



**Northwest
Regional Planning
Commission**

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

**April 29, 2026
6:30 p.m.**

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 March 2026 Meeting** (*action*)
- 5. Commission Reports** (*written reports enclosed*)

Action Item:

Project Review Committee – *William Irwin (see business report)*

Discussion Items:

Finance/Operations– *Kirk Waite*

Personnel – *Bob Buermann*

Executive Committee – *Peter Zamore*

Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) – *Barclay Morris*

Brownfields Committee – *Chip Sawyer*

Plan and Policy Committee- *Lori Ruple*

Vermont Economic Progress Council (VEPC) –*Barbara Murphy*

Rural Community Transit- *Catherine Dimitruk*

Healthy Roots Advisory Committee- *Marietta Scholten*

Northwest Vermont Regional Foundation- *Kirk Waite*

Office-*Staff*

6. **Act 250 and Section 248 Project Review Process** (*discussion*)
Presentation by Emily Klofft
7. **Act 181 Position** (*discussion, possible action*)
Executive Committee position and municipal letters attached.
8. **Nominating Committee and Election Process** (*discussion*)
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 **March 25, 2025, at 6:30 PM**
3 **Hybrid Meeting (Zoom and NRPC Office)**
4 **75 Fairfield Street, St. Albans, VT 05478**
5

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

8 **Staff:** Catherine Dimitruk, Greta Brunswick, Emily Klofft, Dean Pierce, Danielle Turin
9

10 **Other Attendees:** Sam Keeper, Amber Foote, Alice Foote, Kevin Camisa, Alice Peal
11

12 **Adjustments to the Agenda**

13 None
14

15 **Regional Plan Hearing**

16 Chair P. Zamore opened up the hearing to public comment. A. Foote commented that she
17 doesn't trust that no zoning changes will occur and asked what the map updates are for if
18 not to change zoning. C. Dimitruk responded that the map updates will have an impact on
19 areas receiving Act 250 exemptions, obtaining grants and planning for housing. She
20 explained the map updates make it easier to develop in areas planned for growth and
21 reminded that the requirements are imposed by the state. L. Ruple commented on public
22 concern due to lack of clarity regarding what is allowed in rural areas. M. Frennier
23 commented that the FAQ document is helpful and should be posted for public access. K.
24 Waite asked C. Dimitruk to describe the process of plan adoption in response to comments
25 about the perceived lack of information and urgency around plan approval. C. Dimitruk
26 explained that over the course of 16 months NRPC met and worked closely with every
27 municipality's Planning Commission and/or Selectboard an average of 3-5 times, held 14
28 open houses across the region, published a series of newsletter articles, Front Porch
29 Forum posts and a St. Albans Messenger article to inform and educate people about the
30 update. NRPC worked to strike a balance between state requirements and municipal
31 plans. L. Ruple asked if conservation areas changed; C. Dimitruk responded that they
32 changed slightly due to wetlands changes, but that there is less conservation area in the
33 draft update than there is in the current plan. L. McCall asked about a property in
34 Bakersfield with no road access; C. Dimitruk responded that the plan didn't exclude lots
35 without frontage and that NRPC tried to keep to the towns' plans as much as possible. D.
36 Bergstrom mentioned an error listing Georgia as a growth area for elementary school
37 enrollment and asked if it be corrected. C. Dimitruk responded that the data available at
38 the time of update was used, and that updates will be addressed in planning and indicator
39 reports. C. Sawyer commented that no other plan has received more public comment and
40 input than this one and described the great effort to involve everyone as much as possible.
41 He said he hopes the plan will be adopted so that implementation can begin. *Y. Dandurand*
42 *motioned to adjourn the public hearing. H. DeMars seconded. Motion passed. Hearing*
43 *closed at 6:51pm.*
44

1 **Welcome, Introductions, Opening Remarks**

2 Chair P. Zamore called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM followed by roll call. C. Sawyer, M.
3 Stebbins and D. Choiniere made commissioner introductions.

4
5 **Opportunity for Public Comment**

6 No public commented.

7 **Minutes of the February 2026 Meeting (action)**

8 *B. Murphy motioned to accept the February 2026 minutes as corrected. Y. Dandurand*
9 *seconded. J. Pelkey abstained. K. Waite asked that the minutes be corrected to reflect he*
10 *was not in attendance at the last meeting and did not take any action. C. Dimitruk*
11 *responded that the minutes would be corrected. Motion passed.*

12 **Commission Reports - written reports enclosed**

13 Finance/Operations– K. Waite reported that the full committee took action on the budget
14 adjustment.

15 Personnel – B. Buermann reported that a new employee is starting in June.

16 Executive Committee – P. Zamore reported that an update was received from C. Dimitruk
17 on legislative activity.

18 Project Review– W. Irwin reported on the three projects that are listed on the Project Review
19 Report in the board packet. He reported that the Georgia Substation project required a full
20 hearing and will be voted on in April.

21 Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) – B. Morris reported that the committee received
22 a presentation by an engineering firm about the VT-207 and Bushey Rd. intersection, and
23 that it will be presented to the Swanton Selectboard. Marlena Valenta (NRPC) provided a
24 presentation on grants for public area electric vehicle charging stations.

25 Brownfields Committee – No report.

26 Plan and Policy Committee- No report.

27 Vermont Economic Progress Council (VEPC) – No report.

28 Rural Community Transit- No report, but C. Dimitruk commented that the committee is
29 going on a retreat in two weeks' time.

30 Healthy Roots Advisory Committee- M. Scholten reported that Peter Jenkins has taken over
31 Christine Porcaro's role. The committee is working on organizing documentation, and the
32 next meeting will be focused on committee structure and member roles.

33 Northwest Vermont Regional Foundation- K. Waite reported that the committee reviewed
34 its funds transfer policy with NRPC and establishing clear procedures, roles and
35 responsibilities.

36 Office- See staff report. D. Pierce mentioned that the water quality council's membership
37 confirmation happens every two years and appealed for backup members.

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Town of Richford Municipal Plan, Confirmation of Planning Efforts, and Determination of Energy Compliance (action)

The Richford Municipal Plan was reviewed for compliance. L. Ruple recommended the board grant regional approval and confirm the planning process of the Richford Municipal Plan, and to grand a determination of energy compliance of the Richford Town Plan.

B. Buermann made a motion to grant regional approval and confirm the planning process of the Richford Municipal Plan. N. Brosseau seconded. Motion carried. B. Murphy made a motion to grant a determination of energy compliance of the Richford Town Plan. W. Irwin seconded. Motion carried.

Regional Plan Adoption (action)

L. McCall asked if there would be any opportunity to amend the maps. C. Dimitruk responded that there are two ways to amend: the board can amend the maps itself if the property in question is less than ten acres; or the board can do a regular plan amendment. C. Dimitruk noted that the plan will be submitted by the end of the week and that this will be the first region in the state to submit its regional plan for final approval.

