



ACRPC Monthly Newsletter

January 2025

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ACRPC UPDATE

Welcome New Staff Members!

The Regional Planning Commission is excited to welcome 3 new staff members starting in January 2025!

Please join us in welcoming new Staff Planners Danelle Birong from Vergennes, Rebecca Elder from Starksboro, and our new Energy Planner Jolyon Larson. More information about our new colleagues will be included in future newsletters.

[Staff Contact Info](#)

ANNOUNCEMENTS



ACRPC reappointed as Clean Water Service Provider for Water Quality Work

ACRPC has served as the Clean Water Service Provider for the Otter Creek Basin since July 2022. In December we were reappointed to that position for a five year term running through June 30, 2030. The CWSP has made significant progress in funding projects to achieve our assigned phosphorus reduction target.

The CWSP has had to overcome many challenges in making this progress towards our targets including working under draft (or in certain cases, non-existent) guidance, steep learning curves with partners learning phosphorus accounting methodologies, and only the recent ability to complete the verification necessary to adopt a limited suite of projects. DEC's cited ACRPC as being 'entrepreneurial, proactive, and a leader in looking for projects and solutions for reducing phosphorus loading in their basin.' We look forward to continuing to make progress in meeting the state's water quality goals.

If you are aware of any potential water quality projects, please reach out to Mike Winslow (mwinslow@acrpc.org) to see if the CWSP can help fund them.

CWSP Webpage

Energy Training: Best Practices in Residential Construction: Building Durable, Healthy, and Efficient Homes

This training presentation by Efficiency Vermont's Steve Spatz will take place Tuesday, Jan. 14, 8-11 a.m., in the Unity Hall of the Congregational Church of Middlebury.

Spatz, who has more than 20 years' experience with residential building systems, will discuss "hot topics" and best practices for residential new construction, including wall assemblies, air sealing and new products, such as wood fiber insulation. He will also review 2024 updates to Vermont's Residential Building Energy Standards and the required RBES Compliance Form.

The training caters to builders, contractors, and architects, but all are welcome to this free event, sponsored in conjunction with Efficiency Vermont. Bagels and coffee will be provided.

Road Foremen & Crew Training:

Rivers and Wetlands

10am-12pm, Wednesday January 15, 2025

**Addison County Regional Planning Commission:
14 Seminary St, Middlebury**

This training session will provide information to road crews and road foremen around regulations specifically for streams and wetlands. It will be led by District Wetland Ecologist Zapata Courage and River Management Engineer Josh Carvajal.

Email Mike Winslow



VCDA Winter Conference 2025 **Navigating Funding in the Post-Pandemic World**

Wednesday, January 15th, 9:00am-3:45pm
St Albans City Hall in St Albans, Vermont

Over the last four years, new funding sources have emerged to support countless projects and communities around the state. In addition to those new funding sources, we have also seen complexities, like higher than expected costs and capacity constraints.

Come and learn about how communities are finding success and creative solutions to fund their projects. Hear from compliance and technical assistance experts on how to navigate requirements and unearth new ways and resources for you and your community to tap into.

Don't miss this opportunity to connect with fellow community champions, gain valuable insights, and contribute to the collective work of building a brighter future for Vermont.

[Check out the website](#) for agenda and presenter information!

Conference Webpage

Register Here

GRANT & FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Municipal Planning Grants

Municipal Planning Grants help Vermont's cities, towns and villages adapt to change and prepare for the future. This flexible State funding for planning and resilience can pay for a variety of eligible projects, such as:

- [A new or updated municipal plan;](#)
- New or updated bylaws that that implement Act 47 of 2023 (HOME Act) and Act 181 of 2024 (Resilience, Biodiversity & Land Use Act), including **zoning & subdivision** bylaws;
- **Climate resilience and flood recovery projects;**
- Projects related to **housing** development;
- [New or updated capital programs and budgets for infrastructure maintenance and improvements;](#)
- [Physical improvement plans or other planning for a State Designation](#) in coordination with Department of Housing & Community Development program staff; and
- [Projects that support communities for all ages that align with Age Strong Vermont: A Roadmap for an Age-friendly State.](#)

Individual towns may apply for up to \$30,000, and multi-town applications (a consortium) may apply for up to \$45,000. A local cash match of 10% of the total project costs is required, except for zoning/subdivision bylaw projects in municipalities without zoning/subdivision bylaws.

