Collaborative, we onboarded a student intern, Lorna Peters, who has assumed duties for social media, webinar planning, and other activities.
- Filed deliverables for third milestone of "604b" grant program and developed concept plans for two projects potentially funded via "WISPr" program that is the focus of the 604b grant this year.
- Completed draft of Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) for project investigating the economic impact of water quality, with focus on Missisquoi Bay.
- Met with consultants at Watershed Consulting, who have been contracted to investigate floodplain connectivity potential around a culvert on Silver Lake Road in Georgia, with NRPC serving as project manager.
- Submitted a QAPP for the Private Roads Road Erosion Inventory project to VDEC and EPA, now awaiting approval.

Workforce & Economic Development and Northern Vermont Economic Development District (NVEDD)

- NVEDD is done in partnership with Lamoille County Planning Commission, Lamoille County Industrial Development Corporation, Northeastern VT Development Association, Franklin County Industrial Development Corporation and Lake Champlain Islands Economic Development Corporation.
- Applied for and received annual planning grant from the US Economic Development Administration.

Housing For All - Working Communities Challenge

- Project ends 12/31/2025.
- ADU/Duplex Pilot: Provided navigation support for four program participants who are moving forward with design, permitting and construction.

Building/Office: Electrical and data cable work to support conference room upgrades complete. New garage doors have been installed.

**TOWN OF FRANKLIN MUNICIPAL PLAN
-- REQUEST FOR REGIONAL APPROVAL --**

Plan and Policy Committee Findings

Date Issued: 10/8/2025

HISTORY:

On September 15, 2025, the Franklin Selectboard adopted the "Franklin, Vermont Municipal Plan." On September 16, the Northwest Regional Planning Commission received a written request for regional approval of the plan.

Staff of the Regional Commission completed a final review of the Franklin Plan using the Municipal Plan Review Tool and the Energy Planning Standards Checklist provided by the VT Department of Public Service. Staff review resulted in a recommendation that the plan should be approved.

On September 22, 2025, a duly warned public hearing was held for Regional Approval and Confirmation of the Franklin Plan. The Plan and Policy Committee met on October 8, 2025 and reviewed the Franklin Municipal Plan Final Review, Enhanced Energy Assessment, and Implementation Assessment. At this meeting the Franklin Planning Program was reviewed for Confirmation.

FINDINGS:

Municipal Plan Review- Based on review of the Franklin Plan using the Municipal Plan Review Tool, the Plan Review Committee finds the plan:

1. Is consistent with the planning goals of Title 24 VSA Chapter 117, Section 4302.
2. Is compatible with the Regional Plan.
3. Is compatible with approved plans of other municipalities in the region*.
4. Contains all the elements included in subdivisions 4382(a)(1)-(12) of Title 24 VSA Chap. 117.

* Based on approved plans as of the date of request for regional approval

Energy Determination- Based on review of the Franklin Plan using the Energy Planning Standards Checklist, the Plan Review Committee finds the plan:

1. Includes an energy element that has the same components as described in 24 V.S.A. §4348a(a)(3) for a regional plan and is confirmed under the requirements of 24 V.S.A. §4350.
2. Is consistent with following State goals:
 - a. Vermont's greenhouse gas reduction goals under 10 V.S.A. § 578(a);
 - b. Vermont's 25 by 25 goal for renewable energy under 10 V.S.A. § 580;
 - c. Vermont's building efficiency goals under 10 V.S.A. § 581;
 - d. State energy policy under 30 V.S.A. § 202a and the recommendations for regional and municipal energy planning pertaining to the efficient use of energy and the

siting and development of renewable energy resources contained in the State energy plans adopted pursuant to 30 V.S.A. §§ 202 and 202b (State energy plans); and

- e. The distributed renewable generation and energy transformation categories of resources to meet the requirements of the Renewable Energy Standard under 30 V.S.A. §§ 8004 and 8005.
3. Meets the standards for issuing a determination of energy compliance included in the State energy plans as developed by the Vermont Department of Public Service.

Confirmation- Based on the information provided by Franklin to Staff of the Regional Commission, the Plan Review Committee confirms that the Town of Franklin:

1. Is engaged in a continuing planning process.
2. Is providing funds toward Municipal and Regional Planning.
3. And the planning program meets the criteria of Title 24 VSA Chapter 117, Section 4350.

At the public hearing held on September 22, 2025, no comments were heard which question the plan's ability to meet the above guidelines for regional approval by the Municipal Plan Review Committee.

RECOMMENDATION:

Based on the above facts, the Plan Review Committee for the Franklin Plan hereby recommends to the Board of Regional Commissioners that:

1. The plan receives regional approval and confirmation of the planning program in accordance with section 4350 of Title 24 VSA Chapter 117.
2. The plan receives a determination of energy planning compliance with the enhanced energy planning standards set forth in 24 V.S.A. §4352.