B. Murphy motioned to adopt the 2026-2034 Regional Plan. B. Morris seconded. Motion carried by 25 votes, with S. Jensen and L. McCall abstaining.

Commissioner Announcements

A. Alling announced that the official groundbreaking of North Hero’s new Fire Department and Public Works garage took place on March 16, and that the town is also in the process of bringing its new water storage tank online for use. B. Morris announced construction of Grand Isle’s new Library building is underway and that the building is framed in. H. Demars mentioned that the current library has been in operation since 1929.

Adjourned 7:25PM

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	12/17/25	1/28/26	2/25/26	3/25/26	4/29/26	5/27/26	6/24/26
Frkln Cty Youth	Vacant												
GI Cty Youth	Amelia Demars	X		X	E				E				
Alburg Town	Alex McCracken	E											
Alburg Town	Danielle Choiniere	X		X	X		X	X	X	X			
Alburg Village	Vacant												
Alburg Village	Vacant												
Bakersfield	William Irwin	X		E	X		X	X	X	X			
Bakersfield	Linda McCall	X		X	X		X	X	X	X			
Berkshire	Josh Grims	X		E	E		E		E				
Berkshire	Claude Charron												
Enosburg Falls	Leonard Charron												
Enosburg Falls	Vacant												
Enosburgh Town	Jesse Woods												
Enosburgh Town	James Oullette (8/25)				X				X	X			
Fairfax	Barbara Murphy	X		X	X		X	X	X	X			
Fairfax	Nicholas Nadeau/Mike Bishop (10/25)				X		X	E	X	X			
Fairfield	Julia Callan	X		X	X		X	X	X	X			
Fairfield	Chuck Verderber	E		X	X		E	E	X				
Fletcher	Michelle Frennier	E		E	E		X	X	X	X			
Fletcher	Lori Ruple	X		X			X	X	X	X			
Franklin	Yvon Dandurand	X		X	E		E	X	X	X			
Franklin	vacant												
Georgia	Carl Rosenquist	X			X		X	X	X				
Geogia	Doug Bergstrom 3/26									X			
Georgia	Kirk Waite	X		X	X		E	X	E	X			
Grand Isle	Barclay Morris	X		X	X		X	E	X	X			
Grand Isle	Howard Demars	X		X	E		X	X	X	X			
Highgate	Jack Pelkey	X			X		X	X	X	X			
Highgate	Anna Comiskey	X		X	X								
Isle La Motte	Sylvia Jensen	E		X	X		E		X	X			
Isle La Motte	Mary-Catherine Graziano												
Montgomery	Leanne Barnard												
	vacant 3/26												
Montgomery	Mark Brouillette												
North Hero	Andy Alling	X		X			X	X	X	X			
North Hero	Vacant												
Richford	Marissa Tessier												
Richford	Vacant												
Sheldon	Vacant												
Sheldon	Mathew Stebbins	X		X			X	X	X	X			
South Hero	Peter Zamore	X		X	X		X	X	X	X			
South Hero	Bob Buermann	X		X	X		X	X	X	X			
St. Albans City	Elisabeth Nance	X		X	X		X	E	X	X			
St. Albans City	Chip Sawyer	X		X	E		X	X	X	X			
St. Albans Town	Marietta Scholten	X		X	X		X	E		X			
St. Albans Town	Megan Sherlund	X		X	X		E	E	E	E			
Swanton Town	Nicole Draper	X		X			X	E		X			
Swanton Town	Nicholas Brosseau	X		X	X			X	X	X			
Swanton Village	Heidi Britch-Valenta	X		X	X		X	X	X	X			
Swanton Village	Damon Broderick	X		X	X		X		X	X			
	# Municipalities	18	0	18	14	0	15	15	17	19	0	0	0

QUORUM = 12

E= Excused ; X=Present

Committee and Staff Reports – April 2026

Committee Chair/Appointee	Meeting Date	Next Meeting Date	Main Agenda Items/Topics
Executive <i>Peter Zamore</i>	4/14/26	05/19/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislative update, Act 181 position, upcoming Board agendas and locations
Finance/Operations <i>Kirk Waite</i>	none	5/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The committee will in May to review the draft FY27 budget.
Personnel <i>Bob Buermann</i>	none	TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No meeting.
Project Review	4/8/2026	5/8/2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See attached business report.
Plan and Policy <i>Lori Ruple</i>	4/8/26	TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation on the Missisquoi Basin Plan and comments on the draft Act 59 Conservation Plan
Transportation Advisory Committee <i>Barclay Morris</i>	4/9/26	5/14/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MVRT Management Plan and statewide Vermont Rail Trail system update. VTrans/Federal Local Official Involvement policy overview and updates.
Brownfields Adv. Committee <i>Chip Sawyer</i>	none	TBD	
VT Economic Progress Council, Barbara Murphy	none		
Rural Community Transportation <i>Catherine Dimitruk</i>	4/13/26	5/11/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board retreat focused on orientation of new members and identifying RCT strengths and opportunities.

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

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1JLkE8lWP-Vjd-5RYRaQiQ>

Transportation

- Grants in Aid (GIA) and Road Erosion Inventory (REI) municipal outreach and project planning for the upcoming 2026 field season.
- Summer Transportation Intern interviews.
- Rail Trail Ambassador Program coordination and planning. Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT) has dedicated folks serving as local liaisons between the trails/users and the RPCs and State Rail Trail Coordinators. This year VTrans and NRPC have received interest from members of the public to serve in this capacity for the Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail (MVRT).
- Summer road salt workshop planning – focus will be on off-season preparations, roadway runoff/lake effects and potential alternatives with water quality in mind.
- Spot speed studies completed in Grand Isle along US 2 as the town plans for and seeks funding for Radar Speed Feedback Signs.
- VT Bond Bank Capital Planning Workshop
- NADO (National Association of Development Organizations) RPO America (rural transportation planning professionals) meeting. Presentation and discussion regarding expiration of IJA (Federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act which has invested over \$450B in surface and public transportation, nation-wide) and what next steps could look like, including new legislation and possible extension.
- NRPC has executed a contract with VTrans to advance integrated transportation and water quality projects within the Missisquoi River watershed. Previously allocated but unspent funds from the Missisquoi Bay Causeway removal are being reprogrammed to support this effort. Phase 1 will identify project gaps and

establish priorities; subsequent phases will advance selected projects through engineering, design, and implementation.

