

# Legislative Updates to Planning and Land Use for More Homes in Vermont

Vermont League of Cities & Towns  
Planning & Zoning Forum  
Fairlee, Vermont  
October 17, 2024

**Jacob Hemmerick**, Planning & Policy Manager  
Community Planning & Revitalization

**Pete Gill**, Executive Director  
Natural Resources Board



# Community Planning & Revitalization Division

## *What we do*

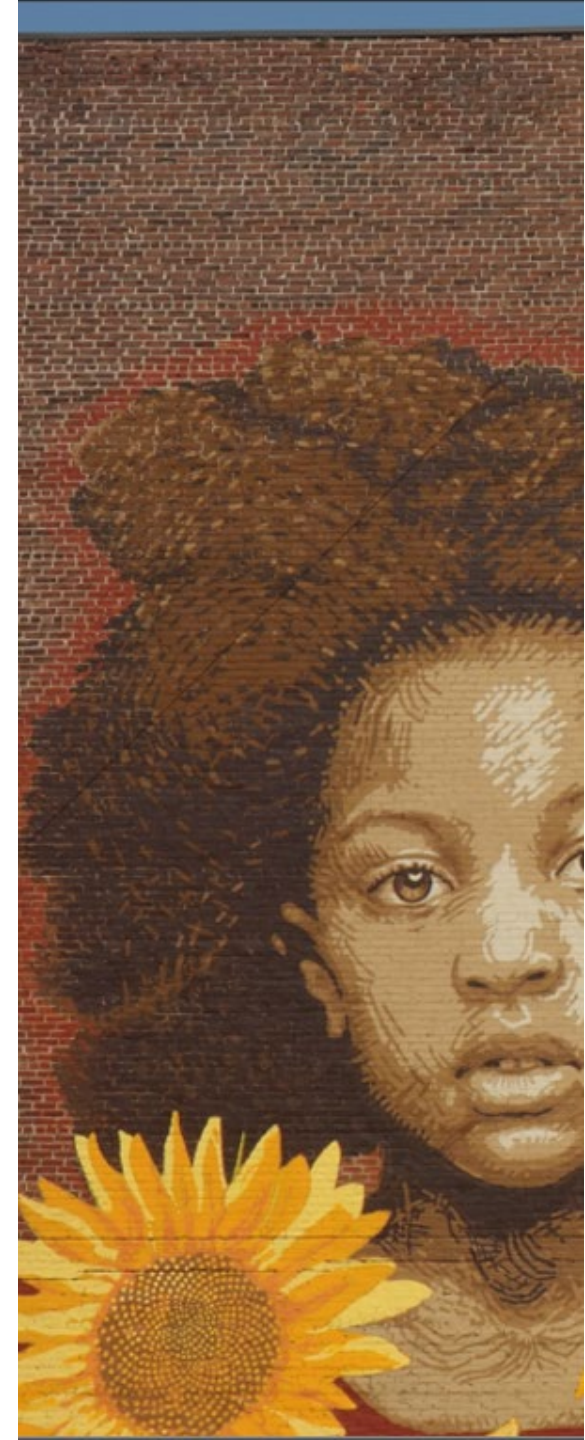
The CP+R team uses a collaborative, place-based approach to land-use planning and community development that empowers state and local leaders to plan for and build vibrant, inclusive, and resilient downtowns, villages, and neighborhoods.



# Community Planning & Revitalization Division

## *How we do it*

- Outreach & Training
- Technical Advice
- Grant Programs
- State Designations
- Community Investment Board
- Special Projects
- Policy & Program Improvement
- Partnerships





# Natural Resources Board | Act 250

## *What we do*

Administer the Act 250 state land use program to ensure subdivision and development adhere to 32 criteria and sub-criteria to address and minimize impacts to our shared landscape including natural resources, public and private investments, and working lands, and infrastructure.



# Natural Resources Board | Act 250

## *How we do it*

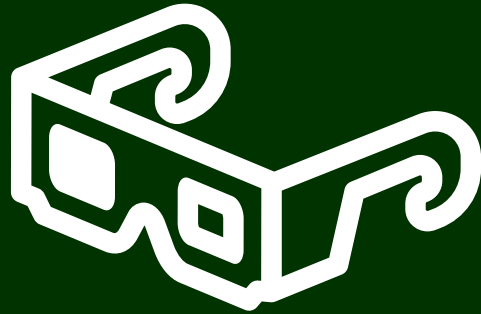
- Quasi-judicial process
- Issue Land Use Permits (300-400 / year)
- Involve the public, state agencies, municipal and regional planners.
- Conserve farmland, habitat, rivers and streams, transportation impact assessments
- Training, Rulemaking and Guidance
- Enforcement



# Contents

# Act 47 of 2023 | HOME Act

The Big Picture



# HOME Act

More direct investments to housing

- For homebuilding
- For renovation
- To ease high construction costs

More permissive regulatory approaches to housing

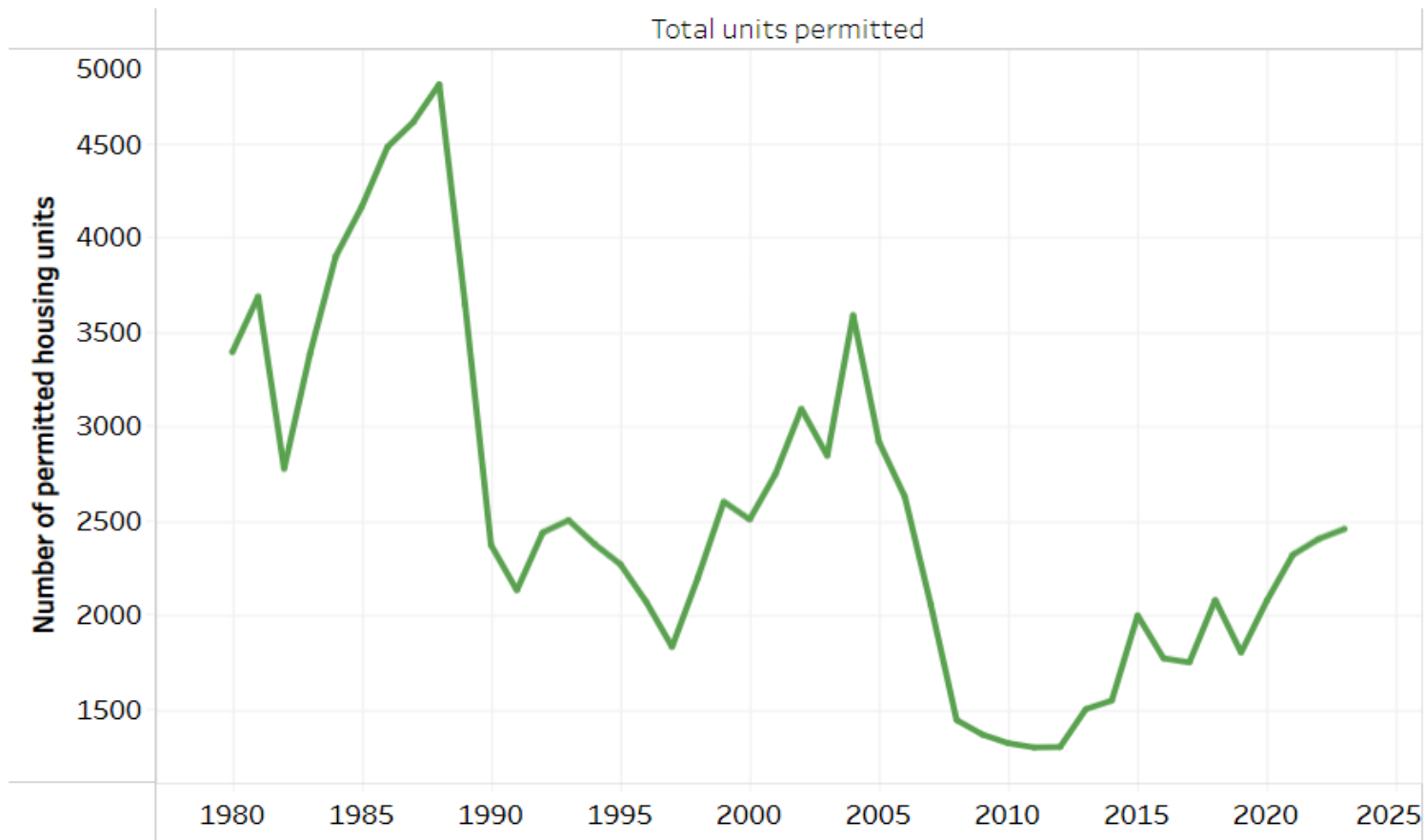
- For additional developable places
- Reduced time, expense, and risk





# Underproduction

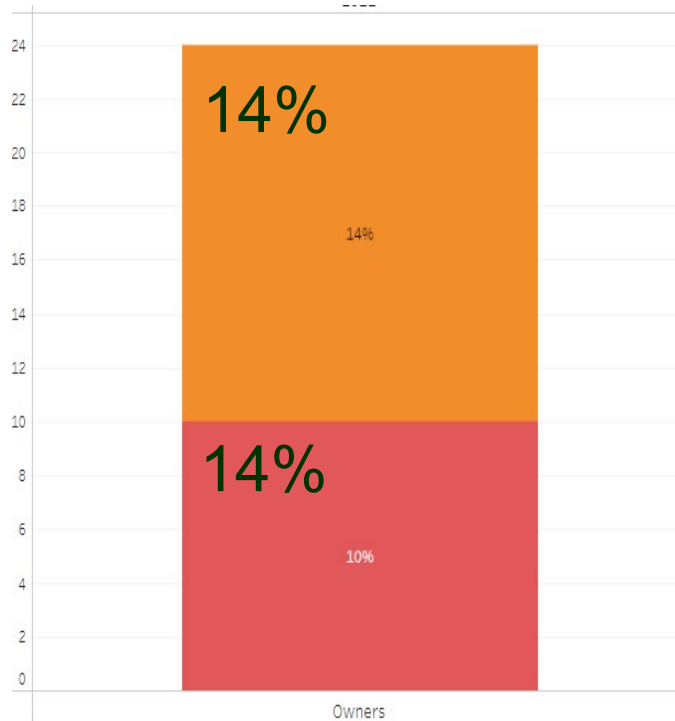
*Overall, fewer homes being permitted & built*



