



RUTLAND REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

RRPC BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2024, 7:00 PM

MEETING DETAILS

Virtual: [Teams Meeting](#), ID: 224 634 587 902, Pass: dBEdSy | Call: 1-802-440-1368, ID: 641 278 173#

In-Person: 16 Evelyn Street, Second Floor, Rutland, VT 05701

MEETING AGENDA

- 7:00 CALL TO ORDER & INTRODUCTIONS
- 7:02 APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 22ND AGENDA [Page 1]
- 7:03 APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 17TH MINUTES [Page 2]
- 7:04 OPEN TO PUBLIC
- 7:05 EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT [Page 7]
- 7:10 REGIONAL PLAN REPORT [Page 8]
- 7:15 REGIONAL PLAN DRAFT POLICY FEEDBACK SESSION [Page 9]
- 8:30 REGIONAL COMMITTEE REPORT
- 8:35 EXECUTIVE/FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT
- 8:40 REGIONAL PARTNERS
- 8:45 EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS
- 8:50 COMMISSIONER ROUNDTABLE
- 9:00 ADJOURN

Questions? Need special accommodation?
Contact: Devon Neary, devon@rutlandrpc.org, (802) 775-0871.



RUTLAND REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

RRPC BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2024, 7:00 PM

MEETING DETAILS

Virtual: [Teams Meeting](#), ID: 224 634 587 902, Pass: dBEdSy | Call: 1-802-440-1368, ID: 641 278 173#

In-Person: 16 Evelyn Street, Second Floor, Rutland, VT 05701

MEETING ATTENDANCE

(x = in person) (v = virtual)

TOWN	NAME	
Benson	Cheryl Murray	
Brandon	Jack Schneider	X
Castleton	Liz Mackay (alt)	V
Chittenden		
Clarendon	Brownson Spencer	X
Danby	Michelle Bushee Andrea Stoddard (alt)	X X
Fair Haven	Jason Coupal	
Hubbardton	Robert Gibbs	X
Ira	Bob Kirbach	V
Killington	Will Austin	V
Mendon	Larry Courcelle	X
Middletown Springs	Steven Harrington	
Mount Holly	Jessica Metcalfe	V
Mount Tabor		
Pawlet	John Sabotka	V
Pittsford	Donna Wilson	X
Poultney	Sarah Pelkey	X
Proctor	Richard Horner	X

TOWN	NAME	
Rutland City	Michael Doenges	X
Rutland Town	David Rosenblum	X
Shrewsbury	Laura Black	X
Sudbury	Barbara Somson	V
Tinmouth	Robert Lloyd	
Wallingford	Erika Berner	X
Wells	Heather Thomas	X
West Haven	John Garrison	
West Rutland	Leona Minard	X
ACI-Natural Resources	Hilary Solomon	
Ex-Officio- CEDRR	Lyle Jepson	V
Ex-Officio- CEDRR	Cooper Babbit	
Ex-Officio- TAC		
Ex-Officio- RRWIB		

Guests: NA

Staff: Devon Neary, Mary Kay Skaza, Karen Hill, Greg Poelker-McKee, and Logan Solomon



RUTLAND REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES

1. PUBLIC HEARING

Chair Berner opened the public meeting for the Hubbardton Town Plan and Confirmation of Planning Process and the Fair Haven Town Plan and Confirmation of Planning Process at 7:00 PM. No public present. The public hearing closed at 7:01 PM.

2. CALL TO ORDER & INTRODUCTIONS

Meeting called to order by Chair Berner at 7:01 pm. Introductions were made.

3. APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 17th AGENDA

Motion to approve the September 17th agenda by Courcelle. Second by Doenges. Approved by voice vote.

4. APPROVAL OF JUNE 18th MINUTES

Motion to approve the June 18th minutes by Wilson. Second by Gibbs. Approved by voice vote.

5. OPEN TO PUBLIC

None present.

6. PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

Economic and Workforce Planner Greg Poelker-McKee presented the \$1.25 grant from Department of Labor Workforce Opportunities for Rural Communities (WORC) Program. The grant will support career pathways through a bridge model and support workforce development for high school seniors, students seeking GEDs, and New Americans in the trades. The three-year program will create a coalition between the Rutland Region Workforce Investment Board, Stafford Technical Center, Vermont Dept. of Labor, and adult education to partner with local employers like Casella and Naylor & Breen to train, connect, temporarily employ, and interview program participants. The grant will start October 1, 2024 with a small cohort for year one as a pilot.