- Staff are assisting the Northwest Rail Trail Council with coordination of trail Green Up on both the Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail (MVRT) and Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT).
- NRPC serves as the Municipal Project Management (MPM) for many local transportation projects. Recent activities and/or milestones include:
 - *US 2-Featherbed Lane Scoping (South Hero)*- Completed drafts of project acceptance memo and final project reimbursement request for Town's use.
 - *Sidewalk Scoping Study (Richford)*- Report finalized, supporting town with next steps.
 - *Sidewalk Scoping Study (Sheldon)*- Consultant continues to draft alternative routes along Mill Street and VT 105.

Emergency Management

- Held Grand Isle County Mutual Aid and Regional Emergency Management Committee meeting to discuss dispatching finances, state dispatching effort and local trainings and resource needs.
- Held Franklin County Regional Emergency Management Committee with presentation by State Dispatch Task Force.
- Finalizing the South Hero Local Hazard Mitigation draft plan to be released for public comment.
- Met with Town of Highgate Planning Committee regarding their Local Hazard Mitigation Plan update.
- Contracted with Swanton Town to update their Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.

GIS

- Working on a map for the Friends of Northern Lake Champlain for the cycling race they have in the summer.
- Created a Sidewalk Inventory map for the Town of Fairfax.
- Created a Conserved Land/Use Value Appraisal Land map of the Northwest Region.
- Map request from Swanton Village of Swanton Traffic Safety Improvements for an application for NBRC.

Brownfields

- Managed active task orders for assessment or cleanup planning on the following sites:
 - Highgate Village Core. Supported the Town of Highgate with project management for building materials abatement funded by an RLF grant and loan.
 - 20 LaSalle Street. Monitoring Corrective Action Plan preparation.
 - LaPointe Auto, Highgate. Monitored Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) review and approval for supplemental sampling.
 - Selected consultant for a Phase 1 and Phase 2 Workplan at the 24 Maple site in St. Albans City on behalf of a new prospective buyer and attended a site visit.
 - Monitored completion of cleanup planning at 124 First Street (former Carroll Concrete) in Swanton and 21-22 Stebbins Street and considered a request for funding cleanup related sampling.
- Revolving Loan Fund
 - Supported and oversee work by Town of Highgate funded by RLF grant and loan.

Municipal Planning

- Continued to work with Bakersfield Planning Commission on the municipal plan update. Reviewed updated Introduction, Historic and Archeological Resources, and Natural Resources chapters with the Planning Commission.
- Met with the North Hero Planning Commission to kick off their Town Plan Update funded by a FY26 Municipal Planning Grant.
- Drafted sections of the Grand Isle Zoning Bylaw update funded by a Municipal Planning Grant.

- Met with the Fairfax Planning Commission to review draft sections of the Fairfax Town Plan as part of the Fairfax 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.
- Supported the Town of Highgate's village wastewater and water supply projects through a local staff transition. Met with project engineer and coordinated with municipal representative; organized the list of landowners that have opportunity to connect to the system and some of which have a letter of interest.
- Coordinated Common School Working Group held a public meeting earlier in the month.
- Supported the Town of South Hero with its community wastewater project, selecting a consultant and coordinating a contract for a wetlands delineation and coordinating qualifications review and interviews for a new wastewater engineer as they ready for Step 2 design engineering.
- Assisted the Bakersfield Planning Commission and Selectboard with transitioning from a Zoning Board of Appeals to a Development Review Board.
- Met with the Lavin Vision Steering Committee to continue work on a project to develop a vision for use and development of the town owned property part of which will be used for wastewater management.

Regional Planning

- Prepared application materials for final Regional Plan submission to the Land Use Review Board.
- Participated in information sharing with other RPCs regarding ongoing Regional Plan work.
- Coordinated with legislators and advocacy groups on potential changes to Title 24 to improve the regional plan development and adoption processes. Changes now included in S. 325.
- Complemented regional planning efforts by developing and presenting draft comments on the Vermont Conservation Plan.

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).
- Attendance of and coordination with Saint Albans Transportation Working Group , including surveying of providers and employers as part of transportation needs assessment funded through EECBG.
- Attendance of Walk Bike Saint Albans meetings and assistance with bike rack project.
- Attendance of Saint Albans City Energy and Climate Committee, assistance with adoption process of enhanced energy plan.
- Continued work on assistance with dam relicensing for Swanton Village through MERP mini grant funding.
- Continued planning of and publicity for 2026 WindowDressers build in collaboration with Saint Albans Energy Committee, including tabling at Franklin County Volunteering Fair on 4/16

Water Quality

- In role as the regional Clean Water Service Provider (CWSP) for Lamoille and Missisquoi basins we:
 - Conducted the 11th Lamoille Basin funding round, including review and follow-up with subgrantees. Launched the eleventh funding round in the Missisquoi Basin.
 - Updated application and pre-qualification materials and issued multiple task awards and amendments.
 - Furthered Operation and Maintenance implementation across multiple projects by clarifying requirements, finalizing site access agreements, and establishing consistent approaches to contractor selection. Initiated development of a standardized site access agreement generator, improving consistency and reducing administrative effort. .
 - Enhanced the new online invoice and deliverables submission system to improve processing efficiency.
 - Completed the biennial membership renewal process for Basin Water Quality Council participants.

- Released updated call for contractor qualifications to fulfill Act 76 Rule requirements.
- As part of Regional Water Quality/Tactical Basin planning work, staff:
 - Began planning public education sessions on the three-acre stormwater permit and road salt reduction.
 - Compiled and analyzed MRGP performance data for towns in region, and began coordination with DEC staff for Municipal Roads General Permit outreach event.
 - Responded to public and municipal inquiries related to water quality mapping and regulatory changes. Participated in Missisquoi basin partner meetings .
- In support of the Regional Stormwater Education Program, staff:
 - Organized and hosted webinar on microplastics as part of Franklin County Stormwater Webinar Series.
 - Organized another successful 'build your own' rain barrel event in conjunction with Friends of Northern Lake Champlain.
- As part of project investigating the economic impacts of water quality, finalized the Quality Assurance Project Plan and completed a literature review memorandum that establishes an analytical framework for the study. Completed and submitted the project quarterly report.
- Private Roads Road Erosion Inventory Project:
 - Finished mapping missing private roads and driveways in the Lake Champlain Basin.
 - Conducted initial cleaning and GIS analysis of the basin-wide Private Roads layer.
 - Coordinated with Phase 1 consultant to sign contract and begin working with NRPC.

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

- NVEDD is a 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.
- Investigated grant options and participated in ongoing meetings (organized by FCIDC) supporting transition planning for Franklin Foods in Enosburgh.

Housing For All - Working Communities Challenge

- Project funding ended 3/15/2026.
- ADU/Duplex Pilot: Provided continued navigation support for two program participants who are still in various stages of design, permitting and construction process. Conducted site visit to view and photograph a completed ADU project.
- Supported the Town of Swanton with the adoption process for draft cottage development zoning bylaws and other bylaw modernization edits.
- Participated in housing policy legislative initiatives.