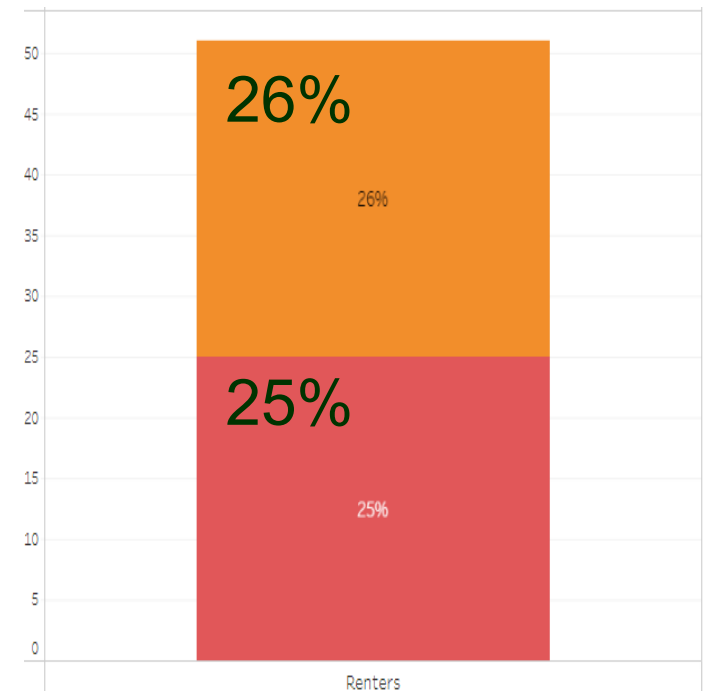
# High Rates of Cost Burden

*Vermonters struggling with housing costs*

**VT Homeowner Cost Burden as of 2022**



**VT Renter Cost Burden as of 2022**

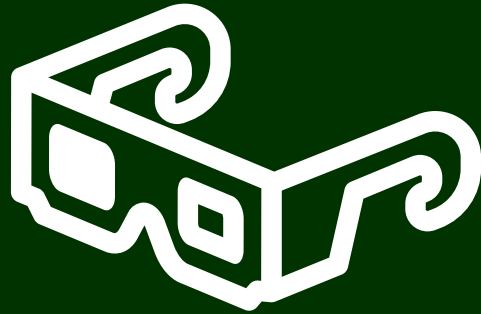


Cost burdened = 30% of income

Severe cost burdened = 50% of income

# Act 181 of 2024

The Big Picture



# Landmark Legislation

## *New Times Lead to New Methods*

- 1900s Village Incorporations/Improvement Societies
- 1921 Vermont Planning Act
- 1928 Standard City Planning Enabling Act (Coolidge)
- 1960s Robust Mid-Century State Planning
- 1968 Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act 250
- 1970 Act 200 Growth Management & Regional Planning
- 1998 Downtown Development Act
- 2024 Act 181



# Act 181 Asks Again What | Where | How

*Today's thinking is very different  
than mid-century thinking.*

## Policies

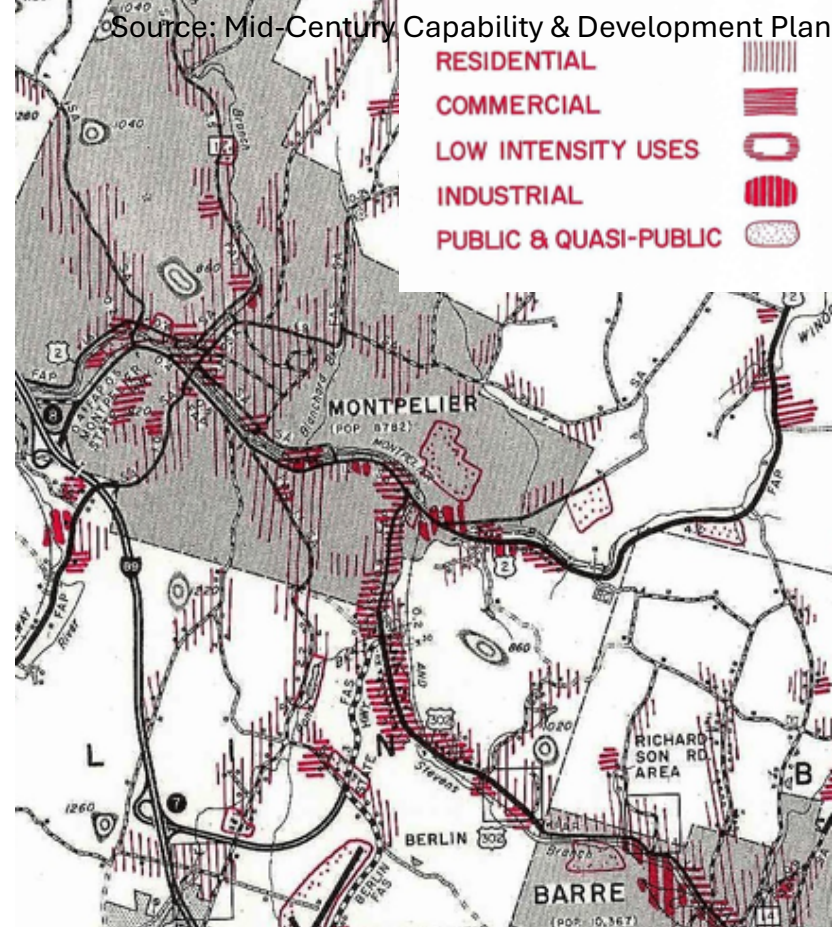
- What policies: smart growth & conservation.

## Maps

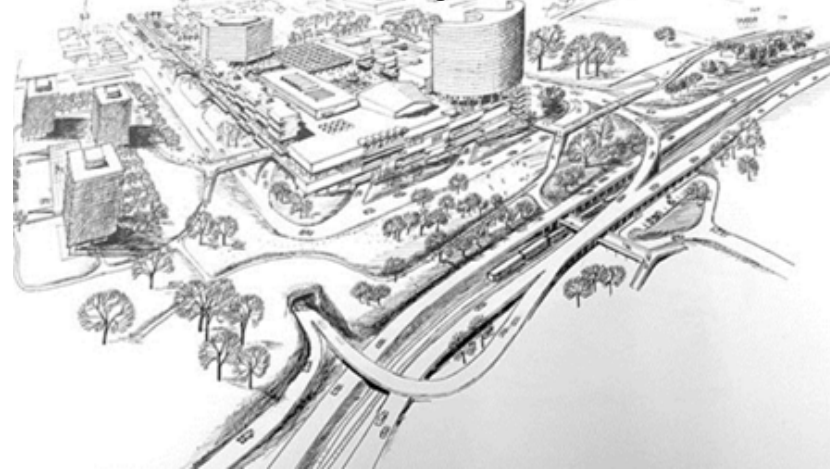
- Where does development best meet our policies: places to grow, evolve, maintain

## Criteria

- How does development best meet our policies



Source: Burlington Horizon Document. 196





# Policies | What

*Mostly stable*

## Smart Growth

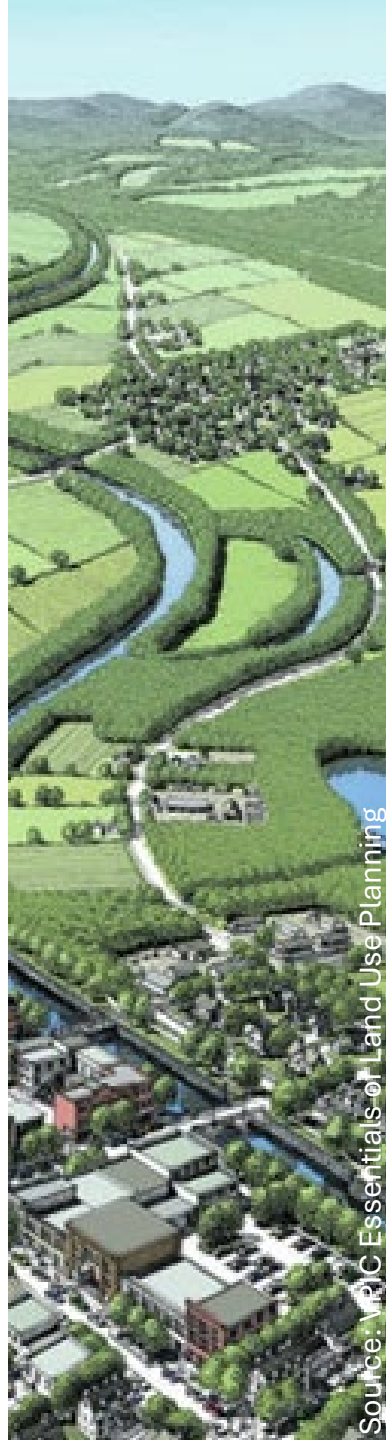
'To plan development so as to maintain the historic settlement pattern of compact village and urban centers separated by rural countryside.' 24 V.S.A. 4302

## Conservation

'30 percent of Vermont's total land area conserved by 2030, and 50 percent of the State's total land area conserved by 2050.' 10 V.S.A. 2802

## For Good Outcomes

Efficiency, environment, climate, economy, convenience, and prosperity



Source: V.P.C. Essentials of Land Use Planning

SMART GROWTH TYPICAL SUBURBAN



Smart growth development

**costs 1/3 less**

for upfront infrastructure.

Smart growth development saves an average of 38 percent on upfront costs for new construction of roads, sewers, water lines and other infrastructure.



Smart growth development

**saves an average of 10%**

on ongoing delivery of services.

The survey concluded that smart growth development saves municipalities an average of 10 percent on police, ambulance and fire service costs.



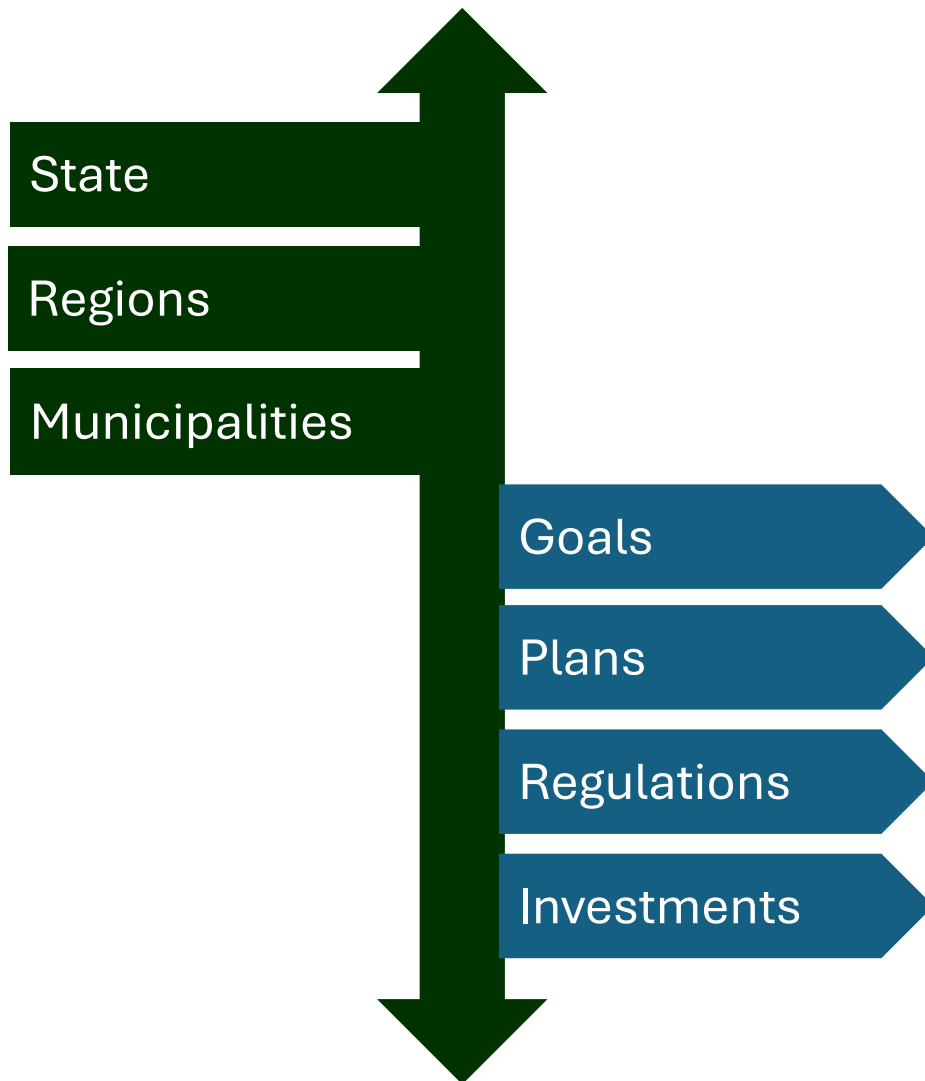
Smart growth development produces

**10X more tax revenue**

than conventional suburban development.

