



ACRPC FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

The ACRPC Newsletter contains Addison County announcements, events, grants, and training for the upcoming month. Click below to see this newsletter and other resources on our website. Please contact Maddison Shropshire with questions, mshropshire@acrpc.org

ACRPC Update

ARPA Local Recovery Funding

The **American Rescue Plan Act** of 2021 established the **Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund** (CSLFRF, aka ARPA) and directed nearly \$11 million of ARPA funding directly to Addison County's cities and towns. Select Boards and City Councils have discretion over how to spend their municipal allocations, and have been reaching out to residents for input in different ways as they begin spending these funds on things like supporting Maple Broadband, infrastructure improvements, and a diverse range of other community revitalization projects.

The next round of ARPA reporting is due by **April 30th** of this year, and every year thereafter through 2027. The Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) has compiled [compliance and reporting information](#), along with a [set of FAQs \(Frequently Asked Questions\)](#) to help guide municipal staff. VLCT has also gone through the hundreds of new and existing state and federal grant programs included in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL, aka Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, IIJA), the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), to create a [single guide document](#). With summaries of the most salient details about each funding source.

To ask questions or schedule an appointment with VLCT, email FFA@vlct.org. For questions about resources or reaching out to municipal residents, contact ACRPC planner Andrew L'Roe (alroe@acrpc.org) and see our website at: <https://acrpc.org/regional-programs/arpa/>

Events

February Calendar

Date	Time	Meeting
February 7th	6:30 PM	ACRPC Energy Committee
February 8th	12:00 PM	REMC Quarterly Meeting
February 8th	7:00 PM	ACRPC Full Commission Meeting
February 16th	7:00 PM	ACSWMD meeting
February 21st	6:30 PM	TAC Meeting (note change from regular time)
February 22nd	6:30 PM	ACRPC Executive Committee Meeting
February 22nd	2:00 PM	Otter Creek Basin Water Quality Council

Please find the meeting agendas and minutes on our [website using this link](#).

This newsletter is financed through the State of Vermont Dept. of Housing and Community Affairs.

Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the State of Vermont. All programs of the Addison County Regional Planning Commission are ADA accessible.

Announcements

Farm Share Program

The NOFA-VT [Farm Share Program](#) application is now open for the spring and summer seasons! NOFA-VT's Farm Share Program reduces the cost of a local CSA (community supported agriculture) share or farm stand credit for Vermonters in need of financial assistance, while ensuring farmers are fully paid. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis and will close on **March 31st, 2023**, or when funds run out.

More about this program and how to apply can be found at nofavt.org/farmshare.

Attached is a paper application for folks who prefer this option. The application and program materials are available this year in Spanish. Please reach out to farmshare@nofavt.org or 802-434-7162 with any questions.

ACRPC Accessory Dwelling Unit Program

ACRPC has been granted \$32,000 from St. Stephens Church as pass-through funds for individuals looking to support affordable housing in Addison County by building accessory dwelling units (ADUs). ACRPC is also putting together a guide and various resources to help interested homeowners navigate the entire process of creating an ADU (permitting, financing, design/construction, renting, etc.) and hopes to work further

with St. Stephens to develop an outreach program. More information will become available as the program develops.

Addison County Legislative Breakfasts

The Bridport Grange #303 and the Addison County Farm Bureau are once again hosting a series of Addison County Legislative Breakfasts. All are welcome to attend - come ask a question or make a comment about a bill. Breakfasts will start at 7am; the program begins at 7:30am and will end at 8:45am. Purchase of breakfast is not required to attend, but it helps the hosts defray the cost of opening their venues for the event.