Building/Office: Rain gutters were installed in 2 locations: garage front, and side entry porch. Gutter planned for the high roof, which would provide protection above the building access ramp could not be installed. Installers found that the building is higher on the north end, preventing necessary slope for the gutter to drain appropriately.

Project Review Committee: Monthly Business Report

Month: April 2026

Project Reviews

- 1) Project Type: **Act 250:** Vermont Agency of Transportation
Project Location: 629 Highgate Road, Highgate
Substantial Regional Impact: Yes No (*If yes, Board action required*)
- *Project Details:* Installation of fencing around the Franklin County State Airport, including replacing some areas of inadequate fencing and new fencing in areas not currently fenced.
 - *Project Comments:* None.
 - *Conformance with Regional Plan:* Yes No
-

- 2) Project Type: **Section 248a:** Industrial Tower and Wireless, LLC/248a-off of Bordoville Road-Enosburgh
Project Location: Bordoville Road, Enosburgh, VT; Parcel WE4756
Substantial Regional Impact: Yes No (*If yes, Board action required*)
- *Project Details:* 120' telecommunications tower.
 - *Project Comments:* The project is a new proposal in the same place as a 140' tower that was found not in conformance with the Regional Plan. The new proposal reduces the height, which results in reduction of aesthetic impacts. The new tower will co-locate an antenna to serve St. Albans dispatch. Project will have substantial regional impact due to its location near the Enosburgh/Bakersfield border and the potential impact to dispatch services for both communities emergency services.
 - *Conformance with Regional Plan:* Yes No
-

- 3) Project Type: **Section 248a:** Verizon Wireless/248a-54 Woods Hill Road
Project Location: 54 Woods Hill Road, Swanton
Substantial Regional Impact: Yes No (*If yes, Board action required*)
- *Project Details:* Addition of new telecommunications equipment on an existing silo antenna. New equipment will extend beyond existing equipment at 65' AGL. This is above the base portion of the silo (60') but below the height of the silo cap (70').
 - *Project Comments:* None.
 - *Conformance with Regional Plan:* Yes No
-

Staff Reviews

- 1) Project Type: **Section 248a:** Verizon Wireless/248a-at 79 Walnut Street Extension-Saint Albans City
Project Location: 79 Walnut Street Extension, St. Albans
Substantial Regional Impact: Yes No (*If yes, Board action required*)
- *Project Details:* Project is addition of new telecommunications equipment on existing structure at the same centerlines as existing equipment with a net increase of roughly 10 sq. ft. Some portions of the equipment are above the primary roofline of the building, but well below structural elements of the existing building (95.2' AGL versus 132' AGL of existing structure).
 - *Conformance with Regional Plan:* Yes No
-

Board Action Necessary: Ratify Committee decision on **Section 248a: Industrial Tower and Wireless, LLC/248a-off of Bordoville Road-Enosburgh.**

Northwest Regional Planning Commission

Balance Sheet

04/23/26

As of March 31, 2026

Accrual Basis

	<u>Mar 31, 26</u>
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
1000 · People's Checking Account	337,006.19
1020 · People's Money Market Account	196,500.52
1035 · New England Federal Cr-1Year CD	49,704.64
1036 · New England Fed Cr-CD 5 Year	67,036.17
1037 · Lamoille CWSP	153,209.79
1038 · Missisquoi CWSP	236,785.53
1040 · Union Bank	398,855.88
1080 · Petty Cash	9.05
Total Checking/Savings	<u>1,439,107.77</u>
Accounts Receivable	
1200 · Accounts Receivable	1,153,951.24
Total Accounts Receivable	<u>1,153,951.24</u>
Other Current Assets	
Account for Credit Transfer	-2,300.00
1400 · Prepaid Expenses	15,109.08
1499 · Undeposited Funds	8,145.38
Total Other Current Assets	<u>20,954.46</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>2,614,013.47</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>2,614,013.47</u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	
2000 · Accounts Payable	53,202.18
Total Accounts Payable	<u>53,202.18</u>
Other Current Liabilities	
Payroll Liabilities	964.62
2001 · Accrued Exp	14,043.70
2100 · Employee Health Ins. Payable	353.81
2110 · Health Equity	3,742.38
2120 · Accrued Payroll	23,721.67
2130 · Accrued Vacation	58,985.71
2213 · VT Tax Withholding Payable	2,567.57
2215 · Retirement Payable	10,570.06
2250 · Deferred Revenue	1,204,494.46
Total Other Current Liabilities	<u>1,319,443.98</u>
Total Current Liabilities	<u>1,372,646.16</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>1,372,646.16</u>
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	588,320.72
Net Income	336,326.59
Total Equity	<u>1,241,367.31</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u>2,614,013.47</u>