# Modernized Process & Platform

*Approaches that Better Align Best Practices for Good Outcomes*



Brandon, Vermont Culvert Installation

# Landmark Legislation

*Major Modernization of Existing Framework*

**Immediate**

**Interim Act 250 Exemptions for Housing  
Municipal Bylaw Pre-Emptions for Housing**

**Next Up**

**Consistent Regional Planning  
State Land Use Review Board Approval of Plans**

**Then**

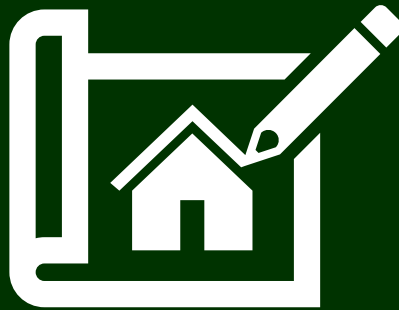
**New Designations & Community Investment Board  
Municipal Plan Amendments  
New Act 250 Location-Based Jurisdiction**

**Further Out**

**Improved Designation Technical Assistance/Investment  
Improved Planning Data Center  
Regional Governance Studies**

# Act 250 Eased for New Homes

Interim, Location-Based Exemptions from Act 250



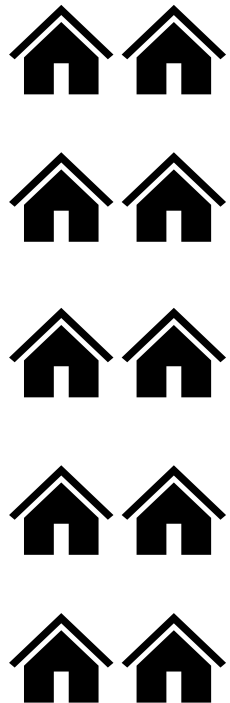
# Act 250 Review Before Act 181

*Statewide development review for larger-scale and higher-impact development*

- Jurisdiction based on use, activity, quantities, location, frequency
- Reviews development impacts; applies 32 sub/criteria

## HOUSING

Reviewed the construction of housing projects such as cooperatives, condominiums, or dwellings, or construction or maintenance of mobile homes or mobile home parks, with **10 or more units**, constructed or maintained on a tract or tracts of land, owned or controlled by a **person**, within a **radius of five miles** of any point on any involved land and **within any continuous period of five years.**





# Interim Act 250 Exemptions

*On ramp to location-based jurisdiction to encourage housing*

## Big Picture

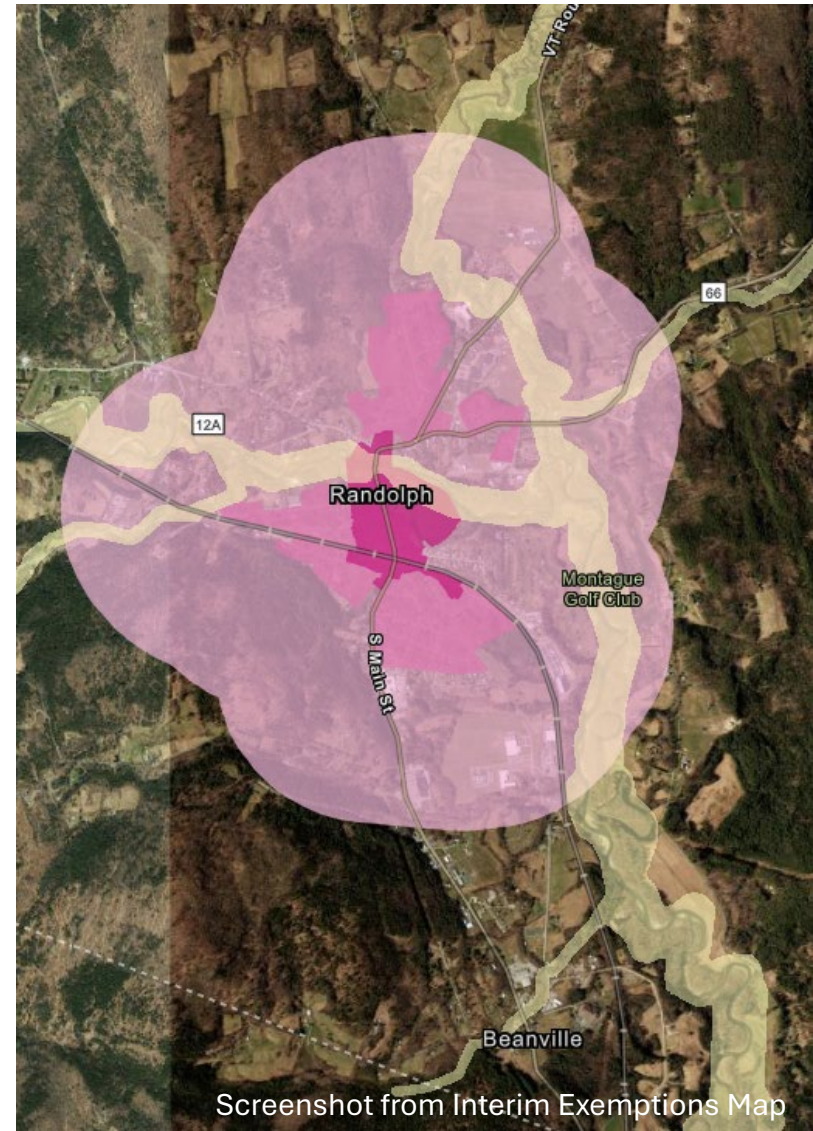
- Larger projects and larger areas exempt through '27 & '28

## 2 Categories

- Location-based; principally built on designated areas
- Use-based

## Resources

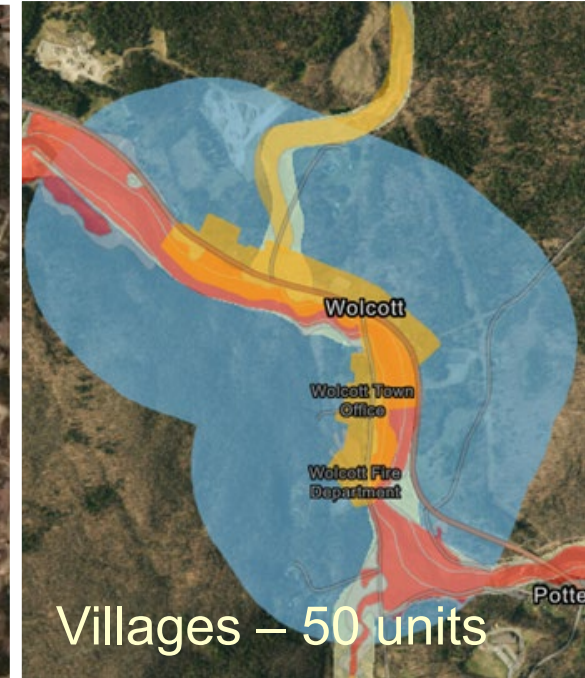
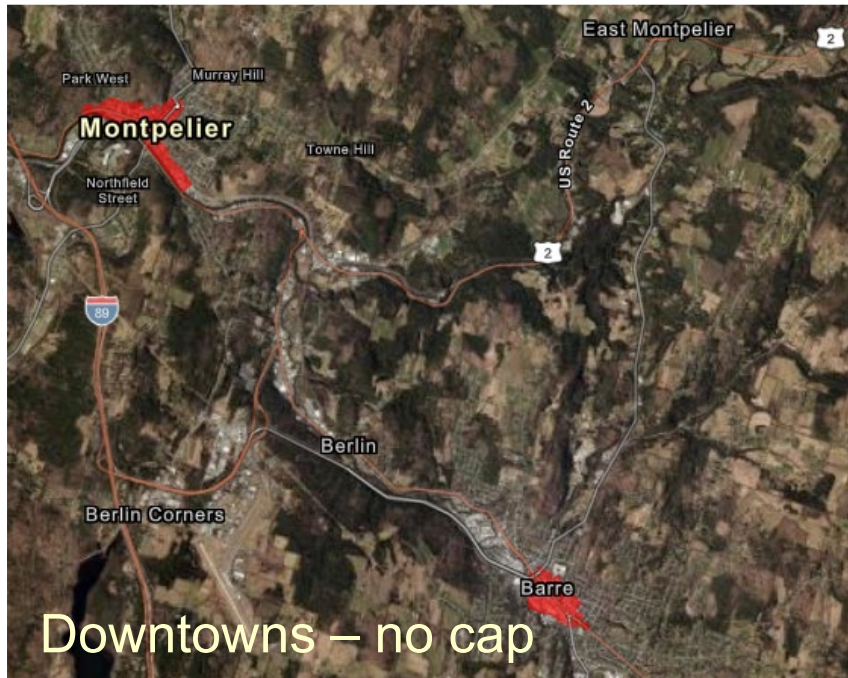
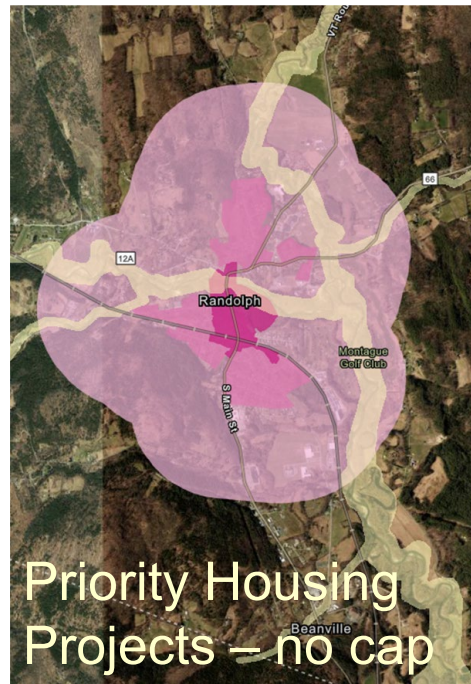
- [Webpage](#)
- Map: Potential Eligibility
- [District Coordinators](#)
- Guidance