Dates and locations are as follows:

- February 13: St. Peter Parish Hall, 85 Main Street, Vergennes
- February 27: Bristol American Legion, 56 Airport Drive, Bristol
- March 13: Salisbury Congregational Church, 853 Maple Street, Salisbury
- March 27: Shoreham Congregational Church, 28 School Street, Shoreham
- April 10: Orwell Fire House, 604 Main Street, Orwell

ACRPC Issues RFP for Water Quality Projects

The Addison County Regional Planning Commission (ACRPC), in its role as the Clean Water Service (CWSP) Provider for Basin 3, the Otter Creek, Lewis Creek, and Little Otter Creek watersheds, is issuing a request for proposals for projects that improve water quality in Basin 3. Projects must be in keeping with the vision set forth by Act 76, the Clean Water Service Delivery Act, and policies and guidance set forth by the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation to implement the Act. The CWSP has approximately \$1,000,000 available to fund eligible projects this year. Applications are due February 8, 2023. Resources in support of this funding are available online at acrpc.org, including the official RFP, application form, and more detailed information on project eligibility. Mike Winslow can also be contacted at mwinslow@acrpc.org for more information or questions.

Flood Hazard Maps and Zoning Bylaws Updates

FEMA is currently updating the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) in Vermont for the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). When the new maps go into effect, FEMA requires that town bylaws meet current standards for participation in the NFIP. If your bylaws are not sufficient, residents will no longer be able to purchase nor renew flood insurance through the NFIP. Participation in NFIP also increases the percentage of your town's post-disaster Emergency Relief and Assistance Funding (ERAF), providing state coverage of public disaster recovery costs that can potentially save thousands of municipal dollars. ACRPC is reaching out to Planning Commissions and Zoning Administrators to help review bylaws and provide advice on updating language to meet NFIP standards.

Learn more: [Here](#) | **Contact:** ACRPC planner, Andrew L'Roe (alroe@acrpc.org).

Brownfield Sites Sought for Assessment

Do you want to develop properties in Addison County but think they might have environmental contaminants from previous activities? These types of properties could include old gas stations, auto repair shops, dry cleaners, landfills, junkyards, industrial buildings, or vacant sites where any of these used to be. Brownfields are properties which have, or could potentially have, hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants. These can significantly complicate the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of properties, so ACRPC is working with the environmental consulting company Stantec to identify sites and work with interested parties to assess and remediate them. If you have site suggestions or plans to purchase one, please contact ACRPC planner, Andrew L'Roe (alroe@acrpc.org).

Regional Emergency Management Committee- February Meeting

A meeting of the Addison County Regional Emergency Management Committee (REMC) will be held on Wednesday, **February 8 at 12pm** (in person at the ACRPC office 14 Seminary St with Zoom option). We will be focusing our meeting conversation on the **response to the December 23 windstorm and power outages**- Green Mountain Power will provide their perspective and EMDs will discuss their challenges.

The REMC conducts All-Hazards preparedness planning and coordinates with Vermont Emergency Management (VEM), the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC), and the new statewide Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC).

The REMC is made up of Local Emergency Management Directors and Emergency Services Representatives from each municipality in the region. Representatives from fire departments, emergency medical services, law enforcement, media, transportation, hospitals, the department of health district office, organizations serving vulnerable populations, and any other interested public or private individual or organization, are welcome to attend and participate! Details at: <https://acrpc.org/acrpc-remc/>
For more information and Zoom link, contact ACRPC Emergency Management Planner Andrew L'Roe at alroe@acrpc.org or 802-388-3141 x3.

Grants and Funding

Community

Creative Futures Grant Program Round 2 Now Open

The Vermont Arts Council is now accepting applications for round two of [Creative Futures Grants](#) to help the creative sector recover from economic losses due to the pandemic. Grants of up to \$200,000 will be available to creative sector non-profits and for-profit entities that can demonstrate economic harm caused by the pandemic.

Learn More: [Here](#) | **Due:** Feb. 28

Better Places Program

Better Places is a non-competitive, community matching grant program empowering Vermonters to create inclusive and vibrant public places serving Vermont's designated downtowns, village centers, new town centers, or neighborhood development areas. The program provides one-on-one project coaching, local fundraising support, and two to one (2:1) matching grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$40,000 to make your community-led placemaking ideas happen. The program accepts applications on a rolling basis.