Please review the [Program Description](#) for eligibility requirements and the [Application Guide](#) for application questions. A wide variety of municipalities access this funding, including the Vermont's [smallest towns](#).

Application Schedule for FY2025 Grants:

- Regional Planning Commission confirmation of municipal planning process (to be eligible to apply for projects other than a municipal plan): **December 31, 2024**
- Online application opens for use: **January 27, 2025**
- **Application Deadline: March 31 @ 6:00 p.m., 2025**
- Award Decisions: April 30, 2025
- Project completion: April 30, 2027 (2-year grant term to complete a project)

If you have any questions about the Municipal Planning Grants or wish to talk through project ideas, please contact ACRPC's Katie Raycroft-Meyer kraycroftmeyer@acrpc.org or 802-388-314

[Learn More](#)

Transportation Grants

**Downtown
Transportation Fund**

**Better Connections
Program**

The Department of Housing and Community Development is pleased to announce the availability of the Downtown Transportation Fund (DTF) to support revitalization efforts in Designated Downtowns and eligible Designated Village Centers.

Eligibility for Designated Village Centers

The Downtown Transportation Fund has expanded eligibility to Designated Village Centers that have participated in the **Better Connections Program** and Designated Village Centers within Chittenden County that have completed a comprehensive downtown/village center/community area planning process with public input, comparable to the Better Connections Program. See the program application for a full list of eligible municipalities.

Application Deadline:
February 17, 2025 @ 5:00 pm
Please note that the application includes a preliminary project review by Historic Preservation, which **must be submitted at least 30 days in advance** of the application deadline.

See the **2025 Downtown Transportation Fund Guidance and Application** for complete details of the program. The maximum grant amount is \$200,000 with a 20% match requirement.

Please contact Natalie Elvidge at **Natalie.Elvidge@vermont.gov** if you have questions or need assistance. Applicants are strongly encouraged to set up a pre-application meeting to discuss project ideas.

The Better Connections Program provides technical assistance and funds to local communities to help them achieve their goals and plan for growth. The program funds planning efforts to increase multi-modal transportation options and to improve land use, water quality, public health, and economic vitality in Vermont communities.

The Program is open to new applications biennially. A 10% local cash match is required. The Program funds physical plans focusing on:

- improved multimodal connectivity;
- active transportation and complete streets;
- access management;
- traffic calming;
- parking;
- wayfinding;
- rehabilitation of buildings;
- redevelopment of sites;
- housing;
- land use planning;
- stormwater management.

Important Dates:

- **January 24: Pre-Application Form and Meeting Deadline**
- **February 21: Application Deadline**

[Learn More](#)

[Learn More](#)

Energy

Notice of intent for Energy Improvements in Rural or Remote Areas

The Energy Improvements in Rural or Remote Areas FY 2024 (ERA) will provide up to \$400 million to spur innovative, community-focused clean energy solutions in rural and remote areas across the United States. This is an incredible opportunity for small towns and rural communities in Vermont! The ERA program plans to support the demonstration of energy technologies that provide clean, resilient, reliable, affordable power, while also aiming to increase local energy independence and economic development.

Eligible projects must address at least one of the following:

- Improving overall cost-effectiveness of energy generation
- Transmission, or distribution systems
- Siting or upgrading transmission and distribution lines
- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions from energy generation in rural or remote areas
- Providing or modernizing electric generation facilities
- Developing microgrids; or increasing energy efficiency

It is anticipated that there will be 16-69 projects, offering a range of funding from \$2–50 million each with a 5–50% minimum non-federal cost share per project.

Concept papers are due by February 27, 2025, and full applications are due by August 28, 2025.

Natural Resources

Vermont Urban and Community Forest Program Grants

Over \$430,000 will be available through two separate categories to support local tree planting and enhancement of healthy urban tree canopy in priority areas statewide. Both grant categories are now open and accepting applications. The two grant categories have the same application **deadline of January 10th, 2025** and neither have a cost-share requirement. However, the categories have different award amounts, geographic eligibility criteria, and are administered and supported by different entities.

Tree Maintenance & Removal Grants:

Supports local efforts to maintain a healthy urban tree canopy and address dead and high-risk trees in disadvantaged communities. \$119k available, min. \$5k, max \$20k

Community Tree Planting Grants:

Supports tree planting projects in high priority areas across Vermont to increase urban tree canopy and improve water quality and public health by controlling stormwater. \$315k available, min. \$5k, max \$75k

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ask us a question?

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