Screenshot from Interim Exemptions Map



# Interim Act 250 Exemptions

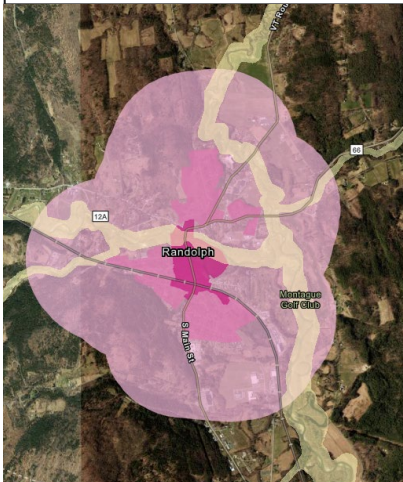


- + New Town Centers, Growth Centers  
Neighborhood Development Areas – 75 units
- + Commercial Conversions – 29 units
- + Accessory Dwellings
- + Hotel/Motel Conversions (permanent)
- + Utility Reliability Projects



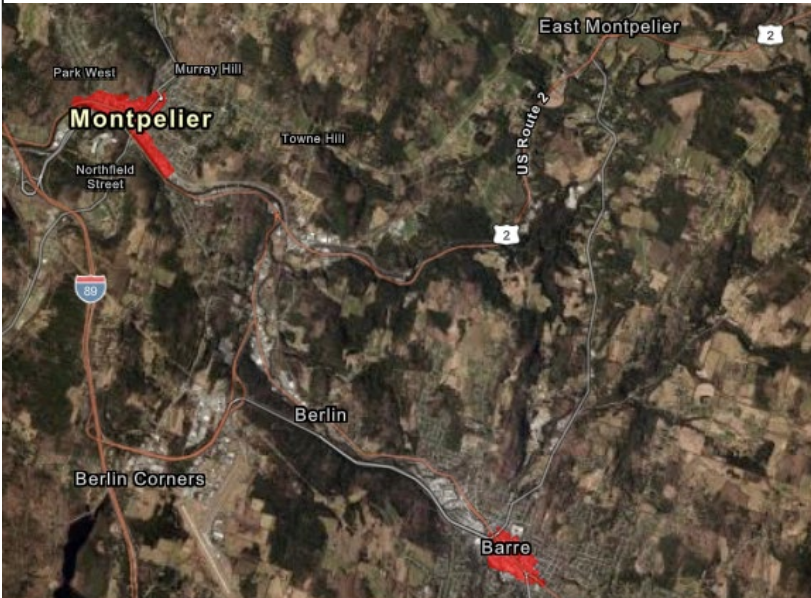
# Priority Housing Projects

<b>Maximum dwelling units</b>	Unlimited
<b>Availability</b>	Through January 1, 2027
<b>Affordability requirements</b>	Must qualify as a mixed-income ' <a href="#">Priority Housing Project</a> '
<b>Qualifying locations</b>	Within designated downtowns, neighborhood development area, or growth center + ½ mile around these areas
<b>Local regulation requirements</b>	Permanent zoning & subdivision
<b>Infrastructure requirements</b>	Served by public water and sewer or soils adequate for wastewater disposal



# Designated Downtowns

<b>Maximum dwelling units</b>	Unlimited
<b>Availability</b>	Through January 1, 2027
<b>Qualifying locations</b>	Within designated downtowns
<b>Location exclusions</b>	River corridors and flood hazard areas, unless infill
<b>Local regulation requirements</b>	Permanent zoning & subdivision
<b>Infrastructure requirements</b>	Served by public water and sewer or soils adequate for wastewater disposal



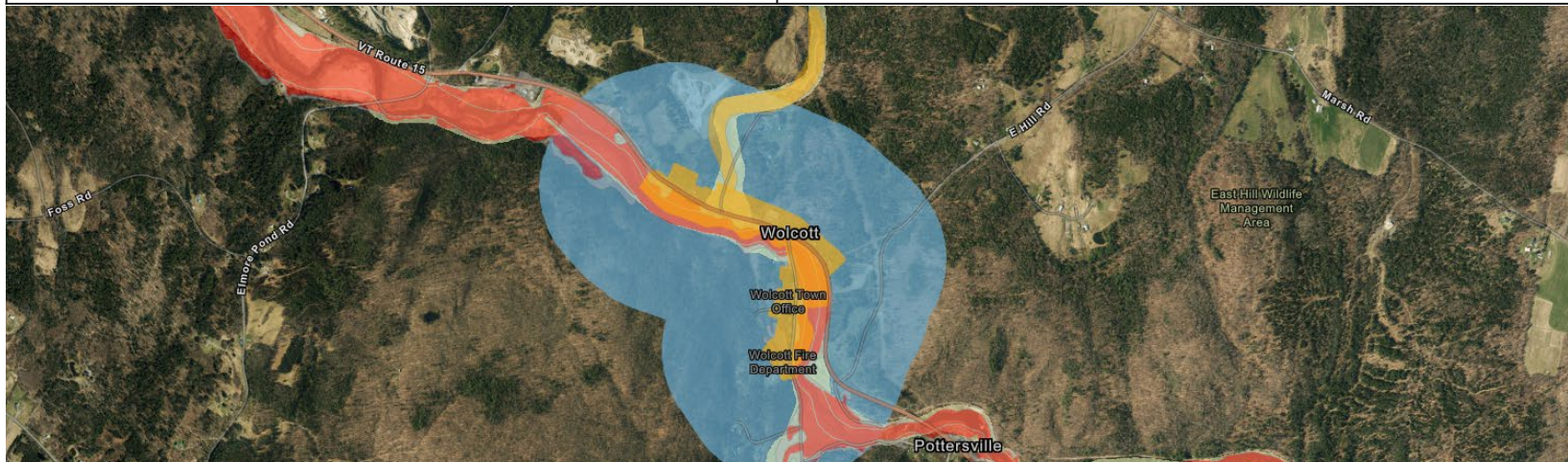
# Designated New Town Centers, Growth Centers and Neighborhood Development Areas

<b>Maximum dwelling units</b>	75
<b>Availability</b>	Through January 1, 2027
<b>Qualifying locations</b>	Within designated new town centers, growth centers and neighborhood development areas
<b>Location exclusions</b>	River corridors and flood hazard areas, unless infill
<b>Local regulation requirements</b>	Permanent zoning & subdivision
<b>Infrastructure requirements</b>	Served by public water and sewer or soils adequate for wastewater disposal



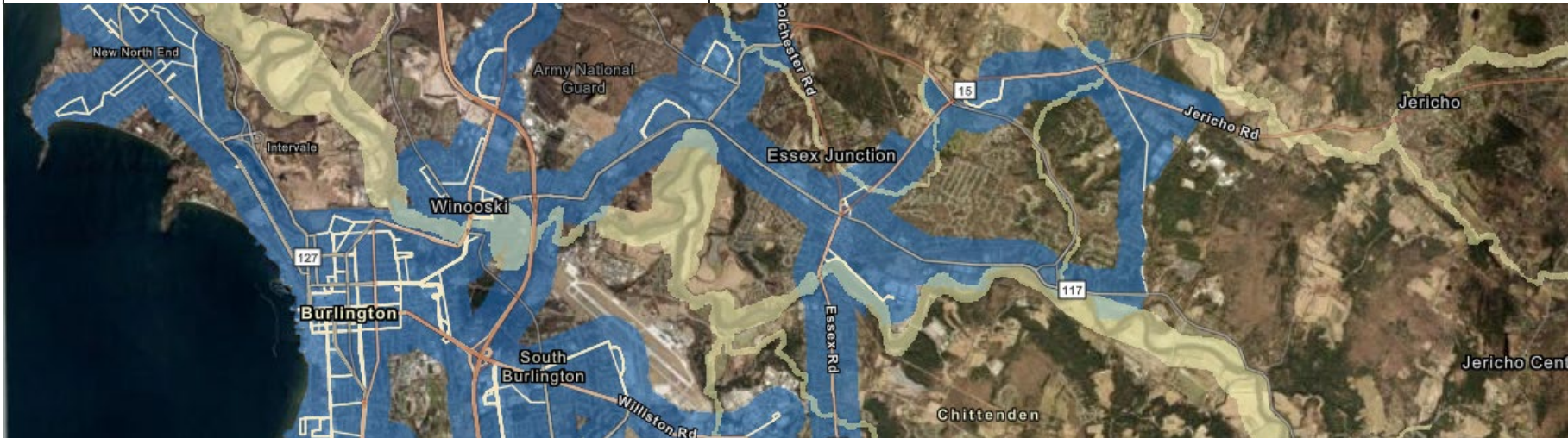
# Designated Village Centers

<b>Maximum dwelling units</b>	50
<b>Availability</b>	Through July 1, 2027
<b>Qualifying locations</b>	Within designated village centers + ¼ mile around these areas
<b>Location exclusions</b>	River corridors and flood hazard areas, unless infill
<b>Local regulation requirements</b>	Permanent zoning & subdivision
<b>Infrastructure requirements</b>	Served by public water and sewer or soils adequate for wastewater disposal



# Certain Transit Corridors

<b>Maximum dwelling units</b>	50
<b>Availability</b>	Through July 1, 2027
<b>Qualifying locations</b>	Within Census-Designated Urbanized Area of 50K within ¼ mi of transit route
<b>Location exclusions</b>	River corridors and flood hazard areas
<b>Local regulation requirements</b>	Permanent zoning & subdivision
<b>Infrastructure requirements</b>	Served by public water and sewer or soils adequate for wastewater disposal



# Commercial to Residential Conversions

<b>Maximum dwelling units</b>	29
<b>Availability</b>	Through July 1, 2028
<b>Qualifying Locations</b>	Statewide



# Accessory Dwelling Units

<b>Maximum dwelling units</b>	1 per single-family dwelling
<b>Availability</b>	Through July 1, 2028
<b>Qualifying locations</b>	On owner-occupied lot
<b>Size limits</b>	Cannot exceed 30% of habitable floor area of single-family home or 900 square feet, whichever is greater





# Hotel/Motel to Affordable Housing

<b>Maximum dwelling units</b>	No permit amendment for conversion to affordable housing defined under 24 V.S.A. sec. 4303(2).
<b>Availability</b>	Permanent
<b>Qualifying locations</b>	Hotels/motels





# Repeals

## *HOME Act Exemptions*

- (1) Up to 24 units of housing in certain designated areas  
[Downtowns, Neighborhood Development Areas, Growth Centers, and Villages with permanent zoning subdivision]
- (2) Additionally, the construction of 4 units or less in an existing structure counts as 1 unit