7. JUNE and JULY 2024 FINANCIALS

Mary Kay Skaza reviewed the June and July 2024 Financials. Report for informational purposes only.

8. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The RRPC was awarded a \$1.25 million grant from the Department of Labor – Workforce Opportunities for Rural Communities (WORC) Program. Over the next three years, the grant will support job growth in critical sectors across the Region, focusing specifically on the fields of infrastructure, construction, and clean energy. The ‘bridge model’ program will create partnerships between schools, workforce groups, and businesses to build pathways to employment.



RUTLAND REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

The RRPC is launching Phase 2 of public engagement that will run from September-November. Phase 2, titled Report Back, will seek input from the public on how Phase 1, Learn and Assess, influenced the draft policies of the plan. The engagement will include 27 town presentations, 5 pop-up events, 2 hybrid feedback sessions, and a public survey. For the survey and a complete list of upcoming events, check out rutlandrpc.org/plan2026.

MERP implementation funding applications are now available. Funding will be available for high energy burdened towns, of which we have 9 towns, 1 village, and 1 fire district. The program was recently updated to allow for all towns with completed energy assessment to also apply for implementation funding.

RRPC is working on several town planning efforts: enhanced energy plans in Killington, Pittsford, Middletown Springs, and Tinmouth; town plans in Clarendon, Benson, Tinmouth, Middletown Springs, and Wells; zoning bylaws in Brandon, Pittsford, Mendon, and Poultney; forecasting subdivision regulations in Pittsford, Fair Haven, and Proctor; and forecasting neighborhood development areas in Brandon and Fair Haven.

VTrans Better Roads Category A grants are now available. The RRPC is planning to update road erosion inventories with half in FY25 and the other half in FY26.

RRPC is working on updates to four local hazard mitigation plans in Middletown Springs, Rutland Town, Rutland City, and Fair Haven. The RRPC is planning to bid on the LHMP for Benson as well.

Devon attended the VAPDA annual retreat in Lyndonville on September 12/13, after which he will officially transition to Chair of VAPDA.

Devon is working on a new RRPC Commissioners Handbook.

9. REGIONAL COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee Chair Minard provided the Regional Committee report. The committee reviewed three minor Act 250 applications. No action was taken. See Regional Committee minutes for more information.

10. COMMUNITY COMMITTEE REPORT

The Community Committee reviewed Fair Haven and Hubbardton Town Plans. **Motion by Gibbs to approve Hubbardton Town Plan and Confirmation of Planning Process and the Fair Haven Town Plan and Confirmation of Planning Process.** Second by Courcelle. Approved by voice vote.



RUTLAND REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

11. EXECUTIVE/FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

FY25 BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING SCHEDULE

Motion by Rosenblum to accept the proposed FY25 RRPC Board of Commissioners Meeting Schedule. Second by Doenges. Approved by voice vote.

FY26 MEMBER DUES

Neary provided an overview of the proposed FY26 member dues that included a memorandum, statewide dues analysis, and draft dues policy. The memo lays out that the current “flat fee” model, \$1,000 per town, is inequitable for our small towns. In addition, the current model includes modest increases of only \$25 every few years, which no longer supports the budget and programmatic increases at the RRPC. Ideally, the member dues will contribute to 3% of the budget and the current dues only contribute to about 1% of the budget. The new proposal is a formula-based approach of \$1.00 per capita, which is still much lower than the rest of the state. The committee discussed the pros and cons of this change, with most concerned about the “sticker shock” by Towns seeing a substantial change from FY25 to FY26. Commissioners agreed the new model was more equitable and the funding increase justified but were worried about the reaction from towns. Commissioners recommended that more information was given to towns to explain the change, how the funding would increase services, and what value the RRPC is to the towns now. **Motion by Rosenblum to adopt the formula based, per capita rate structure with the rate of \$1.00 per resident, based on the 2020 census, for FY26. Second by Bushee. Approved by majority voice vote.** (Castleton, Pittsford, and Clarendon opposed)

BROWNFIELDS POLICY and ASSOCIATED BYLAW AMENDMENTS

Neary provided an overview of the proposed Brownfields Policy to formalize the RRPC project intake, bring transparency to the program, and to bring the program under the RRPC Board of Commissioners as a standing committee. **Motion by Pelkey to adopt the Brownfields Policy and RRPC Bylaw amendment as presented. Second by Spencer. Approved by voice vote.**

12. REGIONAL PARTNERS

No report.

13. EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

No report.

14. COMMISSIONER ROUNDTABLE

No roundtable.



RUTLAND REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

15. ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn by Rosenblum. Second by Wilson. Adjourned at 8:48 PM.

Respectively submitted by Karen Hill

DRAFT



RUTLAND REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2024

Economic and Workforce Development Planner, Greg Poelker, has decided to step away from the RRPC and has given two weeks' notice. October 25th will be the last day. Please help us thank Greg for all his great work at the RRPC!

The RRPC has interviewed for the Senior Planner position.

The RRPC is in full audit season mode. As a result, no financials for October. Mary Kay and Karen have been working hard to get the materials to the auditor by the end of the month. The RRPC board will need to vote to accept the audit results at the December 9th board meeting/holiday party.

FY26 membership dues memos were sent to the towns on 10/11. All Commissioners were cc'd on that email notification. Please help spread the word and let Devon know if he needs to speak directly with a town selectboard.

RRPC received two grants to establish Neighborhood Development Areas in the Towns of Brandon and Fair Haven.

The RRPC is teaming up with CEDRR to solicit economic and community development projects that will transform the region's economy! The top 10 projects will advance to the Priority Project List which will be used by federal, state, and regional entities to understand and fund needs in the Region. Please submit your project ideas or inquiries by November 15th to Cooper Babbitt: cooper@rutlandeconomy.com.

The Recreational Trails Program and VOREC Community Grant Program are now open! The Recreational Trails Program provides annual funding to Vermont communities for the development and restoration of public recreational trails. The VOREC Community Grant Program is intended to fund community projects that leverage outdoor recreation, which VOREC defines as leisure, sport and therapeutic recreation activities pursued outdoors, mainly in a natural setting.



RUTLAND REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

REGIONAL PLAN STATUS REPORT

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2024

DRAFTING PROCESS

- Task 2 Rev 2 is complete.

REVIEW PROCESS

- Regional Plan Committee is currently reviewing the first full drafts of chapters.
- Regional Plan Committee has reviewed all 10 chapter drafts.

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

- Marketing launch started on September 9th and includes, newsletter, email blasts, front porch forum, press releases, town newsletters, flyers, radio, PEGTV, and more.
- Staff continue to present to all 27 town selectboards.
- Staff have held 3 pop-up events throughout the Region.
- RRPC hosted its first public feedback session with a minimal turnout on September 25th. Despite the small turnout, there was a deep discussion with the participants.
- Feedback Session #2 is scheduled for October 30th – PLEASE HELP SPREAD THE WORD!
- Phase 2 Public Survey is live and currently has 150 responses.

PLAN LAYOUT/GRAPHIC DESIGN

- GIS Planner continues to work with the design consultant data visualization and mapping.

RUTLAND REGIONAL PLAN

2026



PHASE 1

PHASE 2

PHASE 3

REPORT BACK

2026 Rutland Regional Plan Feedback Session

This Feedback Session is one of our Phase 2, Report Back, community engagement events.

For more information visit: rutlandrpc.org/plan2026

Phase 2

GOALS

We're at the mid-point in the plan development process and need your continued engagement to ensure we're on the right track!

1 Share with you what we learned from you in Phase 1

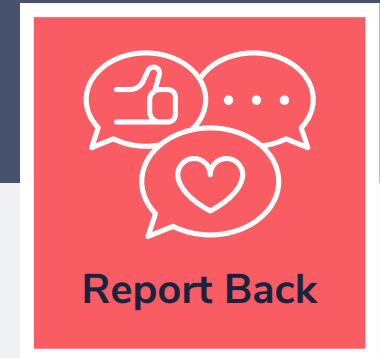
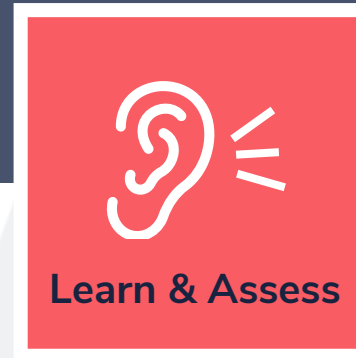
We've summarized the key takeaways from Phase 1 by chapter. We're reporting back to you what we heard....

