

# ACRPC

*update* July 2017

## 2017 Legislative Revisions to Vermont's Planning and Development Act, the Downtown Development Act and Act 250

## *Economic Development Bill* Act 69 (S.135)

In 2017 the General Assembly enacted several laws and amendments affecting local planning and regulation. As in past years, a memo has been issued to inform municipal officials of changes in statute and to provide web links to the pertinent statutory language.

Act 69 updates existing law addressing housing and downtown development as well as infrastructure investment. Recommendations of the 2016 Act 157 Report on housing and infrastructure solutions informed the legislation that increases funding for the downtown and village center tax credits, expands the existing Act 250 exemptions for Priority Housing Projects and enables new Tax Increment Financing districts. Combined, these changes aim to help municipalities and the state increase housing and economic development investments in ways that respects Vermont traditional development pattern of compact centers surrounded by rural, working lands.

Highlights include the following:

### Commission Calendar

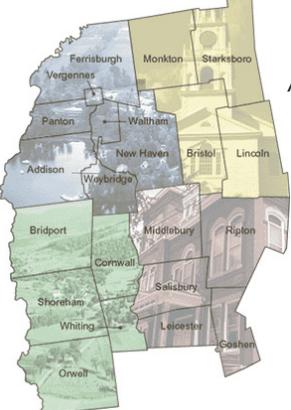
July 2017

12	7:00pm	<b>Full Commission Meeting</b>
20	7:00pm	<b>ACSWMD Meeting</b>
26	6:30pm	<b>Executive Board Meeting</b>
<b>NO JULY TAC MEETING</b>		

Meetings are held at ACRPC, 14 Seminary Street, Middlebury, and are open to the public.

## *Rural Economic Development Initiative* Act 77 (S.34)

Separate from the REDI Districts in Act 69 described above, the Rural Economic Development Initiative in Act 77 enables small towns with a population of less than 5,000 and the businesses within those towns to be eligible for help with identifying, applying for and administering funding opportunities to facilitate business development and siting, workforce development, broadband and infrastructure development and other economic opportunities. The Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB) receives \$75,000 to facilitate these services in coordination with ACCD and other state agencies. This initiative may be useful to municipalities with limited staff that wish to pursue economic development goals in several priority areas such as value-added forest and food products, outdoor



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# Grants, Events & Workshops

equipment and recreation, and compost facilities.

*Review of Energy Facilities & Telecommunications Siting*  
Act 53 (S.52)

Act 53 makes adjustments to the Section 248a review addressing energy and communications facilities for a Certificate of Public Good (CPG). The changes allow for municipal and regional planning commissions to hold public hearings, recommend that the Department of Public Service retain experts to review proposed facilities, and make recommendations regarding the facility to the petitioner and/or to the Public Service Board (now known as the Public Utility Commission). Procedures for permit enforcement by the Public Service Department are also clarified.

In Section 9 of this legislation, the name of the decision-making body, the Public Service Board, is changed to the Public Utility Commission.

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The full memo, including links to statutory language, is available here: <http://accd.vermont.gov/sites/accd-new/files/documents/CD/CPR/StatutoryChanges2017.pdf>.

## **2018 Recreational Facilities Grants Announced**

### Application Deadline – July 14, 2017

The Recreational Facilities Grant Program provides competitive grants to municipalities and nonprofit organizations for capital costs associated with the development and creation of community recreational opportunities. This program requires that there be demonstrated community support for the project, both in financial and grassroots engagement.

The program requires a 1:1 match from the recipient and the maximum available grant is \$25,000.00 per project. Requests in any amount up to the twenty-

five-thousand-dollar limit will be considered. For each dollar requested, documentation must be provided to show that one dollar has been raised (on hand or pledged) from non-State of Vermont sources. Projects that are in the conceptual stage should not apply. Preference will be given to those projects that have demonstrated support within a community. This program is intended as a simple grant application process. Handwritten applications are acceptable. We do not encourage having professionally prepared material created for this application. Short, simple applications are greatly appreciated and supported. Over the years, this has been a great grant opportunity for Vermont parks and recreation agencies, so it is important to take the time to follow the link and read this grant information.

Seven (7) color copies of your grant application must be postmarked no later than July 14, 2017.