# Better Planning

Consistent Regional Future Land Use



# Regional Plans

## *New requirements*

### **Goals**

Must include environmental justice principles and meet housing targets within areas planned for growth

### **Process**

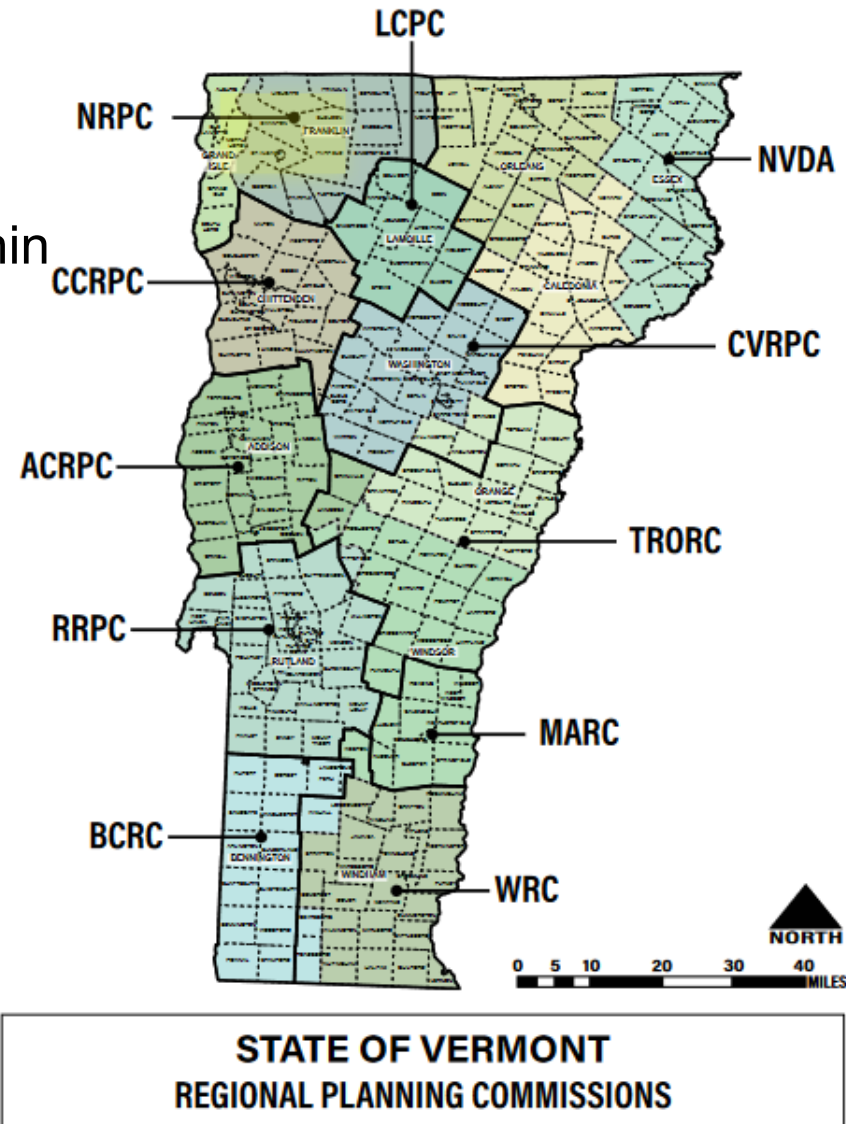
Must incorporate citizen participation

### **Purposes**

More focus on equity, climate resilience, mitigation and adaptation

### **Elements**

New, standard future land use map requirements



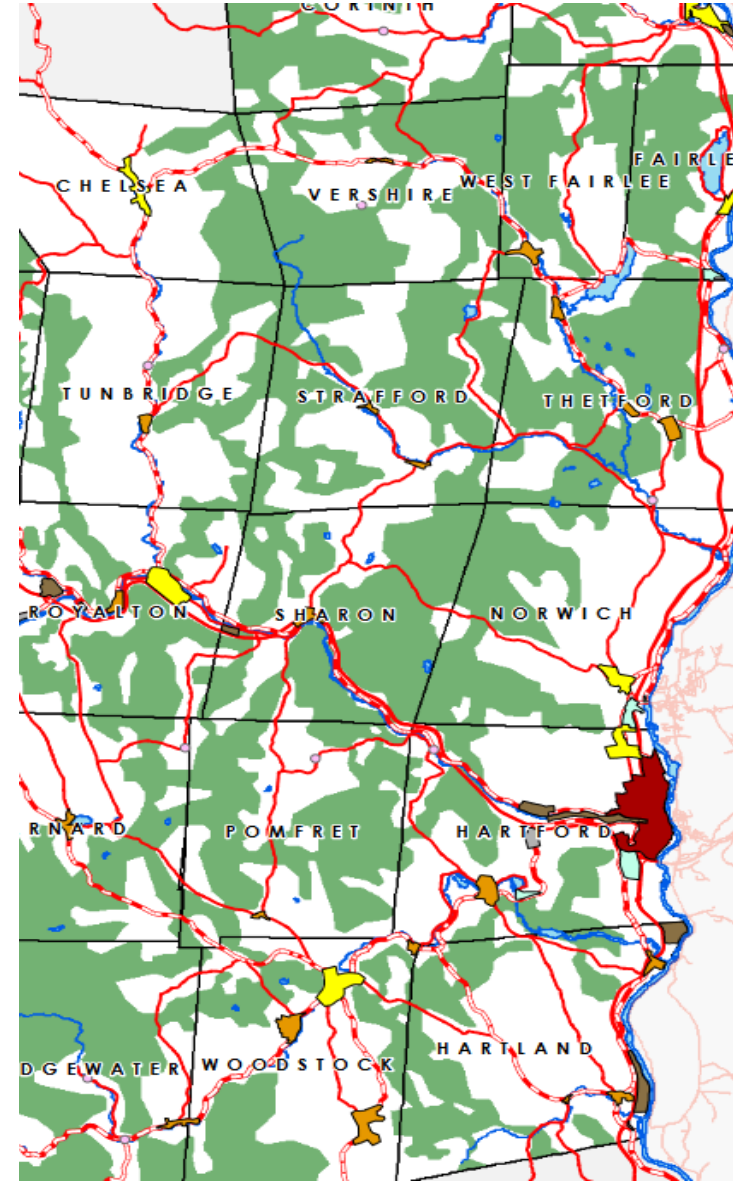
# Consistent Regional Planning

## *Standard Future Land Use Categories*

- **Downtown and Village Centers**
- **Planned Growth Areas**
- **Village Areas**
- Transition or Infill Areas
- Resource-based Recreation Areas
- Enterprise Areas
- Hamlets
- Rural; general
- Rural; agriculture and forestry
- Rural; conservation

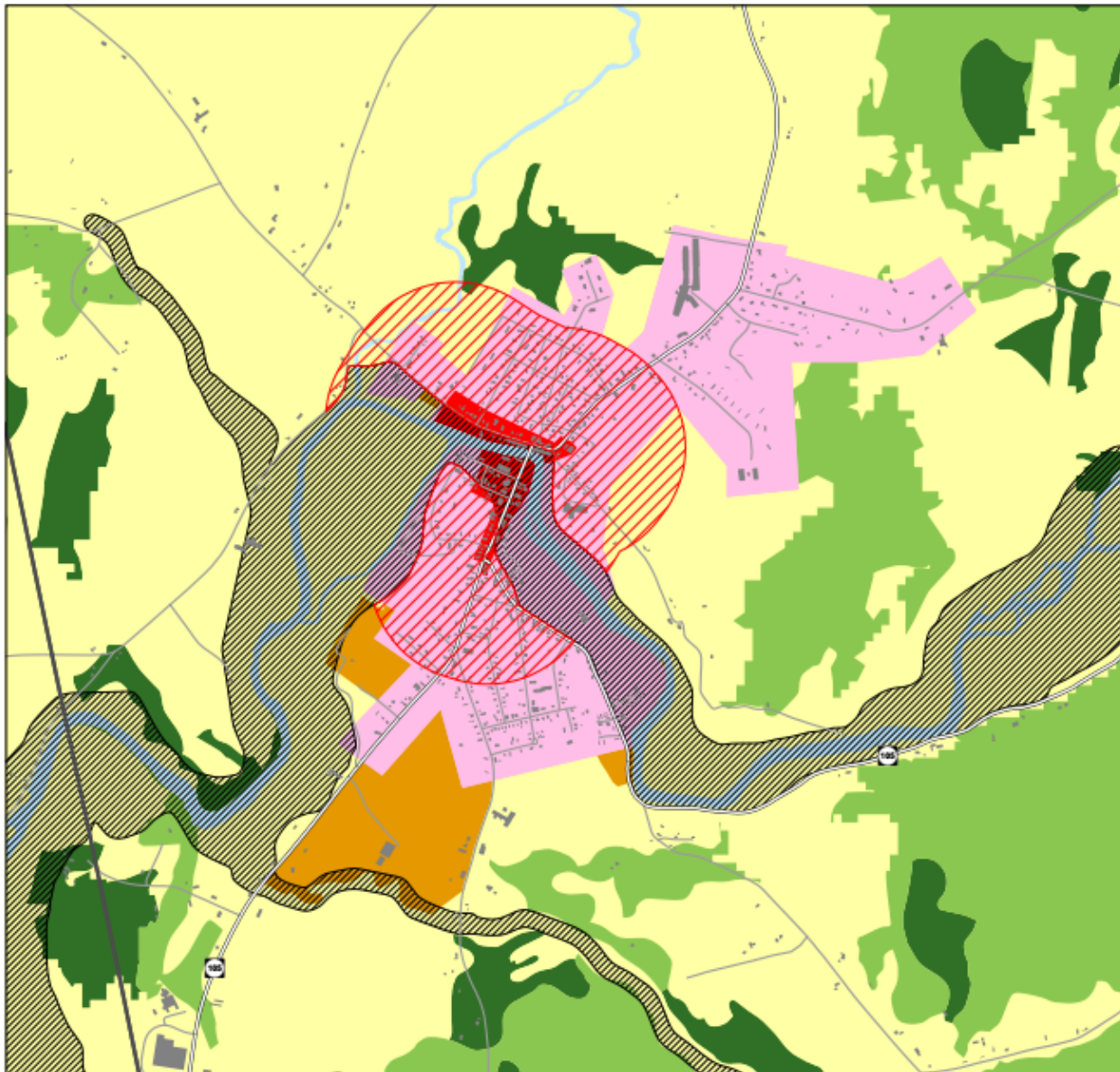
## *Timeline*

- Mapping standards developed in consultation w/ NRB & DHCD by **December 2024**
- Due before **December 2026**





# Future Land Use Scenario



## Legend

### Designated Centers

- Richford Village Center
- 1/4 Mile Buffer Area

### NRPC Future Land Use

- Downtown/Village Centers
- Village Area
- Transitional
- Rural - General
- Rural - Agricultural and Forestry
- Rural - Conservation
- Surface Water

### River Corridors

### Building Footprints



Northwest  
Regional Planning  
Commission

Vermont Coordinate System  
Transverse Mercator, NAD 83.  
For planning purposes only.

