

ACRPC

update

November 2015

Vermont Transportation Board to Hold November 18th Hearing at ACRPC

The Vermont Transportation Board will hold a public forum in Middlebury designed to engage the public in a conversation about navigating Vermont without a car. Topics include public transportation, the future of passenger rail, the proliferation of car sharing, bicycle and pedestrian safety, and how the legalization of marijuana could affect highway safety.

The forum is one of six the Board is holding around the state, and will be held at 6 p.m. at the Addison County Regional Planning Commission, 14 Seminary

Street in Middlebury.

Recent trends indicate that both nationally and here in Vermont people are driving significantly less than they did a decade ago, and that their transportation priorities differ from those seen in years past. The Board wants to discuss this with Vermonters to determine how future transportation policy can be shaped to best position Vermont to meet their needs and remain both a safe and attractive place to live, work and raise a family.

For those who cannot attend, comment can also be submitted via email. For more information, please visit the Board's website at <http://tboard.vermont.gov>.

Commission Calendar

November 2015

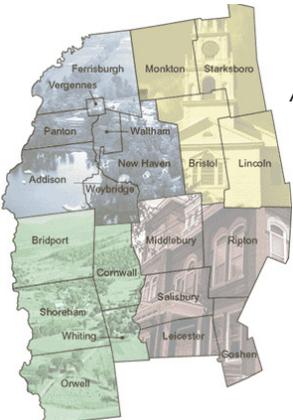
5	4:30pm	Act 250 Committee Meeting
11	7:30pm	Full Commission Meeting
18	7:00pm	TAC Meeting
19	7:00pm	ACSWMD Meeting
25	6:30pm	Executive Board Meeting

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

Citizens' Institute on Rural Design: 2016-2017 Request for Proposals

The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design 2016-2017 Request for Proposals is open to rural communities facing design challenges, from Main Street revitalization to art-based community development. CIRDD will select up to six communities, with populations 50,000 or less, to host a two-and-a-half-day design workshop aimed at solving local design challenges and planning for the future. Selected communities receive a CIRDD stipend of \$10,000 dollars and in-kind professional assistance to organize the workshop and follow up activities. The workshops are interdisciplinary and feature a wide range of design, planning, and creative placemaking professionals, bringing together local leaders from non-profits, community organizations, and government agencies to develop actionable solutions to a community's pressing design challenges. To apply and learn more, visit here: <http://rural-design.org/>. The application deadline is January 12, 2016.

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Grants, Events & Workshops

Public Service Dept. Releases Public Review Draft of Comprehensive Energy Plan, Seeks Public Input

The Public Service Department (PSD) has released the Public Review Draft of the 2015 Comprehensive Energy Plan and will be holding a series of five public hearings around the state in October to seek reaction and comments on its draft Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan. In addition, comments are welcome in writing via the comment form at the CEP project website, <http://energyplan.vt.gov> until November 9, 2015. In particular, the PSD is interested in hearing from the public about what they've gotten right, what they've gotten wrong, and what's missing from the draft plan.

This draft 2015 CEP reaffirms and expands upon the ambitious long-term goal of obtaining 90% of the state's total energy needs from renewable sources by mid-century. When combined with the statutory goal of 25% renewable by 2025 (10 V.S.A. § 580(a)), this draft CEP proposes the following set of goals:

- Reduce total energy consumption per capita by 15% by 2025, and by more than one third by 2050
- Meet 25% of the remaining energy need from renewable sources by 2025, 40% by 2035, and 90% by 2050.
- Three end-use sector goals for 2025: 10% renewable transportation; 30% renewable buildings; and 67% renewable electric power.

The plan also emphasizes the importance of efficiency and conservation. The focus on strategic electrification reinforces the shift toward distributed energy resources that support our grid, increase resilience, and lower infrastructure costs.