Grants will be awarded by the selection committee on a competitive basis. The committee gives priority consideration to applicants demonstrating they have strong community support through the success of local fundraising campaigns. Grant award recipients will be announced in the fall. If there are any remaining funds, they may be awarded on a rolling basis at the convenience of the grant committee.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact:

- Judy Bruneau at the VT Dept of Buildings & General Services office at (802) 828-3519 or (802) 828-3314 or [Judy.Bruneau@vermont.gov](mailto:Judy.Bruneau@vermont.gov) or
- Stephanie Quaranta, Barre City Recreation Director and long-time VRPA representative on the grant selection committee at (802) 476-0257 or [squaranta@barrecity.org](mailto:squaranta@barrecity.org) (thank you Steph!)

Grant application details are available on the VT Department of Buildings & General Services website here: <http://www.bgs.vermont.gov/commissioner/building-communities-grants>.

# Grants, Events & Workshops

## AARP Community Grant Opportunity

Do you have a great idea to make your community more livable for all ages? Apply for an AARP Community Challenge Grant. [Deadline Extended to July 15!!](#)

AARP staff and volunteers across the country are working with local leaders and organizations to enhance the quality of life for all people of all ages.

Our most comprehensive program to make this vision a reality is the AARP Network of Age Friendly Communities. This ever-growing network includes more than 170 enrolled communities across more than three-dozen states, representing more than 65 million people. (Check out The Member List.)

To help support communities and create change in both AARP age-friendly network and non-network communities, AARP plays several key roles, including advocating on important issues, engaging citizens, providing resources and expertise, and serving as a catalyst and convener

Great communities take time to build and sustain, but “quick actions” can be the critical spark for longer-term progress. That’s why the AARP Community Challenge will fund projects to help build momentum. If your idea is big, no project is too small. Projects can range from short-term activities costing a few hundred dollars to sizable efforts that might need thousands.

For more information, visit here: [www.aarp.org/CommunityChallenge](http://www.aarp.org/CommunityChallenge).

To submit a grant application, visit here: <http://aarp.cvent.com/events/aarp-community-challenge-grant-application-due-7-15-17/event-summary-72005aeaa53e4916b0ee9169405a9768.aspx>.

## USDA Seeks Grant Applications for Community Development Efforts

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) invites grant applications for projects supporting economic and community development in rural areas. Grant funding is available to non-profits and public bodies through two programs: the Rural Community Development Initiative Grant Program and the Community Facilities Technical Assistance and Training Grant Program.

“USDA Rural Development helps communities across Vermont and New Hampshire build their capacity to meet the needs of rural residents,” said Acting USDA Rural Development State Director for Vermont and New Hampshire Jon-Michael Muise. “By helping an essential community facility, such as a hospital, plan for an expansion, or supporting a housing non-profit in training residents on accessing safe and affordable housing, Rural Development’s programs invest in community led initiatives that will open economic doors across the two states.”

The Rural Community Development Initiative (RCDI) grant program grants help entities strengthen the rural economy. Qualified intermediary organizations receiving RCDI grants provide technical assistance and training to help nonprofit organizations and communities develop their capacity to undertake housing, community facilities or economic development projects. Applicants must have capacity-building experience for these types of projects and must provide matching funds at least equal to the RCDI grant. Grants range from \$50,000 to \$250,000. For more information, see the Notice of Funding Availability.

In 2016, Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation received a \$230,000 RCDI grant to bolster economic development in 11 southern Vermont towns through providing technical assistance to local non-profits and long term strategic economic development planning for the region.

## Grants, Events & Workshops

The Communities Facilities Technical Assistance and Training Grant program helps rural communities pursuing large projects develop applications for USDA Rural Development's Community Facilities program. The grant provides up to \$150,000 of support to entities to hire specialized personnel, pay for feasibility studies, and retain consultants to prepare financial assistance applications and identify and plan for long-term community needs. Application information can be found in the Notice of Solicitation of Applications published in the Federal Register.

Applications for both programs must be received by July 25, 2017. For more information on these grant programs, contact Eric Law, Vermont and New Hampshire Community Program Specialist, at (802) 828-6033 or by email at [eric.law@vt.usda.gov](mailto:eric.law@vt.usda.gov).

USDA, through its Rural Development mission area, invests in housing, business and community infrastructure programs aimed at increasing economic opportunity and the quality of life in rural America. For more information on Rural Development visit the Vermont Rural Development website ([www.rd.usda.gov/vt](http://www.rd.usda.gov/vt)) or contact USDA at (802) 828-6080.