Northwest Regional Planning Commission

Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual

July 2025 through March 2026

Accrual Basis

		Jul '25 - Mar 26	Budget	\$ Over Budget	% of Budget
Income	4016 · EDA	313,729.82	339,515.00	-25,785.18	92.41%
	4026 · Grants in Aid Pilot Program	0.00	2,500.00	-2,500.00	0.0%
	4030 · ACCD	565,670.58	671,583.00	-105,912.42	84.23%
	4035 · VAOT	180,996.89	325,582.00	-144,585.11	55.59%
	4043 · Working Communities Challenge	62,181.66	62,182.00	-0.34	100.0%
	4044 · Shared Services	37,618.86	57,600.00	-19,981.14	65.31%
	4045 · Public Safety	25,533.42	37,499.00	-11,965.58	68.09%
	4047 · Municipal Assessments	70,439.00	70,440.00	-1.00	100.0%
	4050 · Municipal Contracts/Community	139,785.89	175,957.00	-36,171.11	79.44%
	4054 · Other State Grants	106,680.36	130,595.00	-23,914.64	81.69%
	4055 · Other Federal Grants	670,124.19	607,777.00	62,347.19	110.26%
	4056 · VANR	154,490.10	206,900.00	-52,409.90	74.67%
	4058 · Clean Water Service Provider	1,071,800.90	1,766,665.00	-694,864.10	60.67%
	4059 · RSEP-St. Albans Town & City	15,893.52	15,000.00	893.52	105.96%
	4067 · Brownfields RLF 10 PCPI	13,624.17	30,000.00	-16,375.83	45.41%
	4080 · Misc. Income	48,700.09	78,728.00	-30,027.91	61.86%
	4600 · Interest Income	4,242.73	3,500.00	742.73	121.22%
Total Income		3,481,512.18	4,582,023.00	-1,100,510.82	75.98%
Expense	5010 · Salaries & Wages	794,189.44	1,111,486.00	-317,296.56	71.45%
	5015 · Employer Social Security	48,863.08	68,912.00	-20,048.92	70.91%
	5016 · Employer Medicare	11,427.66	16,117.00	-4,689.34	70.9%
	5020 · Fringe Benefits	203,168.93	252,253.00	-49,084.07	80.54%
	5030 · Travel	15,884.97	26,187.00	-10,302.03	60.66%
	5040 · Advertising	3,279.15	7,500.00	-4,220.85	43.72%
	5050 · Misc Exp-Retiree Ins - Reimb	2,529.50		2,529.50	100.0%
	5055 · Insurance-Liability	4,609.21	17,801.00	-13,191.79	25.89%
	5080 · Meetings	11,097.64	19,632.00	-8,534.36	56.53%
	5085 · Membership Dues	8,045.00	15,000.00	-6,955.00	53.63%
	5090 · Technology and GIS	17,760.38	20,000.00	-2,239.62	88.8%
	5095 · Software	43,224.08	51,500.00	-8,275.92	83.93%
	5100 · Supplies & Furniture	26,206.77	42,809.00	-16,602.23	61.22%
	5660 · Postage	799.29	3,775.00	-2,975.71	21.17%
	5680 · Printing & Copies	1,176.67	12,400.00	-11,223.33	9.49%
	5700 · Telephone	15,335.33	22,000.00	-6,664.67	69.71%
	5800 · Bank Service Charges	141.00	200.00	-59.00	70.5%
	6300 · Professional Services	1,898,671.94	2,826,087.00	-927,415.06	67.18%
	6400 · Building/Utilities	35,637.55	57,042.00	-21,404.45	62.48%
	6560 · Payroll Expenses	3,138.00	4,500.00	-1,362.00	69.73%
Total Expense		3,145,185.59	4,575,201.00	-1,430,015.41	68.74%
		336,326.59			

Open Invoices as of March 31, 2026 \$1,153,951.24 Original Mortgage

Franklin County Industrial Dev Corp - outstanding mortgage \$62,632.97 \$130,000



TOWN OF GRAND ISLE
9 Hyde Road, P.O. Box 49
Grand Isle, Vermont 05458-0049
Phone: (802) 372-8830 • www.grandislevt.org

April 6, 2026

ATTN: Sen. Patrick Brennan, Rep. Leland Morgan, Rep. Michael Morgan, Governor Phil Scott, Lt. Gov. John Rodgers, Jill Krowinski, Speaker of the House, House Environmental Committee, Vermont Land Use Review Board, Vermont Woodland Association, Vermont Sugar Makers Association, VLCT, NRPC, State of Vermont

REGARDING: Vermont Act 181

To Whom It May Concern,

It is the opinion of the Town of Grand Isle Selectboard that Act 181's regulations do not adequately respect the rights of rural property owners and, furthermore, that the Act's imposed restrictions are not equitable to rural communities such as Grand Isle. While we share the statewide goal of conserving Vermont's natural beauty, this aspirational vision should not be translated into state-imposed Future-Land-Use projections that undermine property rights and municipal authority. We support all bills and ideas currently being considered would reduce the impact of Act 181 on rural towns.

The state's Future-Land-Use projections have not been informed by the lived experiences, history, or stewardship practices of our families. Generations of Grand Isle residents have cared for their land—often for more than a century—balancing agriculture, recreation, forestry, and community use. Imposing state-level land-use restrictions and organizing all land into “connectivity blocks,” particularly when paired with new state-level reviews of municipal road development, continues a troubling legacy of centralized control over rural lands. These projections fail to recognize the cultural, historical, and economic value of the landscapes our residents maintain, including old farm roads, stone walls, shoreline access points, and historic features that do not appear on state maps but remain integral to our community's identity and daily life.

Act 181's restrictions will be felt more severely by rural towns such as Grand Isle, which insults the integrity of the hardworking custodians of these lands. Grand Isle is geographically unique—an island community with limited developable land, limited tax base growth opportunities, and higher infrastructure costs due to our location. Despite our size, our population has remained relatively stable for generations, and our municipal resources are far more limited than those of larger or more affluent towns. Grand Isle has no local option tax, no enterprise funding, and a modest grand list that must support essential governmental functions including road maintenance, clerk operations, zoning administration, and emergency services.

The additional fees, permitting requirements, and land-use restrictions resulting from Act 181 could realistically threaten the viability of family farms, small agricultural operations, and local businesses. Many of these already comply with Current Use requirements, Agency of Natural Resources permitting, and local zoning regulations. Any further restrictions on development will undermine our ability to grow our grand list and maintain financial stability. Navigating and enforcing Act 181 locally will impose undue hardship on both the municipality and the families who call Grand Isle home.

Our Town Plan and Zoning Bylaws already prioritize careful, steady, and responsible growth. If unchanged, Act 181's land-use restrictions will impose an unfair economic burden on our landowners and on the long-term economic stability of the Town of Grand Isle. As such, we strongly encourage you to take all possible action to pause, amend, or repeal the most harmful components of Act 181, including but not limited to:

- H.70 – Use existing “current use” laws to meet conservation goals and prevent skyrocketing land costs
- H.602 – Repeal the “Road Rule” permit requirement and extend Act 250 relief
- H.730 – Require notification and property tax reduction for Act 250/181 designation impacts
- H.805 – Streamline Act 250 permitting and provide property tax relief for restrictive land-use designations
- H.749 – Remove requirements to permanently preserve 30% and ultimately 50% of Vermont land under Act 59

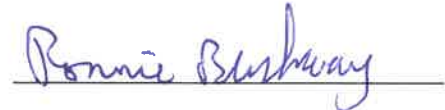
Thank you for the important role you play in advocating for what is best for our state. We urge you to proceed wisely and hope you will share our concerns as you address this legislation.

Respectfully Yours,


The Town of Grand Isle Selectboard



Jennifer Morway – Chair



Ron Bushway



Jeff Parizo



Aimee Cochran – Vice Chair



Ellen Howrigan

REC'D
4/3/26



Town of Bakersfield

Phone: 802-827-4495 | www.townofbakersfield.org PO Box 203, 40 East Bakersfield Road, Bakersfield, VT 05441

March 26, 2026

Subject: Vermont Act 181

To: Sen. Randy Brock, Sen. Bob Norris, Rep. James Gregoire, Vermont Land Use Review Board (LURB), VLCT, NRPC, State of Vermont

To Whom it May Concern,

It is the opinion of the Town of Bakersfield Selectboard that Act 181's regulations do not effectively respect rural property owner rights, and that the Act's new restrictions will be unequally borne by property owners in rural towns such as ours. The vision to conserve Vermont's natural beauty through top-down, duplicative land use regulations undermines local municipal control — and ignores what is already working here.