Vermont Watershed Grants

Vermonters have an opportunity to protect and restore watersheds through the Vermont Watershed Grants Program. Half of the proceeds derived from the sale of the Vermont Conservation License Plate go towards funding the Vermont Watershed Grants Program. The Program, co-administered by DEC and the Department of Fish and Wildlife, distributes grant

dollars for noteworthy local and regional water-related projects within Vermont. The other half of proceeds derived from the Conservation License Plate go towards helping the Vermont Non-Game and Natural Heritage Program.

Grant funds are available for water-related projects that:

- Protect or restore fish and wildlife habitats;
- Protect or restore water quality, and shorelines;
- Reduce phosphorus loading and/or sedimentation as part of DEC's Clean Water Initiative Program objectives;
- Enhance recreational use and enjoyment;
- Identify and protect historic and cultural resources;
- Educate people about watershed resources; or
- Monitor fish and wildlife populations and/or water quality.

Who May Apply: Municipalities, local or regional governmental agencies, nonprofit organizations, and citizen groups are eligible to receive Watershed Grants for work on public or private lands. Individuals and state and federal agencies are not eligible to receive funds directly, but may be partners of a project. Visit our website for lists of funded watershed grant projects between 1998-2012.

Watershed grant awards are made up to \$10,000, depending on project category type. Category types and the maximum grant amount for each project category are as follows:

- Education and outreach: up to \$5,000
- Planning, assessment, inventory, monitoring: up to \$3,500
- On-the-ground implementation: up to \$10,000

Watershed Grants Program dollars are intended for complete projects or for discreet, identifiable portions of larger projects. Grant awards are made on an annual cycle, with applications due in the fall of the year and funding decisions made the following mid-winter. The 2016 Project Year grant application deadline is Friday, November 20, 2015. The online application and additional information is available here: <http://>

Grants, Events & Workshops

www.watershedmanagement.vt.gov/lakes/htm/lp_watershedgrants.htm.

Forest Service Grant Opportunity: Community Forest Program

The USDA Forest Service is seeking applications for the Community Forest program. The Community Forest Program provides financial assistance grants to local governments, non-profit organizations, and federally recognized tribes to establish community forests that provide defined public benefits. Projects considered for this funding opportunity must include:

- Lands with at 75% forested cover
- Provide public access
- At least 5 acres in size
- Threatened by conversion to a non-forest use
- Provide economic and ecological benefits to the community
- Community engagement in the development of a community forest plan
- A 50% non-federal funding match

Additional requirements are outlined in the attached request for applications and summarized in the fact sheet. Applications are due to State Foresters and Tribal officials on January 15, 2016. Please note: entities submitting applications must submit an email to communityforest@fs.fed.us confirming an application has been sent to the State Forester or Tribal official. For additional information, visit here: www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/programs/loa/cfp

Working Lands Enterprise Board Announces Upcoming Grant Availability

The Working Lands Enterprise Board (WLEB) is pleased to announce the availability of over \$500,000 in grant funds for the 2016 program year. The application period opened on October 1, 2016, with grants targeting essential, catalytic investments in Vermont's farm and forest economy. Grants will be available to Vermont agriculture and forest sector businesses, as well as service providers that provide the critical technical assistance needed for business growth.

The two investment areas are as follows:

1. Business Investments

Projects may include, but are not limited to: Infrastructure (project-specific planning, permitting, and/or engineering/architectural plans; and/or building and equipment costs); Marketing (accessing new markets and securing new customers); Research and Development (testing new systems or technologies or developing innovative solutions). Projects focused on scaling up to meet new market opportunities are encouraged. Working capital is an eligible use of funds.

2. Service Provider Investments

Projects should show direct impacts on Vermont Working Lands businesses. Types of technical assistance provided may include: Scaling up; Market development, marketing plans, and sales; Business and financial planning; Succession planning; Access to capital; Manufacturing efficiencies or process flow.

