

# **VLCT's New Local Government Nerd Helps Members Operate!**



*Kathleen Ramsay was born and raised in Vermont, earned her BA in Political Science from UVM, and has spent most of her career as a Town Administrator or Town Manager – four years in Massachusetts and the rest in Vermont – in various places near the Appalachian mountain range. Kathleen recently left the position of Middlebury Town Manager to embark on this new career. We at VLCT are delighted to have her join our staff.*

## **What interested you about working for VLCT?**

As a municipal manager, I had worked closely with most of VLCT's staff for many years – including several for nearly 30 years! So, when I saw the job posting for the Municipal Operations Specialist, a new position created to provide one-on-one service to local government officials, I saw a terrific opportunity to work with an exceptional team, while using my experience to support town officials across the state!

## **What do you want members to know about your work at VLCT?**

The new [Municipal Operations Support department](#) – consisting of Katie Buckley, Municipal Operations Support Director; Marguerite Ladd, Government Finance Specialist; Bonnie Waninger, Project & Funding Specialist; and me, Municipal Operations Specialist – is available to help answer general operations and finance questions, help develop projects, and help find funding for projects. Notice the “help” in the description: we help to research options and resources for municipalities – and leave decision making up to local officials.



## **What are you working on at VLCT? What most excites you about this position?**

First off, I have been working on program design and building partnerships with other VLCT departments and external organizations. I have also started reaching out to communities to increase awareness of this new support position and also learn about issues local officials are currently grappling with – so we can research solutions and provide options for municipalities to consider. Chances are strong that if one municipality is struggling with an issue, many are, so it would be great to develop resource materials to add to VLCT's extensive online library of helpful documents.

What excites me about this position? My mantra is “helping good people do good things for good people!” and this position certainly fills that bill!

## **Tell us a little bit about yourself, your interests, a fun fact about you, etc.**

Well, let's face it, I'm a local government nerd! Everywhere I go, I'm looking for ideas to make our communities better and to serve our residents better. That's why most of my travel photos feature municipal parks and facilities (especially public bathrooms), downtown signage and decoration, and “extra” roadway features (such as bike lanes, pavement markings, curbs, and special sidewalks).

A couple of fun facts:



- I have photos of me in front of a lot of town and city halls! The photo above was taken at the Madison (Wisconsin) Municipal Building.
- My husband and I took a cross-country motorcycle tour in June of 2024, with no reservations or plans other than "travel from Phoenix, AZ to Vermont in two weeks (or so)". If you want a few laughs, ask me about it sometime.

## **If you had an unlimited budget, what would you most want to focus on in your work?**

Building partnerships to extend the reach, effectiveness, and sustainability of our programs.

## **How are you committed to justice, diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in your work?**

I act on my commitment by:

- looking for opportunities to communicate to the larger community (such as a community-wide e-mail list, which is used in several municipalities);
- soliciting and welcoming feedback through community surveys; and



- looking for non-traditional ways for community members to take part in local government other than evening meetings.

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