There are generations of Bakersfield residents long committed to land stewardship — of farms and former farms marked by historic stone walls, ancient roads, mineral springs, foundation remnants, aging dams, and historic buildings including Brigham Academy, the Hearse House, and the Bakersfield Historical Society. We cherish our Cold Hollow Mountain range views. These are not extras. They are woven into the daily life and special events of our families and our community, cared for not because the state required it, but because this is home.

Bakersfield has evolved from a farming community into a bedroom community for working families employed in St. Albans, Chittenden County, and across Franklin County — nurses, tradespeople, teachers, and service workers who deserve a path to homeownership where they choose to live. Our town's own goals are clear: affordable workforce housing near the village core, where the best soils and services already exist, where road maintenance and school transportation is most efficient, and where public water access is most feasible. Modest, locally-led residential growth in and adjacent to our village center is the organic path forward for Bakersfield.

Act 181 is the upstream catalyst that effectively blocks this path. The Act's land use designations are influencing regional planning maps, and those maps are in turn influencing local planning maps and zoning to align with state goals — including by categorizing large portions of the land adjacent to our village centers in maps and ways to discourage subdivision. This is precisely the land best suited for the workforce housing Bakersfield needs. Rather than supporting growth where it makes the most sense, Act 181's downstream zoning pressure discourages it there most.

The consequences compound. Proposals for larger minimum lot sizes — driven by that same alignment pressure — would disqualify those properties for buyers from VHFA and other government-backed financing programs, pricing out the working families who depend on those tools. Existing landowners with larger parcels who might otherwise subdivide will face additional new costs and review that make it economically unviable, even as sandy soils abound, road access exists, utility poles run to the lot line, and public water is available or nearby. Meanwhile, our proposed local zoning map includes no "growth center" designation — only a village core with less than ten lots that we estimate

could ever realistically be subdivided, even under current rules. The result is a town squeezed from every direction: both the land that should grow cannot, and state incentives that would make it affordable are out of reach. That is a future Bakersfield affordable only to the wealthy.

Bakersfield's large parcel landowners and farmers already operate within a rigorous and overlapping set of conservation tools: Current Use/UVA land management commitments, NOFA standards, the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), Agency of Natural Resources permitting, Vermont Land Trust agreements, Act 250 review, and our own locally adopted Zoning Regulations and Town Plan — a plan that has always reflected our community's vision for careful, organic growth. These programs work because they were built on landowner trust and local knowledge. Act 181 adds bureaucratic layers on top of an existing framework without adding conservation value. It effectively rezones towns like Bakersfield without our input.

The burden falls hardest on small, rural, under-resourced towns — precisely those least equipped to carry it. Bakersfield covers 44.6 square miles and, after a significant mid-century decline, has a recovering population of 1,273 as of the 2020 census. We have no municipal septic, limited village water, and no cell service. Our entire Grand List generated \$2,759,752 in FY 2025. We do not have the staff or revenue to administer a new layer of state-mandated land use review. The extra fees and permitting delays Act 181 can create could financially stifle organic growth and thus undermine the Town's ability to fund the basics, including plowing, culvert replacement, pothole repair, town clerk operations, and services that help our citizens age in place.

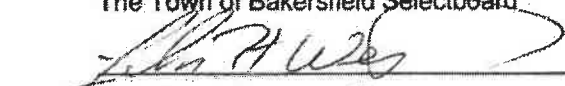
We strongly urge you to advance legislation and regulatory relief grounded in the following principles:

- o Use existing conservation to meet the state's conservation goals, rather than imposing new designations that duplicate and override them
- o Require meaningful notification to landowners when Act 250 or Act 181 designations affect their property, and provide equitable property tax relief where restrictions reduce land value
- o Authentically streamline Act 250 permitting so that it does not place disproportionate financial and procedural burdens on small rural towns and family landowners
- o Repeal or substantially revise provisions that mandate permanent conservation of fixed percentages of Vermont land
- o Ensure that minimum lot size requirements resulting from Act 181's downstream zoning pressure do not disqualify Vermont working families from VHFA and other government-backed home financing programs


Vermont's conservation legacy was built on programs that earned landowner trust through fairness and local partnership. Act 181 risks dismantling that trust — and with it, the working communities that give Vermont's landscape its meaning. We ask you to be wise stewards of both our land and our towns, and to use the tools that already work.

Respectfully,


The Town of Bakersfield Selectboard




John West, Chair



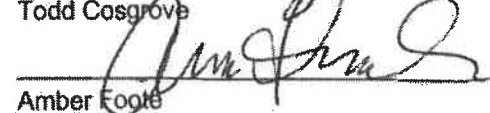
Lance Lawyer, Vice-Chair



Nicola Crijth



Todd Cosgrove



Amber Foots



Phone: 802-827-3261
Fax: 802-827-3653
www.fairfieldvermont.us

P.O. Box 5
25 North Road,
Fairfield, VT 05455

February 25, 2026

ATTN: Sen. Randy Brock, Sen. Bob Norris, Rep. James Gregiore, Vermont Land Use Review Board, Vermont Woodland Association, Vermont Sugar Makers Association, VLCT, NRPC, State of Vermont

REGARDING: Vermont Act 181

To Whom it May Concern,

It is the opinion of the Town of Fairfield Selectboard that Act 181's regulations do not effectively respect the rights of rural property owners and, furthermore, the Act's imposed restrictions are not equitable to rural towns such as Fairfield. An aspirational vision of conserving the natural beauty of Vermont should not be translated into state-imposed, Future-Land-Use projections that undermine property owner rights, and municipal control. We support all bills and ideas being considered that will reduce the impact of Act 181.

The state's Future-Land-Use projections have not been informed by our families, our efforts, our stories or our history. Although the formation of our country includes the government claiming control of rural lands from rightful owners, the tragic consequences to native peoples and rural farm families have, since, been made clear. In our opinion, imposing state-level, Future-Land-Use restrictions and organizing all land into "connectivity blocks", to impose limitations and state-level reviews on municipal level road development, only continues this tragic legacy of claiming control of rural lands from rightful owners. It also does not take into consideration the fact that families, as stewards of their lands for sometimes more than 10 generations in Fairfield, also are custodians of historic rock walls, ancient roads, and ruins of old schoolhouses, civil war activity and industry. These structures and ruins may not show on our current E911 registration or on state maps but they are often utilized and woven into the activities of our community for multiple purposes including education, maple sugaring, farming and recreation.