Prepared by:  
Northwest Regional Planning Commission  
75 Fairfield Street  
St. Albans, VT 05478  
802.524.5958  
www.nrpcvt.com  
February 2024  
z:/nrpc-gis/projects/counties/franklin/richford/  
richfordlu.aprx

0 0.25 0.5 Miles

Source: Northwest Regional Planning Commission

# Regional Plan Approvals

Regional Plans +  
Future Land Use Maps  
Downtown/Village Centers Planned Growth Areas Village Areas

State Land  
Use Review  
Board  
Approval

Automatic  
State Designation

Municipal Opt-In  
Act 250 Exempt-Areas

# Approval Body

## *New State Land Use Review Board*

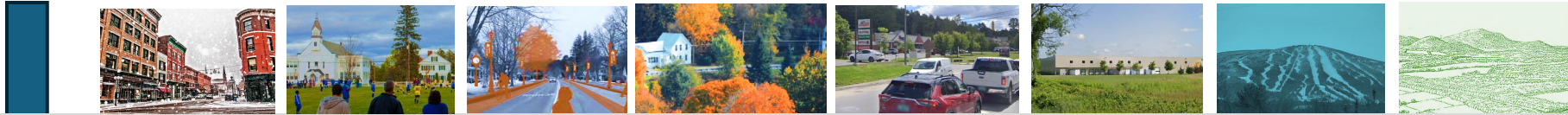
- 5 full-time positions, including a chair
- No members residing in the same county
- Membership shall reflect diversity of the state
- Expertise in environmental science; land use law; policy, planning and development, and commitment to environmental justice
- Produce guidelines and rules
- Review and approve regional plans and maps
- Review and approve municipal applications for 1A exempt areas
- Oversee administration of the program
- Appeals of Act 250 permit and jurisdictional opinion decisions continue to be heard by the Environmental Division of the Superior Court, but subject to a future study

## *Timelines*

- Replaces the Natural Resources Board on **January 1, 2025**
- Regional plans must be adopted by **December 2026**

# The New Framework

*Land Use Plans | Designation & Investment | Act 250 Regulation*



## Regional Plan Future Land Use Categories

Downtown Center	Village Center	Planned Growth Area	Village Area	Transition (optional)	Enterprise	Resource-Based Recreation	Rural	
							Hamlet	General
							Ag/Forest	Conservation

## State Designation / Community Investment

Center		Neighborhood						
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## Act 250

Tier 2: Status Quo + Road Rule & Study								
Tier 1a: Full Exemption – ‘consistent with’ FLU								
Tier 1b: Partial Exemption (50 dwellings)								
								Tier 3

**Tier 3 subject to rulemaking; not derived from regional maps.**

This table represents land use, designation, and Act 250 jurisdiction categories, not land area acreage or percentage of land area.



# Smarter Regulation

Location-based jurisdiction for Act 250: Tiers



# Three Tiers for Jurisdiction

*Derived from regional plan future land use categories, except Tier 3*

## Tier 1

### Tier 1A

*Full Act 250  
Exemption*

- Municipal application
- LURB review
- Guidelines by January 1, 2026
- Specific requirements

### Tier 1B

*50 units or fewer of  
housing Exempt*

- Methodology by December 31, 2024
- Municipal requested
- RPC mapped
- LURB review
- Specific requirements

## Tier 2

*Act 250 Status  
Quo*

- All areas not 1A, 1B, or Tier 3
- Road rule July 1, 2026

## Tier 3

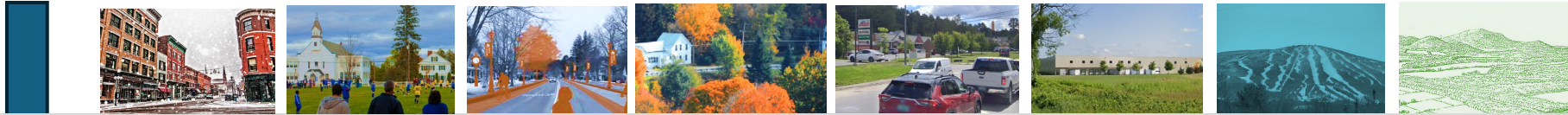
*Expanded  
jurisdiction to be  
established by  
Board rules  
February 1,  
2026*

- Not based on regional maps
- Road rule July 1, 2026



# The New Framework

*Land Use Plans | Designation & Investment | Act 250 Regulation*



## Regional Plan Future Land Use Categories

Downtown Center	Village Center	Planned Growth Area	Village Area	Transition (optional)	Enterprise	Resource-Based Recreation	Rural Hamlet General Ag/Forest Conservation
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## State Designation / Community Investment

Center		Neighborhood					
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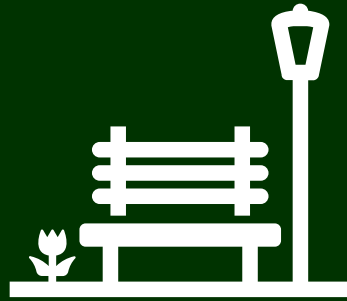
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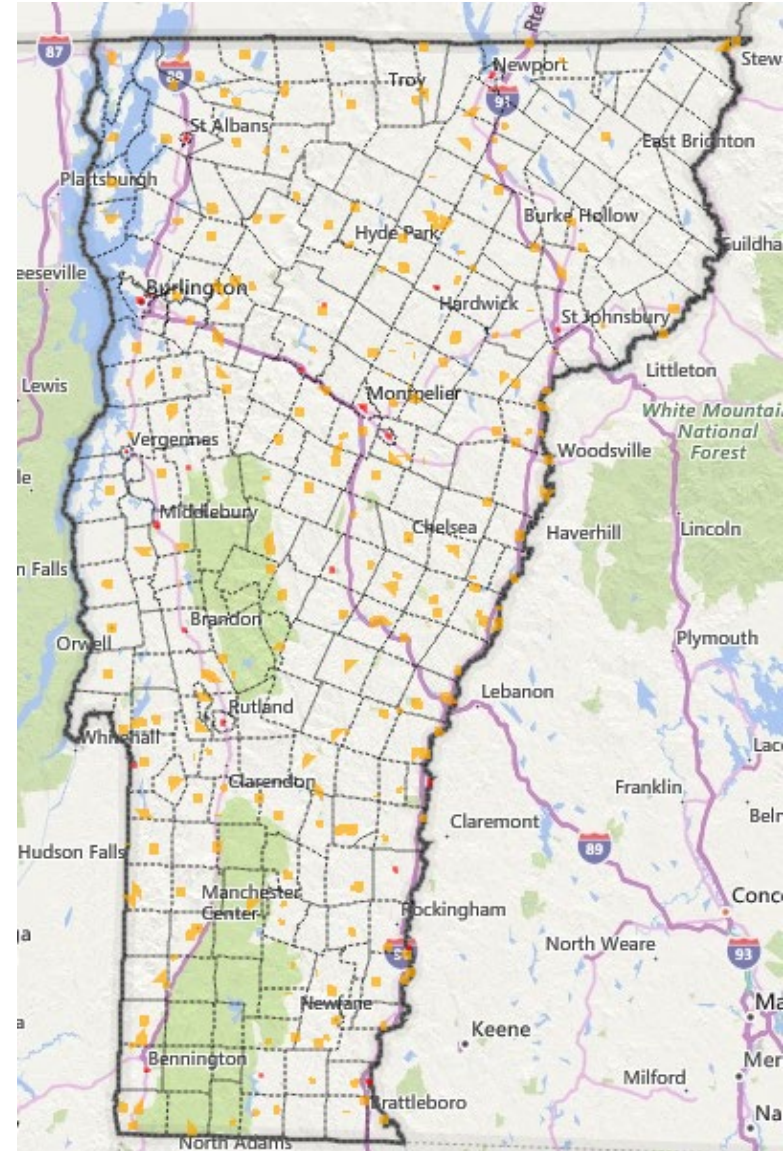
# Better Designation

Improved access and better benefits



# State Designation

- 25 Years
- 295 designated areas
- Every county
- Every region
- A coordinating platform for shared priorities & investments
- Used as a proxy for state land use
- Rooted in Vermont's common goals and principles