Plan and Policy Committee:

Lori Ruple, Chip Sawyer, Elisabeth Nance, Chuck Verderber, Megan Sherlund, Nicole Draper

Finance Committee Recommendation:

3% Increase in municipal assessment, shown below.

Approved (draft): MUNICIPAL ASSESSMENT RATE FOR FY 27 (July 1, 2026- June 30, 2027)				
Municipality	2020 Population	Current Assessment 1.2306	Recommended Option (3% overall increase)	
			\$1.268	\$\$ Change
Alburgh	2,106	2,592	2,670	79
Bakersfield	1,273	1,567	1,614	48
Berkshire	1,547	1,904	1,962	58
Enosburgh	2,810	3,458	3,563	105
Fairfax	5,014	6,170	6,358	188
Fairfield	2,044	2,515	2,592	76
Fletcher	1,346	1,656	1,707	50
Franklin	1,363	1,677	1,728	51
Georgia	4,845	5,962	6,143	181
Grand Isle	2,086	2,567	2,645	78
Highgate	3,472	4,273	4,402	130
Isle La Motte	488	601	619	18
Montgomery	1,184	1,457	1,501	44
North Hero	939	1,156	1,191	35
Richford	2,346	2,887	2,975	88
St. Albans City	6,877	8,463	8,720	257
St. Albans Town	6,988	8,599	8,861	261
Sheldon	2,136	2,629	2,708	80
South Hero	1,674	2,060	2,123	63
Swanton	6,701	8,246	8,497	251
Total:	57,239	\$70,438	72,579	\$2,141

Employment Cost Index for New England (US Bureau of Labor Statistics) 6/25
increase of 3.2%

MUNICIPAL ASSESSMENT POLICY

ADOPTED BY THE NRPC BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS (12/18/13)

MUNICIPAL ASSESSMENT POLICY

Each year, the NRPC assessment rate will be raised by 3% or the percent change in the employment cost index for New England (US Bureau of Labor Statistics), whichever is lower. In years where population figures are adjusted the per capita rate will be set so that the total amount collected will increase by a similar percentage.

The NRPC Board may adopt an increase that is greater than this amount. Reasons for a higher increase will be detailed in any recommendation from the Finance Committee to the Board of Commissioners, after consultation with the Executive Committee. Potential reasons include known or anticipated decreases in funding from other sources that would impact an NRPC program, or funding a special project or program supported by the municipalities.

The NRPC Board may adopt an increase that is less than this due to known increases in funding that will alleviate the need for municipal contributions. Reasons for a lower increase will be detailed in any recommendation from the Finance Committee to the Board of Commissioners.

BACKGROUND

NRPC has two flexible sources of funds: municipal assessments and regional planning funds provided from the State of Vermont.

Municipal Assessments

Of these two sources, the municipal assessment funds are the most flexible- they are provided to the RPC with the trust that they will be used wisely for local and regional planning and implementation programs. Once received by the municipalities, these funds are controlled and managed by the NRPC. They are used to match other grants sources, make up shortfalls or reductions in grants and contracts and help to support our ongoing operations and professional staff. State officials and legislators look to municipal assessments (both the rate and the overall participation) as one indicator of the success of a regional planning commission.

Through this policy NRPC seeks to ensure that municipal assessments continue to be an integral part of the NRPC budget, that the buying power of this resource is not diminished over time, and that the funds continue to keep pace with the increasing state and federal interest in higher percentages of local match.

Setting the Assessment Rate

The NRPC bylaws require that the municipal assessment rate be set each year by a vote of regional commissioners. For many years, Commissioners were reluctant to raise the rate, as the goodwill of maintaining a level request was more valuable than the amount of money each increase would bring to NRPC. This led to the municipal assessment becoming less and less

effective as a source of funds, in terms of buying power and as a portion of the NRPC budget. This coincided with reductions in regional planning funds and higher match requirements on both state and federal dollars. Because of this, the NRPC Board has voted to increase the assessment in recent years. In order to attain consistency in approach for future years, the NRPC Board has adopted this policy to guide its decisions in future years and allow municipalities to anticipate and plan for future budget requests.

Regional Planning Funds

The regional planning funds provided by the State of Vermont are set in statute as a percentage of the property transfer tax. This 'formula' amount is regularly reduced by the legislature when passing the yearly State budget. The overall amount provided to regional planning is further distributed to the RPCs based on a funding rule that allocates dollars based on population, number of municipalities and portion of the overall state property transfer tax. Expenditure of these dollars is somewhat flexible, but increased scrutiny and accountability has led to tighter restrictions and more detailed guidance on how these funds can be spent. Therefore these funds are not as flexible as municipal assessment dollars. These pass through grant dollars are managed by the Agency of Commerce and Community Development- Department of Housing and Community Development through a yearly contract.