Act 181 restrictions will be felt more severely by large, rural, towns such as Fairfield, which insults the integrity of the hard-working custodians of these lands and this municipality. The Town of Fairfield is the third largest town in VT, by square miles, but has held about the same population, 2,044 as of the most recent census, for over a hundred and fifty years. At 68.5 square miles, Fairfield is only 4.2 square miles smaller than the next largest town in Vermont, Stowe, according to Vermont's Open Data Portal, but with significantly fewer financial resources. For comparison, Stowe's population is estimated to be 4,339 and their total Government Expenses in 2025, according to their most recent audit, was \$19.5 million dollars. Fairfield has only 1046 taxable properties, no opportunities for

local option taxes, and has no enterprise funding. Our grand list is just over \$1.5 million dollars and our total expenses on governmental activities were \$2.3 million dollars. Although Fairfield is expansive, it is not affluent. The extra fees and restrictions that will result from Act 181 could realistically result in the end of many family farm and maple sugaring enterprises; the majority of these already have careful land management practices in place to meet their obligations for Current Use land management, NOFA standards for land care, Fairfield Zoning Regulations, Agency of Natural Resources permitting, and more. Furthermore, any new restrictions on development in Fairfield could undermine the Town's ability to grow its grand list to pay for its own governmental activities, including road maintenance, town clerk operations, zoning and town administration and more. Navigating and enforcing Act 181's requirements locally will result in undue hardship to our municipality and our families.

Maintaining our rural landscape, with careful, steady growth strategies over time, is already embedded into our Town Plan and our Zoning Bylaws. We are concerned that, if unchanged, Act 181's land use restrictions will impose an unfair economic burden on, not only our landowners, but also The Town of Fairfield's overall economic stability into the future. As such, we strongly encourage you to do all in your power to pull the brakes on as many Act 181's restrictions as possible, including but not limited to:

- H.70 - Use existing "current use" laws to meet conservation goals and prevent skyrocketing land cost
- H.602 - Repeal the "Road Rule" permit requirement and extend Act 250 relief
- H.730 - Require notification & property tax reduction for Act 250/181 designation impacts
- H.805 - Streamline Act 250 permitting & provide property tax relief for restrictive land use designations
- H.749 - Remove requirements to permanently preserve 30% and ultimately 50% of Vermont land from Act 59

Thank you for the important role you play in advocating for what is best for our state. We encourage you to be wise, moving forward, and hope you will share our concerns as you tackle this legislation.

Respectfully Yours,
The Town of Fairfield Selectboard,
Tom Howrigan, Chair
Gavin Ryan
David Persons
Ron Bocash
Brian Dubie



PO Box 189
2996 Vermont Route 78
Highgate, VT 05459

Phone: 802-868-4697
Fax: 802-868-3064
www.highgatevt.org

April 2, 2026

ATTN: Vermont Land Use Review Board, NRPC, VLCT
Sen. Randy Brock, Sen. Bob Norris, Rep. Lisa Hango, Rep. Wayne Laroche

REGARDING: Act 181 Concerns

To whom it may concern:

The Town of Highgate Selectboard is writing this letter in order to mirror the recent concerns made known by other neighboring municipalities regarding Act 181. Although supportive of the aspects of the Act that would loosen regulation and promote affordable housing growth within our Village Centers, the Town is concerned that the other provisions of the Act would unfairly hinder the rights of rural property owners who may wish to subdivide and develop their lands in the future.

The Town of Highgate is comprised primarily of low to medium density rural residential areas, some industrial commercial areas, agricultural areas, forested areas, and shoreline. Act 181 restrictions will be felt severely by rural towns such as Highgate and rural landowners are concerned about the impact it would have on their ability to develop their land in a way that would keep family farms and agricultural operations continuing for generations to come.

While we understand the attraction of growing population centers in our designated village areas, we also are very aware and supportive of those who choose to move to Vermont and Franklin County in order to enjoy the natural beauty and landscapes of our area on larger or more remote parcels. We are not seeking to restrict further growth and development in these areas, and feel that our existing Zoning process, Current Use land management practices, and existing ANR State permit review processes are sufficient to keep the slow and steady growth in our rural Town unchanged while protecting our natural resources and landscapes.

We do not want to impede our existing slowly growing Grand List that naturally results from development outside of our Village areas. We would like to caution the Land Use Review Board and our Legislature, that further restriction on these land owners could have substantial negative impact on multi-generational family land owners, seeking to develop land for their families or others to enjoy while keeping their families local or agricultural operation in tact, who could become financially prohibited by high fees to do so.

In conclusion, the Town of Highgate is opposed to increased regulations under Act 181 in proposed Tier 2 & Tier 3 areas, the 'Road Rule' as currently proposed, and supportive of any amendments or drafts of Act 181 that would remove these burdens on our rural landowners and their rights or abilities to develop their lands in the future as allowed within our existing land use permitting processes and procedures.

Sincerely,

The Town of Highgate Selectboard


Richard Flint, Chair


Chad Carr


Merry Spouza, Vice Chair


Christopher LaPan


Vern Brosky III

Town of Enosburgh

PO Box 465
Enosburg Falls, VT 05450
(802) 933 – 4421

April 6, 2026

Attn: Representative Allen Demar, Representative Lisa Hango, Senator Robert Norris, Senator Randy Brock, VLCT, NRPC-Catherine Dimitruk, Vermont Sugar Makers Association, Vermont Land Use Review Board, State of Vermont

Re: Vermont Act 181

To Whom it May Concern,

The Enosburgh Town Selectboard would like to express our serious concerns regarding Act 181. We believe that Act 181, as written, has the potential to be a significant detriment to our community and the rural communities of Vermont. Act 181 could dramatically affect the value of rural properties, and in turn cause financial hardship for owners and ultimately communities that rely on their grand list values to conduct essential government services.

Enosburgh (town) largely consists of rural residential and agricultural land. We agree there is a need to be mindful and careful with our regulations to balance protection of our beautiful state with the necessary growth we must allow for sustainability and affordability. We, however, stand by our existing bylaws, town plan and zoning regulations. We also support the continuation of the State of Vermont's Current Use Program, as they have permit and review processes that are closely managed, and we support voluntary participation in conservation. We work closely with Northwest Regional Planning to ensure that our planning and zoning is updated as required by statute and that it's supported by our constituents. Act 181 implies that communities are not capable of this long-standing self-determination and 'home rule' model of land-use regulation.

Vermont's towns, of all sizes, struggle to collect revenues that are proportional to our needs, with the burden falling almost exclusively to the property taxpayer. With the implementation of Act 181, we risk that landowners may utilize the grievance process to request reductions on their property values, citing the impacts of Act 181 as their case, particularly those impacts from the Tier 3 designation. If this happens, the tax burden will be redistributed across all of the properties in town to accommodate the loss in revenue, thereby impacting those with fewer means to pay taxes or seek a grievance or abatement.