Learn more: [here](#) | **Contact:** Katie Raycroft Meyer kraycroftmeyer@acrpc.org

VLCT Announces New Federal Funding Assistance Program

In response to member requests, VLCT has created the Federal Funding Assistance Program (FFA). Modeled after the successful [ARPA Assistance and Coordination Program](#), FFA expands VLCT's work with ARPA to include the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL, aka Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, IIJA), the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), and other new and existing state and federal grant programs. They will do the work of sifting through the tsunami of information, and work with their broad network of state, federal, statewide, and national partners to curate only programs and resources for which municipalities are eligible and that are relevant to our Vermont scale. As the program launches, VLCT has developed the following resources:

- New [Federal Funding Assistance Program webpage](#)
- VLCT's [Vermont Federal Funding Guidebook](#)
- "Consults On Call" – Book a 15-minute meeting with the FFA team during weekly office hours. Evening hours are available. Book your appointment [HERE](#). Need more than 15 minutes? Email ffa@vlct.org to schedule a longer consultation.

AARP VT Accepting 2023 Community Challenge Grant Applications -

The annual program aims to make communities in Vermont more livable for people of all ages. AARP invites local eligible organizations and governments across the state to apply for the 2023 AARP Community Challenge grant program, now through March 15 at 5:00 p.m. Grants fund quick-action projects that help communities become more livable in the long-term by improving public spaces, transportation, housing, civic engagement, diversity and inclusion. [Learn more and apply here.](#)

AARP VT is hosting an informational webinar on Thursday, February 9th from 12 -1 pm. Learn about the 2023 Community Challenge grant program, new funding sources, the application process, and a new offering they are providing for eligible small non-profits in the form of grant writing coaches to help with the application process. [Register for webinar here.](#)

Community Recovery and Revitalization Program

The Community Recovery and Revitalization Program (CRRP) will provide recovery funding for projects that spur economic recovery and revitalization to mitigate the negative economic impacts of COVID-19 in communities across the state. Program guidelines have now been posted on the ACCD website and the application will become available in the coming weeks.

Learn more: [Here](#)

Vermont Community Development Grants

The Vermont Community Development Program (VCDP) assists communities on a competitive basis by providing financial and technical assistance to identify and address local needs in the areas of housing, economic development, public facilities, public services, handicapped accessibility and modification planning.

Learn more: [Here](#) | Due: [Rolling basis](#)

Equity

Vermont Healthy Communities

From safer, walkable, universally accessible streets to more green spaces, the Vermont Department of Health (VDH) in partnership with the Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) is excited to announce the launch of a technical assistance pilot to support community-led design, placemaking, and healthy equity projects across Vermont. **Applications are now open for interested communities* and Health Equity Ambassadors.**

VDH and DHCD invite eligible Vermont communities* and residents over 18 years of age to apply for the [Health Equity and Community Design Technical Assistance \(TA\) Pilot](#). Approximately 20 to 35 communities will be accepted for in-person and virtual engagement sessions between December 2022 and October 2023.

- The TA Pilot will provide extra capacity and resources to communities to develop healthy community design and placemaking plans, ideas, and projects that center on equity.
- The TA Pilot will also help prepare communities that are interested in, but not yet ready to apply for, [DHCD's Better Places](#) placemaking grants.

Trusted community members who want to be directly involved in bringing health equity to their community are also encouraged to apply to be a [Health Equity Ambassador](#). Ambassadors are important to the success and sustainability of the TA pilot.

Ambassadors will:

Support and co-lead on navigating community issues and opportunities,

- Engage community members, stakeholders, and state and local agencies,
- Co-develop community ideas and action plans to advance health equity in their community,
- Receive training and compensation for their time and contributions in support of local communities.

Visit the Healthy Communities Vermont website to [learn more](#).

*Communities are flexibly defined- may include nonprofits, municipalities, & volunteer groups.