2 Seek your thoughts on the Plan's draft policies

The Regional Plan's policies are an expression of how the RRPC will meet the region's goals for community economic development. We want to hear from you about the draft policies....

**Do you agree with the direction of the draft policy?
Is something missing that we should consider?**

Feedback Session OVERVIEW



Chapter Introductions

First glimpse at the Regional Plan chapters and plan goals

Phase 1: Learn & Assess Recap

Summary of what we heard from you in Phase 1

Plan Draft Policies

How what we heard from you in Phase 1 helped inform the Plan's draft policies

What is the Rutland Regional Plan?

A comprehensive 8-year (2026-2034) plan to guide and accomplish coordinated and efficient community economic development in the region that balances economic development with social, cultural, and environmental priorities.

LAND USE



GOALS

Maintain historic settlement pattern of compact village-urban center separated by rural countryside

In the Land Use chapter, we...

outline a vision for vibrant compact centers separated by rural countryside.

The chapter describes current land use patterns and planning opportunities, as well as provides a regional Future Land Use map that can be used as a planning tool to encourage land use patterns that will achieve the character and quality of life that is important to the region.

Phase 1

What we heard...

- Focus future growth in downtown districts and village centers.
- Improve the walkability of towns.
- Preserve and conserve the region's natural landscape.
- Expand trail networks in the region.

LAND USE



Maintain historic settlement pattern of compact village-urban center separated by rural countryside

How Phase 1 input helped inform the Plan's draft policies...

- **Policy 1:** Increase infill development, redevelopment, and adaptive reuse of underutilized properties within Planned Growth Areas, Village Areas, Transition/Infill Areas, and Enterprise Areas.
- **Policy 2:** Stop strip development and development of blocks of land that contain: significant natural and agricultural resources, areas of high flood risk, comprise resource industries, and provide outdoor recreation/scenic beauty.
- **Policy 3:** Most development outside Planned Growth Areas and Village Areas is clustered or otherwise designed to work with the landscape in terms of protection of ecologically sensitive areas, and conservation of farmland and agricultural soils.
- **Policy 4:** Most public investments are in Planned Growth Areas and Village Areas that are clustered, or area a part of a cluster of buildings.
- **Policy 5:** Ensure the scale, siting, design, and management of new development is orderly by respecting the character of the natural and built environment.

HOUSING



Provide for high-quality, diverse, safe, affordable, conveniently located, and energy-efficient housing in the region

In the Housing chapter, we...

outline a vision for high-quality, safe, diverse, affordable, conveniently located, and energy-efficient housing.

The chapter describes current conditions based on our research and public engagement, as well as trends that are shaping the future of housing development.

Phase 1

What we heard...

- Affordable housing and a lack of housing in the region are significant issues.
- Need to address homelessness and the lack of rental units.
- Need to restore old, blighted housing stock.
- Frustrations voiced regarding Act 250 and development restrictions in the state.

HOUSING



Provide for high-quality, diverse, safe, affordable, conveniently located, and energy-efficient housing in the region

How Phase 1 input helped inform the Plan's draft policies...

- **Policy 1:** Target housing growth, programs, and incentives that result in people spending no more than 30% of their income on housing and not more than 15% on transportation.
- **Policy 2:** Promote construction and renovation practices, and universal design principles, that result in high-quality, energy-efficient, and safe homes that meet the needs of all.
- **Policy 3:** Create diverse homes, with varying numbers of bedrooms, and at a price point affordable for households with varying incomes.
- **Policy 4:** Locate housing growth primarily in Planned Growth and Village Areas.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



GOALS

Provide for a strong and diverse regional economy

In the Economic Development chapter, we...

outline a vision for a strong and diverse regional economy.

The chapter describes current conditions based on our research and public engagement, as well as trends that are shaping the future of economic development in the Region.

Phase 1

What we heard...

- Focus future growth in downtown districts and village centers.
- Attract new businesses and employment opportunities to diversify the tax base.
- Recruit new workers and retain younger adults.
- Expand industrial/manufacturing and trade career opportunities.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



GOALS

Provide for a strong and diverse regional economy

How Phase 1 input helped inform the Plan's draft policies...

- **Policy 1:** Focus future growth in downtown districts and village centers.
- **Policy 2:** Attract new businesses and employment opportunities to diversify the tax base.
- **Policy 3:** Recruit new workers and retain younger adults.
- **Policy 4:** Expand industrial/manufacturing and trade career opportunities.