The rate of development in rural communities, especially outside of the I-89 corridor, is not so alarmingly high that we need to be greatly concerned that our large parcel owners will suddenly clear-cut and subdivide for hundreds of homes. In our case, the public utilities are not sufficient or available for that kind of growth. The demand for development in Vermont, is generally low aside from the major population centers which will continue to see demand as rural demand will likely shrink.



As we mentioned, affordability is of the utmost importance to us and our community. The fees and restrictions associated with Act 181 are untenable to the person of average means, especially the many farmers who still own large parcels and rely on their land assets. The impacts are disproportionate to those owners who are not outside developers or wealthy second-home owners. Many of these people have inherited their property through the generations and struggle to hold onto it.

We would like to encourage the younger generations to settle here and experience what we have enjoyed for generations, however, with Act 181, it is fair to say that this hope for the next generation is not attainable.

We thank you for the hard work you do with the best interest of Vermonters in mind. We would welcome a conversation and more information about Act 181, and the impact on the Town of Enosburgh.

Respectfully,
Town of Enosburgh Selectboard
Dean Wright, Chair
Pierre Letourneau, Vice Chair
Larry Gervais
Nicholas Aldrich

**TOWN OF SWANTON
SELECTBOARD
1 ACADEMY STREET
P. O. Box 711
SWANTON, VERMONT 05488
802-868-7418
TOWNADMIN@SWANTONVERMONT.ORG**

April 17, 2026

Attn: Sen. Randy Brock, Sen. Robert Norris, Rep. Tom Oliver, Rep. Matt Walker, Vermont Land Use Review Board, Northwest Regional Planning, Vermont League of Cities and Towns

RE: Act 181 Concern

To whom it may concern:

The Selectboard of the Town of Swanton is writing this letter in order to mirror the recent concerns made known by other neighboring municipalities regarding Act 181. Although supportive of the aspects of the Act that would loosen regulation and promote affordable housing growth within our village centers, the Town is concerned that the other provisions of the Act would unfairly hinder the rights of rural property owners who may wish to subdivide and development their lands in the future.

The Town of Swanton is comprised primarily of the Village of Swanton, that is for all intents and purposes, built out with very little, if any substantial land available for development. Outside of the Village the Town has several low to medium density housing developments with a mix of some industrial and recreational areas. However, the Town is severely limited as a large portion of its real estate has had development rights acquired by the Land Trust for conservation and a huge portion of land is owned by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge in addition to land owned by the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department for conservation. Furthermore, we have a large number of acres that are wetlands and are not available for development.

For these reasons, developable real estate within the Town of Swanton is already at a premium. We are not seeking to restrict further growth and development in the areas and feel that our existing zoning process, Current Use land management practices and existing ANR State permit review processes are sufficient to keep the slow and steady growth in our Town unchanged while protecting our natural resources and landscapes.

We do not want to impede the growth of our Grand List that naturally results from development outside the Village. We would like to caution the Land Use Review Board and our Legislature, that further restriction on these land owners could have a substantial negative impact on multi-generational family land owners, seeking to develop land for their families or others to enjoy while keeping their families local or agricultural operation intact, that could become financially prohibited by high fees to do so.

Act 181 Concerns

April 17, 2026


Page 2

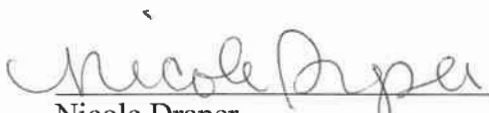
In conclusion, The Town of Swanton is opposed to increased regulations under Act 181 in proposed Tier 2 & Tier 3 areas, the "Road Rule" as current proposed, and supportive of any amendments or drafts of Act 181 that would remove these burdens on our local rural landowners and their rights or abilities to develop their lands in the future as allowed within our existing land use permitting processes and procedures.

Sincerely,

Town of Swanton Selectboard


Joel Clark, Chair


Nicholas Brosseau, Vice Chair


Nicole Draper


Earl Fournier


Ronald Underwood



April 22, 2026

TO: Area Legislators and Selectboard, Trustee and Council Chairs
CC: NRPC Regional Commissioners
RE: Act 181

The Executive Committee of the Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) is writing to support the changes to Act 181 currently under consideration by the legislature.* Specifically, the Executive Committee supports: repealing the road length jurisdiction and Tier 3, extending the interim exemptions, and making adjustments to Title 24 language so that regional plans can more easily reflect local planning.

During our recent regional plan adoption process we heard from citizens concerned about additional Act 250 jurisdiction in rural areas, and many of our region's Selectboards have sent letters expressing concern as well. We understand and share these concerns.

Act 181 included many positive changes, that have our full support. Relaxing Act 250 permitting requirements for housing in our downtowns and villages is a positive change to help encourage more housing where infrastructure and services exist. Using local and regional planning to determine the long-term exemption areas enables citizen participation in these decisions. And, the state designation program now uses regional plan maps, based on local and regional planning and input from the public. This allows all towns to access these benefits and has significantly increased the areas eligible for benefits.

Our concerns echo the concerns of our communities. Tier 3 has potential for automatic Act 250 jurisdiction in a geographic area that is too large, and the time frame for rule making did not allow for enough public engagement. The road length jurisdiction of 800 feet could be counter-productive to farmland conservation, and create incentives for site design that avoids Act 250 jurisdiction rather than site design that is most appropriate for the location (like the historic 10.1 acre spaghetti lots). Additionally, the road length jurisdiction could put increased pressure on local officials to upgrade Class IV roads. Finally, statutory language for land use areas and designations sometimes limited NRPC's ability to fully reflect local planning for new smart growth areas.

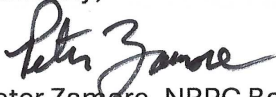
We recommend the following:

- Retain the positive aspects of Act 181 as described above, and extend the interim exemptions for 2-3 more years. Consider making some, like for accessory dwelling units, permanent.

- Repeal, or significantly rewrite Tier 3 and the road length jurisdiction. Instead, identify which, if any, critical natural resources need additional protection and use specific regulatory or financial tools to protect those resources.
- Make adjustments to the wording of some land use areas and designations to provide more flexibility to support local smart growth planning (currently in S. 325 as passed the Senate).

Act 181 discussions have highlighted concerns that Vermonters have about the future of their communities. Moving forward we must continue to listen to rural communities, including all of us who live and work there. We must collectively consider the future of our state, and long-term, sustainable economic opportunities for rural communities and residents should be of highest priority. A Vermont conversation is needed, and NRPC is ready to be an active part of that conversation.

Sincerely,



Peter Zamore, NRPC Board Chair, on behalf of the
Northwest Regional Planning Commission Executive Committee

** The Executive Committee, rather than the full Board of Commissioners, addressed these issues due to their time-sensitive nature.*