VCF Equitable and Inclusive Communities grant

The Vermont Community Foundation is seeking proposals from Vermont villages, towns, and cities that close the [opportunity gap](#) by supporting local efforts to foster inclusion and belonging for people of all races and backgrounds. The Foundation offers grants of up to \$10,000 to fund projects that generate a greater sense of community and equity education in town.

Learn more: [Here](#) | **Due:** rolling basis until funds are used

Energy

Municipal Energy Resilience Program

The VT Department of Buildings and General Services has begun to develop the [municipal energy resilience program](#) as required by Act 172. The program will provide multiple opportunities for municipalities including:

1. \$4,000 mini-grants for towns to educate their community on energy efficiency and generate buy-in and consensus around applications for the following opportunities below. **Applications open in March**
2. Free energy assessments of any building owned by the municipality except school buildings. **Applications open in March**
3. Up to \$500,000 in construction funds for municipal buildings to undergo recommended improvements following the assessments above.
4. A revolving loan fund to provide additional construction funds and access to investment grade audits beyond the one time funds available for the rest of the program.

More information will become available as the program is developed. If you are interested in applying for this program please add the buildings to [this list](#). If you are interested in learning more about this program, please contact Maddison Shropshire mshropshire@acrpc.org.

Weatherization Repayment Assistance Program

WRAP will allow Vermont households to pay for qualifying weatherization projects like insulation and air sealing as well as heat pumps and advanced wood heating systems through a monthly charge on their utility bill that can be paid back over time. The program is open to Vermonters of all incomes and both homeowners and renters can participate in the program. **Learn more:** [Here](#)

Natural Resources

Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions Tiny Grants

To assist local committees/groups to become conservation commissions, To increase the functioning capacity of existing conservation commissions, and To provide seed money and/or matching funds for specific projects in the broad categories of land conservation, education and outreach, stewardship and management, and planning.

Grant range: \$250 - \$600

Grant application due: March 31, 2023

Grant award announcement: April, 28 2023

Learn More: [Here](#) | Contact: vtconservation@gmail.com (AVCC Board)

Clean Water

2023 Watershed Grants

The [Vermont Watershed Grant Program](#) supports the protection, restoration, enhancement, and public appreciation of Vermont's lakes, ponds, rivers, and streams, and efforts to improve surface water quality. Awards are up to \$10,000, depending on the project category type, and can go to towns, nonprofit organizations and community groups with specific watershed projects. **Learn more:** [Here](#) | **Due:** February 8th
Contact: William Eldridge William.eldridge@vermont.gov if you have any questions.

Emergency Preparedness

State Homeland Security Program Grants

This program supports terrorism preparedness with 100% funding for specified training and equipment, including items like generators, cybersecurity software and training, and many other security items. Applications require multiple quotes and documentation from municipalities, so it's not too early to get started! Contact the RPC if you have ideas for your town. The FY 2023 round will open mid-January.

Learn More: [Here](#) | **Due:** February 24

Contact: Andrew L'Roe (alroe@acrpc.org)

Flood Resilient Communities Fund (FRCF)

Reducing the future public safety and water quality impacts of climate-related flood hazards, focusing on buyouts of flood-vulnerable properties. This program funds 100% of costs and is a limited time opportunity, so please reach out to property-owners that might benefit!

Learn More: [Here](#) | **Due:** Rolling Basis, before March 31, 2023

Contact: Andrew L'Roe (alroe@acrpc.org)

Tools and Training

Energy

Vermont Department of Public Service Webinar Series on Renewable and Clean Electricity Policies and Programs

The Vermont Department of Public Service is hosting a [webinar series](#) to share information and answer questions about Vermont's current electric system. The webinars will be of interest to anyone who wants to know where Vermont's electricity comes from and what policies and programs support renewable electricity. [Learn More](#)

Questions About the Affordable Heat Act? Get Them Answered!