CULTURAL RESOURCES



GOALS

Identify, protect, and promote important historic, cultural, archeological, and scenic features and resources.

In the Cultural Resources chapter, we...

detail a path forward for preserving and enhancing our region's identity, which is deeply rooted in its historical, cultural, archaeological, and scenic resources.

We dive into the how the insights from our public engagement and research inform and substantiate the policies and actions to be completed by the RRPC to achieve our goals of sustaining and enriching our cultural resources. Ensuring that the values, compromises, and accomplishments of hundreds of years of development and conservation continue to guide us.

Phase 1

What we heard...

- Most frequently mentioned resources that people value were Downtown districts, water recreation sites, and parks and trail systems.
- Natural landscape was a frequently noted cultural and scenic resource.
- Strong desire for more annual festivals, especially pride festivals and centers.
- Including certain historic or culturally significant topics in school curriculum was recommended as a way to pass on our region's history.

CULTURAL RESOURCES



GOALS

Identify, protect, and promote important historic, cultural, archeological, and scenic features and resources.

How Phase 1 input helped inform the Plan's draft policies...

- **Policy 1:** Preserve and restore historic buildings.
- **Policy 2:** Strengthen the intra-organizational relationships and volunteer capacity of historical societies in the region.
- **Policy 3:** Recognize arts and culture as essential infrastructure for healthy, equitable, and resilient communities.
- **Policy 4:** Prioritize the identification and preservation of scenic resources.

TRANSPORTATION



GOALS

Provide for safe, convenient, economic, and energy efficient regional transportation systems.

In the Transportation chapter, we...

outline a vision for a safe, convenient, economic, and energy efficient regional transportation system.

The chapter describes current conditions based on our research and public engagement, as well as trends that are shaping the future of multimodal transportation systems.

Phase 1

What we heard...

- Deep need for increased road maintenance and upkeep.
- Expanded and better maintained sidewalks and bike paths.
- Driving and walking are highly valued.
- Calls for better public transit schedules, routes, and accessibility.
- While many people said they felt safe traveling on roads in the region, they felt safety would be improved by reducing vehicle speeds.

TRANSPORTATION



GOALS

Provide for safe, convenient, economic, and energy efficient regional transportation systems.

How this input helped inform the Plan's draft policies...

- **Policy 1:** Increase implementation of Complete Streets infrastructure on both Town and State roadways.
- **Policy 2:** Improve resiliency of regional transportation systems for increased extreme weather events.
- **Policy 3:** Increase the development of infrastructure that supports transition to electric vehicles.
- **Policy 4:** Ensure the provision of convenient and cost-effective public transit services that connect residential clusters with rail stations, employment, recreation, medical services, and shopping.
- **Policy 5:** Apply principles of systemic safety to regional roadway systems.
- **Policy 6:** Protect airport airspace and runway clearance for Rutland Southern Vermont Regional Airport through local land use and town planning.
- **Policy 7:** Increase passenger rail ridership and encourage expansion of rail service in the region.
- **Policy 8:** Increase the share of regional freight tonnage that travels by rail.
- **Policy 9:** Increase development within existing built-up areas with multimodal infrastructure.

ENHANCED ENERGY



GOALS

Reduce greenhouse gas emissions, provide for renewable energy, and make efficient use of energy.

The Enhanced Energy chapter is written to...

guide the Rutland Region in developing an equitable, healthy, and resilient energy system.

In addition to creating a planning guide for the region, the RRPC will seek certification of this plan from the Public Service Department. Once certified this Regional Enhanced Energy Plan will enable the RRPC to certify municipal Enhanced Energy Plans. A certified Enhanced Energy Plan affords regions and towns heightened legal abilities to plan and direct the development of their energy systems.

Phase 1

What we heard...

- There is strong support to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels and begin looking at renewable energy options.
- People said it's important to do their part in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- Strong preference for solar energy as compared to other renewable sources.
- Many expressed significant concern for the high cost of energy, followed by concern about the climate impacts of energy use.
- Most desired energy projects among homeowners are weatherization and heat pumps.

ENHANCED ENERGY



GOALS

Reduce greenhouse gas emissions, provide for renewable energy, and make efficient use of energy.

How Phase 1 input helped inform the Plan's draft policies...