The Working Lands funds are administered by the Vermont Working Lands Enterprise Board (WLEB), an impact investment organization whose mission is to grow the economies, cultures, and communities of Vermont's working landscape by making essential, catalytic investments in critical leverage points of the Vermont farm and forest economy, from individual enterprises to industry sectors. The WLEB began operations in August 2012 and to date has awarded over \$3 million in grant funds to 110 grantees, leveraging an additional \$4.3 million of matching and outside funds. The WLEB looks forward to continuing this impressive track record in Fiscal Year 2016.

Letters of intent are due Friday, December 4th.

For more information, visit <http://workinglands.vermont.gov/>, or contact Noelle Sevoian, Working Lands Specialist, at Working.Lands@vermont.gov or 802-585-9072.

Grants, Events & Workshops

Safe Winter Driving in Vermont

Safe Roads at Safe Speeds. During the winter months, Vermont's Snow and Ice Control Plan calls for "safe roads at safe speeds" – NOT "bare roads". That means that during a storm, roads are plowed, sanded and salted to keep them open for traffic and provide a safe surface on which to travel, though road surfaces may be snow covered at times during the storm. Roads will be returned to bare pavement only when the storm is over. Drivers must be responsible for driving their vehicles according to conditions, which includes reducing speeds as needed to ensure safe travel. Note that this policy means that there will often be snow covered roads during a storm. As most travel occurs daily between the hours of 4 a.m. until 10 p.m., a majority of Vermont's resources are deployed during that time frame. Motorists should anticipate reduced coverage and varying road conditions at night and drive accordingly.

Snow and Ice Control. VTrans uses a time tested approach to maintaining Vermont's roads in winter, which includes using carefully calibrated equipment to spread a measured amount of salt early in the storm, and as necessary throughout, to prevent the snow and ice from bonding to the road. The end result is our ability to achieve bare pavement much sooner after a storm has ended.

Anti-Icing. Just prior to a storm, VTrans equipment may be seen spraying a liquid onto the road surface. This practice is known as "anti-icing" with salt brine. Salt brine is a 23% mixture of salt and water that will dry within about 45 minutes, leaving a thin, white film of salt that is ready to start working when the first snowflakes fall.

Pre-wetting. Pre-wetting refers to the application of liquids onto salt as it is applied to the road surface. Liquids can include salt brine, calcium chloride, magnesium chloride, or a blend. The benefits of pre-wetting include keeping solid materials on the pavement, increase salt activation efficiency, melt snow and ice at lower working temperatures, and melt snow and ice with less salt.

For the latest information on road conditions, weather, construction, accidents or major delays, dial 511 or log on to www.511vt.gov.

Required Agricultural Practices Draft Rules – Public Comment Period

The Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets has released the Draft Required Agricultural Practices Rules for public review and comment. These rules, called for under the Vermont Clean Water Quality Act (A.64) passed this year, will replace Accepted Agricultural Practices (AAPs), as exempted from local regulation under Chapter 117. The Agency is required to adopt RAPs rules by July 1, 2016, to include requirements for small farm certification, nutrient management and storage, soil health, buffer zones, livestock exclusion, and tile drainage. Beginning on July 1, 2017, small farms will be required to certify compliance with the RAPs.

Ten public meetings regarding the proposed rules are scheduled around the state; [a meeting will be held in Middlebury from 2pm-4pm on Thursday, November 19th at the Middlebury American Legion \(49 Wilson Road\)](#). See the rest of the schedule here: <http://agriculture.vermont.gov/water-quality/news-events/public-meetings>

[The initial public comment period on the draft RAPs rules will run through December 18, 2015.](#)

Public comments can be submitted by e-mail to: AGR.RAP@vermont.gov
Or can be submitted in writing to:

Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets
Attn: RAPs
116 State Street
Montpelier, Vt 05620-2901

More information is available on the agency's website: <http://agriculture.vermont.gov/node/1166> (press release)
<http://agriculture.vermont.gov/water-quality/regulations/rap>