This Friday, February 3rd at 12:00 PM - The Affordable Heat Act aims to cut energy costs, reduce carbon and support Vermont's fossil fuel heating providers in delivering cleaner, more affordable, healthier, local options to help Vermonters stay warm. In this webinar, get a brief, 10-minute overview of the core components of the Affordable Heat Act, then stay for ~45 minutes of Q&A. [Learn more and register to attend here.](#)

VECAN Winter Workshop Series

Join VECAN Every Other Wednesday at Noon in 2023! - Starting Wednesday, January 18th at noon, VECAN will kick off our Winter Workshop Series, covering timely clean energy and climate action topics! These virtual workshops will be free and open to anyone who wants to join. [Learn more and register to join here.](#)

Green Saving Smart Program

Reaching Energy Equity Goals with GreenSavingSmart - [GreenSavingSmart](#) is a new service administered by Vermont's five community action agencies that connects financial coaching with energy savings for low- and moderate-income Vermonters to ensure a cleaner, greener Vermont. [Learn all about this initiative here.](#) Contact Maddison Shropshire: mshropshire@acrpc.org for more information.

VNRC's Climate Dispatch - Stay updated on what's happening this legislative session on equitable climate action and the transition to a clean energy economy by tuning into [VNRC's weekly Climate Dispatch video.](#)

Energy Action Network Webinar: Retaining Workers in the Climate Workforce - February 9th at 12:00 PM. This webinar by the Climate Workforce EAN Network Action Team will be targeted at climate workforce employers. It will provide an inspiring view of low and no-cost retention techniques for keeping your workers in their jobs. [Learn more and register to attend here.](#)

Public Service Department Electricity Webinars - To kickstart public engagement opportunities related to reviewing renewable electricity programs in Vermont, the Public Service Department is hosting an informational webinar series to share information and answer questions about Vermont's current electric system. [Learn more and register to attend here.](#)

- Current Renewable Electricity Policies
 - February 14th from 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM [register here](#)
 - February 15th from 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM [register here](#)
- Parking Lot Session
 - March 9th from 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM [register here](#)
 - March 13th from 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM [register here](#)

Climate Workforce Focus Group for Youth - February 8th at 6:00 PM - The Energy Action Network and VEEP are seeking youth to share their thoughts about how to make climate careers interesting and accessible to young people. They will be hosting a listening session on February 8th at 6:00 PM via Zoom. Participants will be paid \$50 for participating and sharing their thoughts, but must register in advance. Any Vermont-based youth can participate. [Register here.](#)

Efficiency Vermont 2023 Rebates - Are home or apartment improvement projects in store for 2023? If you plan to buy new appliances, make your space less drafty, or lower your energy costs, there may be a rebate for you. Combine those with federal tax credits and additional rebates from your electric or gas utility, and you're on your way to some serious energy savings. [Explore 2023 rebates here.](#)

Rewiring America's Inflation Reduction Act Savings Calculator - This tool provides personalized incentives, including upfront discounts, available tax credits, and estimated bill savings per year. [Calculate your personal savings here!](#)

Equity

VLCT Equity Resources for Municipalities

The VLCT Municipal Equity Toolkit is a ten-part online resource that covers everything from creating a municipal equity committee to building a framework and action plan to

listing equity-related books, podcasts, and videos. It is free and available to all VLCT members and the public at vlct.org/JDEIB-resources. VLCT's equity consultants, Nikki Fuller Esq-SHRM-SCP of Workplace Matters and Dr. Wanda Heading Grant, helped create the toolkit in collaboration with the VLCT Equity committee and with the support of a grant from the Vermont Community Foundation. The toolkit includes resources for both internally focused equity efforts (ensuring a community is a model employer) and external equity resources (ensuring the community itself is a welcoming place to all). More information and resources on equity can also be found through the [State of Vermont Office of Racial Equity](#).

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Climate Planning Training: Feb. 28

Climate change disproportionately impacts certain communities; that is why diversity, equity, and inclusion are crucial to consider when creating a climate action plan. This one-hour training is hosted by the U.S. Department of Energy. [Learn More](#)