- **Policy 1:** Demonstrate regional leadership by implementing efficiency and fuel switching actions.
- **Policy 2:** Promote adoption of Enhanced Energy Plans to all municipalities in the region.
- **Policy 3:** Ensure Regional Enhanced Energy Plan is equitable.
- **Policy 4:** Prevent forest fragmentation and preserve priority forest blocks.
- **Policy 5:** Educate individuals and organizations about energy conservation.
- **Policy 6:** Increase building efficiency, climate resilience, and safety.
- **Policy 7:** Switch from fossil fuels to sustainable alternatives for heating and cooling and transportation.
- **Policy 8:** Provide education about transportation energy conservation and combustion alternatives.
- **Policy 9:** Decrease single occupancy vehicle trips.
- **Policy 10:** Maintain existing and develop new walking and biking infrastructure.
- **Policy 11:** Ensure energy generation siting adheres to orderly development.
- **Policy 12:** Review Act 250 permits for energy efficiency and Section 248 applications to meet renewable targets.
- **Policy 13:** Maximize potential for renewable generation on preferred locations.

WORKING LANDS



GOALS

Encourage and strengthen agricultural and forest industries.

In the Working Lands chapter, we...

outline a vision for encouraging and strengthening our agricultural and forest industries.

While the look of agriculture and forestry has changed significantly since the 1800s, these occupations remain an integral part of what makes our region what it is today. Without farming we would not have open rolling fields or one of our durable economic drivers. However, maintaining our working landscape and the occupations and businesses it supports is not a given. To keep it sustainable – now and in the future – there are challenges to address. Since the decline of dairy farms, farmers in Rutland County are pivoting to produce a wide variety of crops and products.

Phase 1

What we heard...

- High demand for locally sourced foods, including farmers market, community gardens, and community supported agriculture (CSAs).
- Strong agricultural system in Vermont provides access to locally sourced foods and preserves farmland.

WORKING LANDS



GOALS

Encourage and strengthen agricultural and forest industries.

How Phase 1 input helped inform the Plan's draft policies...

- **Policy 1:** Stop the loss of farmland and forestland to development.
- **Policy 2:** Ensure that the working landscape (agriculture, forestry, and value-added production) is a strong asset for the region's economy.
- **Policy 3:** Ensure that the working landscape (agriculture, forestry, and value-added production) improves the health of residents.
- **Policy 4:** Enhance the health and diversity of the region's ecosystems to benefit local agriculture and forestry.

NATURAL RESOURCES



GOALS

Maintain and improve quality of natural resources.
Provide for wise and efficient use of natural and earth resources.

In the Natural Resources chapter, we...

outline a vision for maintaining and improving the quality of natural resources and for providing for the wise and efficient use of natural and earth resources.

Retaining the rural character of our region is extremely important to our residents. At the core of our natural landscape and rural character are our extraordinary natural resources which are also key to our economic, ecological, and physical well-being.

Phase 1

What we heard...

- Protecting the natural landscape was one of the most important and agreed upon topics.
- Water resources and forests are cherished.
- Improve accessibility for beginners and persons with disabilities to natural resource sites.

NATURAL RESOURCES



GOALS

Maintain and improve quality of natural resources.
Provide for wise and efficient use of natural and earth resources.

How Phase 1 input helped inform the Plan's draft policies...

- **Policy 1:** Safeguard groundwater and other local drinking water sources to ensure they are safe for the public.
- **Policy 2:** Ensure that all surface waters in the Rutland Region are of high quality, free of pollutants and toxins, and suitable for recreation and aquatic life.
- **Policy 3:** Attain no net loss of wetland acreage.
- **Policy 4:** Increase the amount of protected shoreline buffers and riparian areas in the region.
- **Policy 5:** Maintain water quality to sustain existing aquatic communities and to ensure the natural diversity of aquatic species.
- **Policy 6:** Create a regional approach to maintaining and restoring the health of forest blocks, forest fragmentation, wildlife corridors, habitats, and biodiversity, and for conserving land in alignment with the Vermont Conservation Plan to protect 30% of the state by 2030 and 50% by 2050.
- **Policy 7:** Be proactive about local air quality during summer ozone and winter inversion episodes by monitoring the State's data to address those at most risk: people with heart or lung diseases (including asthma), older adults, children, and people of lower socioeconomic status.
- **Policy 8:** Encourage the reduction of nighttime light levels to improve the health of residents and wildlife and to promote dark sky astro-tourism.
- **Policy 9:** Promote safe and clean mineral extraction methods if appropriately managed and the public interest is clearly benefitted.