# The 5 Designations

*Distinct requirements & benefits*

## **3 Core Designations**

Village Centers

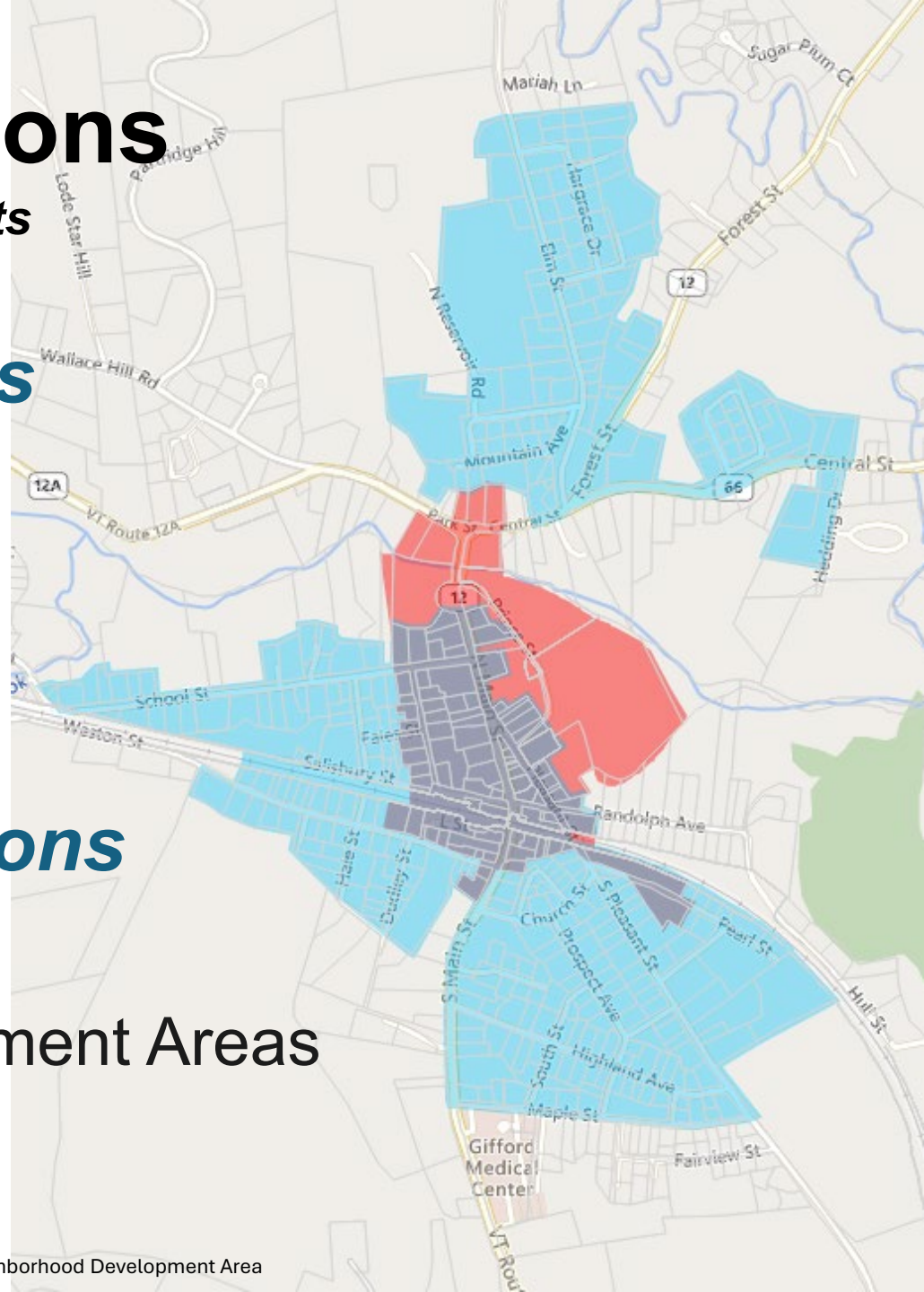
Downtown Centers

New Town Centers

## **2 Add-on Designations**

Growth Centers

Neighborhood Development Areas



# Designation 2050

## *Robust public outreach and engagement led by Smart Growth America & Community Workshop*



We aimed to reach...

**6**  
core stakeholder groups

local program users & leaders • program staff  
state agencies & partners  
legislators • planners & local gov • underrepresented Vermonters • leaders in business, climate health, and others sectors

We created and used...

**1** website  
~**350** grew a...  
**person e-news list**

planned and held...

**1** statewide summit

**5** virtual conversations

**9** strategic focus groups

**20+** chats & interviews

and gathered input from...

**4** targeted surveys

plus special events, emails, and other sources

We asked...

What's working?  
What's not?

Are these the right designations?

Do they achieve our goals?

Do they offer the right benefits?

Who's left out? Who faces barriers?

What's our new vision?

What should we change & improve?

Hundreds of Vermonters responded, connected, shared ideas and shaped plans. Engagement looked like...

**500+**  
event registrations

Sign Up!

**359**  
survey & poll responses



**229**  
6-word visions

With participation from ...



and representation from organizations and interests like...

business • climate resilience • equity and social justice • regional planning • housing • economic development • education • research • historic preservation • zoning • consulting • rural development • media

# Designation 2050: Priorities

Vermont  
wants...

More dollars for  
action

Direct program  
assistance

Local capacity  
solutions

Simpler Designations

Accessible & Coordinated Administration

Better Benefits & Support for Focused Priorities

Housing

Infrastructure

Capacity  
Equity

Livability  
Vibrancy

Climate  
Resilience

Accessible Information & Promotion

Robust Monitoring & Sharing



# Act 181: Same Basic Concept

*From 5 to 2 Designations*

*Each have requirements & benefits*

*Anticipate larger areas*

## Centers

Step 1: Beginner

*Starter Village*

Step 2: Intermediate

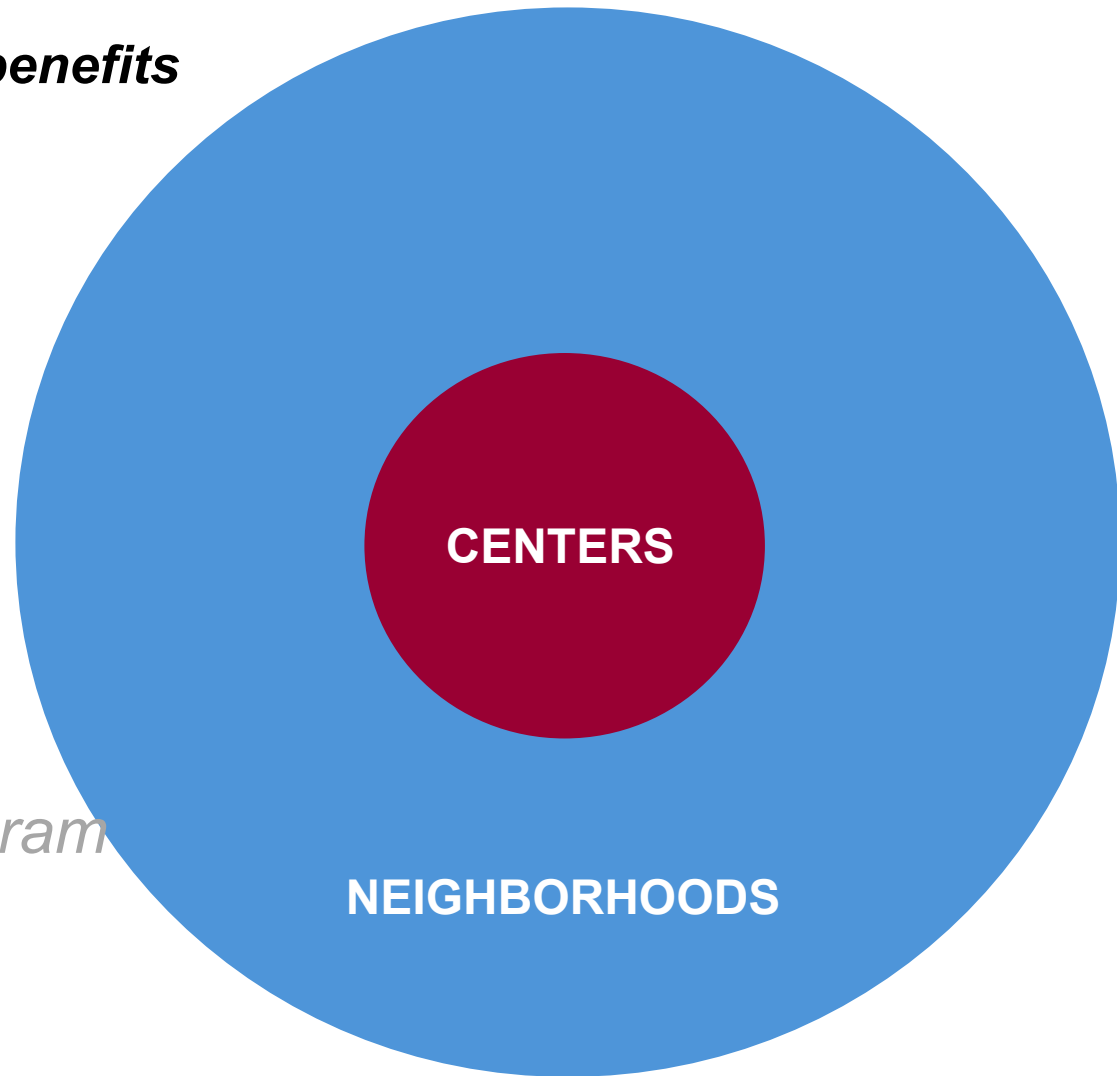
*Growing Village*

Step 3: Advanced

*Downtowns*

*Main Street Program*

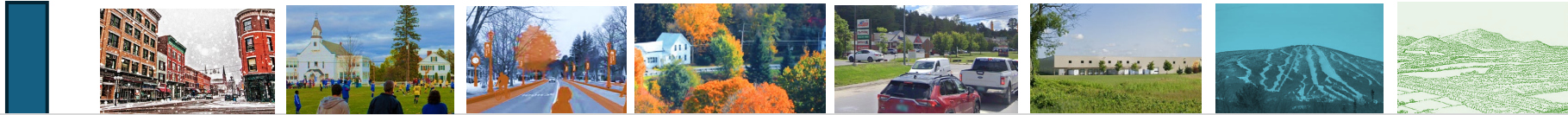
## Neighborhoods





# The New Framework

*Land Use Plans | Designation & Investment | Act 250 Regulation*



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# Designation 2050

## *Smooth Transition*

- Existing designations continue through regional plan adoption
  - No renewals or check-ins required
  - New applications & boundary amendments through December 2025; except no new growth centers
  - Existing designations transfer into new framework with regional plan adoption by December 2026
- No loss of existing benefits during transition
- Transition of existing designation:

Villages > Step 2 Center	<b>Centers</b>
Downtowns > Step 3 Center	
New Town Centers > Step 2 Center	
Neighborhood Development Areas >	<b>Neighborhoods</b>
Growth Centers >	

- Movement between steps approved by DHCD staff

# Better Support

Community Investment Board & Data Center



# Community Investment Board

## *New Oversight & Stewardship Body*

- 16 members: representatives from State agencies, local government, regional planning commissions,
- Expanded Board now includes State Treasurer, Bond Bank, Regional Development Corporations, and Office of Racial Equity
- **Increased focus on implementation and infrastructure investments through cross-government and cross-agency coordination**
- Will continue to confer place-based benefits (like tax credits)

Vermont  
wants...

More dollars for  
action

Direct program  
assistance

Local capacity  
solutions

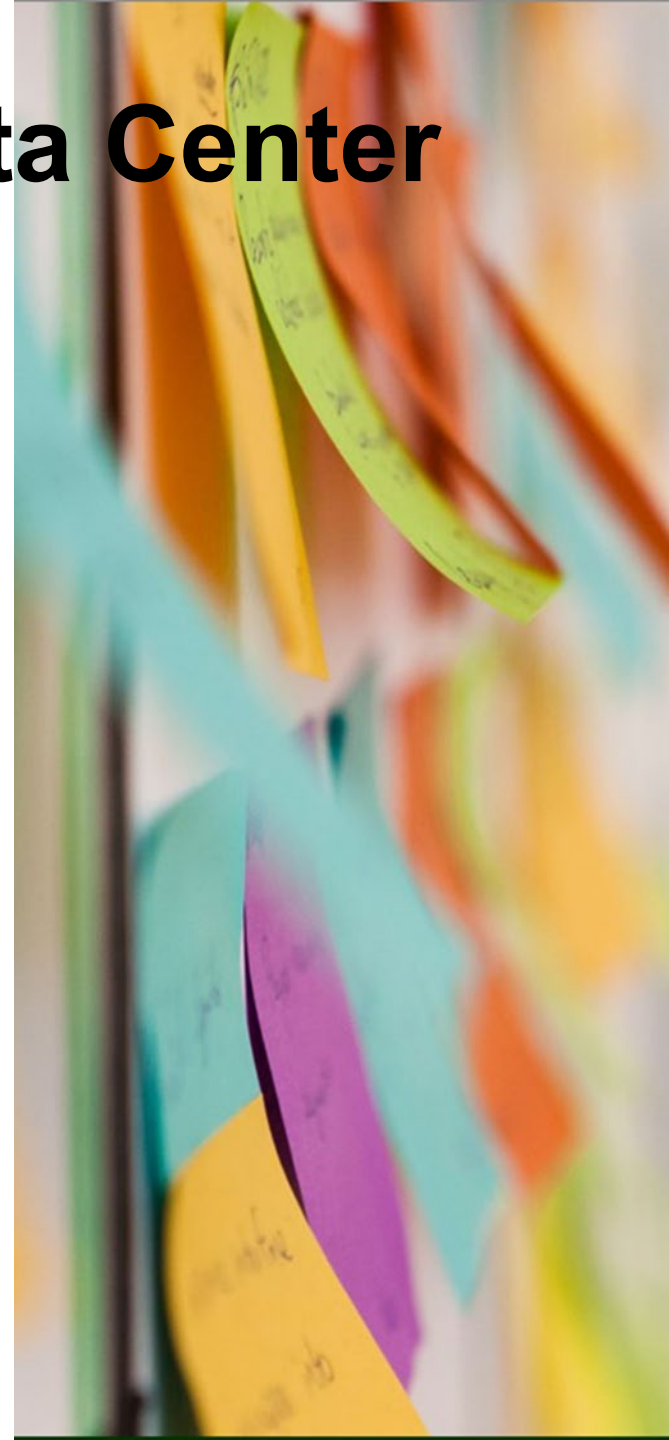
## *Timeline*

- Replaced the Downtown Board on **July 1, 2024**
- Report on Designation-based Municipal Technical Assistance due **December 31, 2025**