FACILITIES & UTILITIES



GOALS

Broaden access to educational and vocational training; Maintain and enhance recreational opportunities; Plan for, finance, and provide efficient system of public facilities and services; Ensure availability of safe and affordable childcare.

In the Facilities and Public Utilities chapter, we...

outline a vision for a Region that 1) broadens access to educational and vocational opportunities, 2) maintains and enhances recreational opportunities, 3) plans for, finances, and provides an efficient system of public facilities and services, and 4) ensures the availability of safe and affordable childcare.

This chapter describes current conditions based on our research and public engagement, as well as trends that are shaping the future of education, recreation, childcare, and facility and utility services in the Region.

Phase 1

What we heard...

- Affordable childcare is one of the most highly desired community facilities.
- Extend and improve connections for hiking and biking trail networks in the region.
- Some support for more indoor and outdoor recreation facilities; more public safety (police, EMS, etc.); more community events and gathering places - such as a movie theater.
- People feel there are limited options for community events and gathering places.
- Improve mental health and substance abuse resource facilities.

FACILITIES & UTILITIES



GOALS

Broaden access to educational and vocational training; Maintain and enhance recreational opportunities; Plan for, finance, and provide efficient system of public facilities and services; Ensure availability of safe and affordable childcare.

How Phase 1 input helped inform the Plan's draft policies...

- **Policy 1:** The scale and type of facilities and utilities shall support existing and future development, consistent with the future land use in this Plan.
- **Policy 2:** Water, Wastewater, and Stormwater utilities shall be expanded, upgraded, and maintained in an economically and environmentally sustainable manner to serve areas designated in this Plan.
- **Policy 3:** Municipal offices, garages, libraries, and other facilities should be constructed, maintained, or upgraded to serve the diverse needs of the community.
- **Policy 4:** Municipal shared services and resources should be considered to improve quality and reduce costs.
- **Policy 5:** Solid waste districts and transfer stations should be coordinated to reduce costs and waste to improve efficiency and sustainability.
- **Policy 6:** Telecommunications infrastructure and service area shall be expanded to unserved and underserved permanent residents while protecting the scenic and natural resources.
- **Policy 7:** Energy transmission lines and substations shall be constructed to provide resilient and reliable energy while avoiding critical natural resources.
- **Policy 8:** The construction, maintenance, and marketing of recreational trails, parks, and water resources is encouraged for all user types.
- **Policy 9:** School construction, consolidation, and renovation should increase efficiency, reduce tax burdens, and improve equitable education.
- **Policy 10:** Workforce programming and capacity shall be expanded in critical sectors like education, healthcare, and trades.
- **Policy 11:** The regional network of childcare facilities and providers should be expanded to meet the current and future workforce needs in areas designated in this Plan.
- **Policy 12:** Access to healthcare, mental health services, and recovery treatment should be centered on advancing health equity.

CLIMATE RESILIENCE



GOALS

Encourage climate resilient communities.

In the Climate Resilience chapter, we...

outline a vision for a Regionwide climate resilient community.

This chapter describes current conditions based on our research and public engagement, as well as trends that are shaping the future of our changing climate and our ability to adapt.

Phase 1

What we heard...

- Many people do not feel the region is prepared for natural disasters.
- Calls for flood prevention infrastructure.
- Concerns over changing winters negatively affecting winter recreation.
- Flooding and temperature fluctuation were the highest climate-related concerns.

CLIMATE RESILIENCE



GOALS

Encourage climate resilient communities.

How Phase 1 input helped inform the Plan's draft policies...

- **Policy 1:** Assist municipalities in understanding their vulnerabilities and strategies to bolster resilience to climate change.
- **Policy 2:** Prepare municipalities for longer duration, higher temperature heatwaves.
- **Policy 3:** Implement more natural systems-based projects that will help moderate the impacts of climate change.
- **Policy 4:** Increase social cohesion to bolster community resilience during and after extreme weather events or disasters.

Learn More & Share Your Thoughts



rutlandrpc.org/plan2026



plan2026@rutlandrpc.org

Together we're crafting a collaborative guide for a healthy, equitable, and resilient region with strategies to achieve coordinated and efficient community economic development.