# Improved Planning Data Center

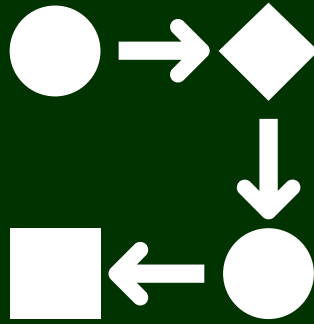
## *Objectives*

- Regional Plan Library
- Regional Plan Atlas/Mapping
  
- Municipal Planning Data
- Municipal Plan Library
- Municipal Bylaws Library
- Zoning Atlas/Mapping
  
- Designation Data
- Designation Atlas/Mapping
  
- Act 250 Tier Data
- Tier Atlas/Mapping



# Bylaw Modernization for Housing

## Zoning Pre-Emptions for Housing





# Local Zoning Pre-Emptions

*Why?*

**Housing Shortage**

**Exclusionary Awareness**

**Dillon's Rule State**

**Ch. 117 Enables Local Regulations**

**Applicability varies:**

- Some statewide
- Some in water/sewer service areas
- Some in residential zoning districts

Additional rationale found in the legislative record.



# Municipal Water & Sewer

Means areas where connection is available; still must obtain a state water/wastewater permit

Does not require connection to development where connection is prohibited by a State regulation or permit, an identified capacity constraint, intermunicipal agreement or excluded by local ordinance/bylaw

Municipality has specified authority to exclude parts of service area, but no limitation may result in the unequal treatment of year-round housing

Municipalities may exclude some areas by ordinance or bylaw:

- Flood hazard, fluvial erosion, shoreland protection areas
- Places where year-round dwellings are not allowed
- Areas where connection is prohibited or capacity limited
- Areas served to address a community-scale public health or environmental hazard
- Areas serving a mobile home park in an area not planned for growth
- Industrial parks or sites
- Modify zoning for indirect discharge systems under 100,000 gallons per day

# Minimum Dwelling Density of 5

“In any area served by municipal sewer and water infrastructure that allows residential development, bylaws **shall establish lot and building dimensional standards that allow five or more dwelling units per acre for each allowed residential use.** Density and minimum lot size standards for multiunit dwellings shall not be more restrictive than those required for single-family dwellings”

Minimum lot sizes and dwelling unit density for multiunit dwellings shall not be more restrictive than those required for single-family dwellings and must allow a dwelling unit density of five dwelling units per acre within subject areas for each allowed residential use.

# Minimum Dwelling Density of 5

*What that looks like for single-unit dwellings*



# Duplex/2-Unit Use



- Applies statewide in residential zoning districts where year-round homes are allowed
- Must be an allowed use
- Cannot be more restrictive than is required for a single-unit dwelling; e.g. cannot require a larger setback
- Cannot require more land area than is required for a single unit dwelling
- Duplexes are two units in a building; not two units on a lot – *however, accessory dwelling unit language allows two detached units on a lot, one principal, one accessory.*

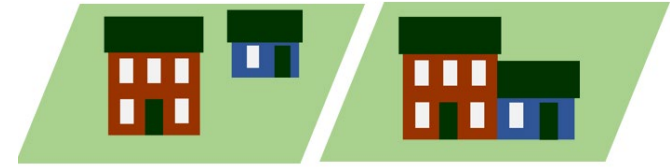


# Accessory Dwelling Use

## HOME ACT

Creates definition using existing language

- Must be a distinct dwelling subordinate to single-family dwelling
- On owner-occupied lot
- With wastewater capacity
- Sized up to the greater of 30% of floor area of main unit or 900 s.f.
- ADU review, dimensional, or other regulations must not be more restrictive than those for single-unit dwellings
- Allows conversion of an existing, detached nonresidential building (such as a carriage barn) to habitable space for an ADU in a manner that is not more restrictive than a single-unit dwelling without an ADU
- Municipalities can continue to be more permissive than this statewide minimum
- For fire-safety code, clarifies ADUs are not 'public buildings' unless rented



# Small (3-/4-) Multi-Unit Use



## HOME ACT

- Defines multi-unit to mean 3 or more dwelling units in the same building
- Applies statewide in municipalities with bylaws, in zoning districts allowing year-round residential uses, served by municipal water & sewer
- Must be a permitted use, not conditional
- Includes exemption for districts requiring larger multi-family

## ACT 181

Three and four-unit dwellings must be a permitted use in any residential district that is served by municipal sewer and water **on the same size lot as a single-unit dwelling** (if a single-unit dwelling use is allowed in the district) means that 3- and 4-unit dwellings may not be subject to conditional use review, they must be a permitted use. ‘Served by water and sewer’ is a defined term.

# Bonus for Affordable Housing

## HOME ACT

- Applies statewide in areas served by water and sewer
- Where residential development is allowed
- For affordable housing, including mixed-use development
- Provides dwelling unit density bonus of 40% and one habitable floor above height maximum
- Affordable housing bonus dwelling unit density (40%) and height (extra floor)
- Affordable housing development, as defined in 24 V.S.A. Sec. 4303(2) and including mixed-use development. The statute does not specify what the height of a “floor” is.

## ACT 181

- Clarifies rounding to the nearest whole unit



# Unrelated Occupant Protection

## **ACT 181**

“No zoning or subdivision bylaw shall have the effect of prohibiting unrelated occupants from residing in the same dwelling unit.”

# Hotel/Motel Conversions

## HOME ACT

- Bylaws must not prevent or penalize hotels used to rent rooms with public funds for the purpose of providing Vermont General [housing] Assistance
- Defines shelter to mean temporary shelter for the homeless
- Shelters must be regulated similarly to state or community-owned and operated institutions
- Bylaws may not interfere with daily or seasonal hours of operation or otherwise interfere with the functional use of a shelter

## ACT 181

- Adds “Hotels and motels converted to permanently affordable housing developments” to the list of uses with special limitations from zoning in 24 V.S.A. § 4413(a)(1)



# Min. Parking Limits



## HOME ACT

- Applies statewide to municipalities with bylaws with min. parking requirements
- Bylaws may require no more than **1 per dwelling unit in zoning districts served by water and sewer**
- **May require 1.5** for duplexes and multiunit dwellings in areas not served by sewer and water, and in areas that are located more than one-quarter mile away from public parking

## ACT 181

- When calculating required parking spaces produces a fraction of a number, it shall be **rounded up** to the nearest whole number to produce the total.
- Maximum allowed parking space **9' x 18'**, unless for ADA compliance
- Must count **nonconforming spaces**
- **Off-site counting:** “A municipality may allow a person with a valid legal agreement for use of parking spaces in an adjacent or nearby lot to count toward the parking requirement of a residential building.”

# Development Review Matters

## HOME ACT

- **Protects allowed housing** in development review:
  - No increases in lot sizes
  - No reductions in building footprint and height
  - No reductions in dwelling unit density
  - No increases in parking
  - No modifications to an application that complies with the minimum or maximum standards in the bylaws
- Enables administrative reviews of **minor subdivision**
- Municipality may opt-in and is able to define what is minor

## ACT 181

“Within **120 days** of an application being deemed complete, the appropriate municipal panel shall notice and warn a hearing on the application.”

# Appeals

## HOME ACT

- Prohibits **conditional use appeals** when the local development review panel has determined character met for residential development in designated downtowns, growth centers, and neighborhood development areas
- Other elements remain appealable
- Expands **party status** to residents, but interested parties may no longer appeal a residential project based on character of the area for affordable housing

## ACT 181

- Anyone in the category of “any combination of voters, residents, or real property owners within a municipality listed in subdivision” needs to put together a group of **20 co-appellants**. Prior was 10.
- “It shall be the goal of the Environmental Division to issue a decision on a case regarding an appeal of an appropriate municipal panel decision...within **90 days** following the close of the [court] hearing.”

# Bylaw Adoption Procedures

## HOME ACT

- Rural towns can no longer vote to adopt municipal bylaws by Australian ballot, unless forwarded by the Selectboard
- Bylaws and report must be filed with the Department upon adoption
- *Reporting Form* available online
  - <https://accd.vermont.gov/community-development/town-future/plans-bylaws>
- Enhances fair housing reporting & requires GIS upload for zoning district
- [Statewide database](#) & statewide zoning files on [geodataportal](#)

## ACT 181

- Requires to DHCD to prepare Planning Data Center for better intake and more accessible information on planning.

# Administration of New Standards

*What do you do when State statute and local provisions are in conflict?*

## **3 Options**

- Apply new statutes directly, along with current zoning
- Adopt interim zoning
- Risk Appeals & Court Expense



# Municipal Plans

## HOME ACT

Municipal plan housing chapter must use data on year-round housing and seasonal dwellings and must include **specific actions** to address housing needs.

Regional plan housing element must **estimate the total housing needed** and include actions and municipal targets for housing types.

## Act 181

The housing element of a municipal plan must address **housing targets** set by the regional planning commission.

The housing element also “shall use data on year-round and seasonal dwellings and include specific actions to address the housing needs of persons with low income and persons with moderate income and account for permitted residential development as described in” 24 V.S.A. Sec. 4412.

# Areas for Municipal Focus

- Municipal water mapping
  - lines, service area, service constraints
- Municipal sewer mapping
  - lines, service area, service constraints
- Continued bylaw modernization
- Adoption of initial zoning subdivision
- Municipal Plan updates for alignment
- Municipal Planning Grants:  
ANNOUNCEMENT IN NOV. DUE IN 2025
- Designation stewardship
- DHCD [Summary of Act 181](#)

# Information

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