

RESOURCES

General resources

“Energy Planning and Implementation Guidebook for Vermont Communities” and “Communities Tackling Vermont’s Energy Challenges”

– These companion guides, released by VNRC in partnership with the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, help communities deal with the pressing issues regarding our energy future. The guides outline how communities can comprehensively, systematically and aggressively address energy use and consumption through planning, community organizing, and learning from existing projects.

Regional Planning Commissions – <http://vapda.org/> - Vermont has 11 regional planning commissions that provide a variety of services to member municipalities. Services vary by RPC, but generally include land use, affordable housing, transportation, and open space planning expertise; GIS mapping services; brownfields assessment and redevelopment assistance; and economic development planning. Contact your RPC to learn about available technical support.

Community Action Agencies – <http://humanservices.vermont.gov/community-partners/cp-community-action/> - There are five of these low-income service organizations across Vermont working to help bring people out of poverty by lending support and resources on housing, home heating (including low-income weatherization), education, food and nutrition, and more.

Vermont Planning Information Center – www.vpic.info - VPIC is a clearinghouse for planning commissions, zoning boards, development review boards, their staff, and all others involved in land use planning and implementation in Vermont.

Land Use Planning Implementation Manual – <http://www.vpic.info/pubs/implementation/> - This publication of the Vermont Land Use Education and Training Collaborative uses topic papers to comprehensively cover a variety of topics related to planning, smart growth and natural resources.

Rocky Mountain Land Use Institute’s Sustainable Community

Development Code Framework – <http://www.law.du.edu/index.php/rmlui/rmlui-practice/code-framework/model-code> - The Code Framework is an online tool designed to help communities audit and upgrade their development laws. It covers diverse topics including land use, transportation, and energy. Each topic area includes specific chapters that assist communities in identifying barriers, incentives and regulatory gaps in its zoning codes. Additionally, each chapter provides examples of model language.

Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission Model Energy

Policies and Standards – <http://swcrpc.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/SWCRPC-Model-Energy-Policies-and-Standards.pdf> - An energy planning guide that complements VNRC’s and VLCT’s companion guides. The SWCRPC guide provides examples of model energy policies and bylaws, which can be tailored to address a community’s particular energy planning needs.

Community Planning Toolbox – <http://vnrc.org/resources/community-planning-toolbox/> - The Community Planning Toolbox was developed by Smart Growth Vermont, which merged with VNRC in July of 2011. It introduces users to the issues, techniques and resources for smart growth planning, and features case studies and sample tools that demonstrate how other communities have addressed similar challenges. The Toolbox is organized into five main sections: Land Use Planning in Vermont, Legal Issues in Planning, Issues, Tools, and Case Studies.

Vermont’s Comprehensive Energy Plan and the Vermont Department of Public Service - www.vtenergyplan.vermont.gov - Vermont has a 20-year

comprehensive energy plan that addresses Vermont’s energy future, making nearly 250 recommendations for how to meet 90 percent of the state’s energy needs in 2050 through efficiency, renewables, transportation, land use, and public engagement strategies. The Department of Public Service, the state’s ratepayer and public advocate, leads the crafting and implementation of the plan.

Specific resources

The following resources correspond with the terms in bold in the “suggested steps for building resilience” above. Additional topics are included to provide basic information about building resilience.

Accessory Apartments: “Accessory apartment” (a.k.a. “accessory dwelling unit”) is the common term for a separate living unit created within, or adjacent to, a single-family home and occupied by either a family member or a non-family tenant. These units are often referred to as “in-law apartments” or “granny flats” due to their popularity with aging parents seeking independent living arrangements close to family. They can increase the variety of available housing types in a town and the number of affordable housing options. Accessory apartments are allowed by default in many areas, but municipalities can take steps to encourage them within their zoning bylaws.

- **Community Planning Toolbox: Accessory Apartments** <http://vnrc.org/resources/community-planning-toolbox/tools/accessory-apartments/>
- **Land Use Planning and Implementation Manual, topic papers 14, “Housing Regulations” and 30, “Zoning Regulations”** <http://www.vpic.info/pubs/implementation/>
- **Adding an Apartment to Your House:** A brochure on creating an accessory dwelling unit. http://accd.vermont.gov/strong_communities/housing/housing_resources/accessory_apartment_brochure

Affordable housing options: One of the biggest challenges facing our state is providing housing that meet the needs of Vermonters while protecting our historic and natural resources and the character of our communities. Housing is needed for small and large families, empty-nesters, and seniors, and for households with a variety of incomes. By allowing low, medium and higher-density housing – each in appropriate locations and appropriately designed – communities can offer a wider range of housing options that meet the needs of everyone in the community.

- **Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development:** Covers incentives for housing development; resources for homeowners, renters, and landlords; mobile home parks; and planning, rules, and regulations. http://accd.vermont.gov/strong_communities/housing/
- **Community Planning Toolbox issue: Housing for All:** Covers housing issues, needs, and strategies for Vermont. <http://vnrc.org/resources/community-planning-toolbox/issues/housing-for-all/>

Appropriately-scaled business development

- ***Growing Smarter: Best Site Planning for Residential, Commercial & Industrial Development***

includes pictures, case studies, and practical recommendations for ensuring that development is appropriately scaled and supports compact centers, working lands, and economic opportunity. http://vnrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/growing_smarter...best_site.pdf

Bicycle and pedestrian networks: In communities that incorporate sidewalks, crosswalks, bike paths, and transit stops into their development, residents can more safely reach destinations, save on transportation costs and be more active. A interconnected network that links these different modes of transportation is key to making non-motorized transportation options usable and safe.

- **Local Motion:** <http://www.localmotion.org/> - Local Motion is a greater Burlington non-profit promoting bicycling, walking, running, inline skating and the facilities that make such travel safe, easy, and fun.
- **Community Planning Toolbox tool: Complete Streets:** <http://vnrc.org/resources/community-planning-toolbox/tools/complete-streets/>
- **Assessing walkability:** AARP's Sidewalks and Streets Survey focuses on connecting specific areas, and it encourages the user to think about all types of pedestrians. Local Motion (above) is able to provide some assistance with the application process. <http://createthegood.org/toolkit/sidewalks-and-streets-survey-1>
- **Assessing bikeability:** The Bicycle and Pedestrian Information Center helps users evaluate infrastructure and identify ways that individuals can bicycle more safely. Local Motion (above) is able to provide some assistance with the application process. <http://www.bicyclinginfo.org/> Search for "checklist."

Brownfields: According to the US Environmental Protection Agency, brownfields are land and buildings whose expansion, redevelopment, or reuse may be complicated by the presence - or even the potential presence - of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. In Vermont, brownfields are often in prime smart growth locations in villages and downtowns, for example, former "mom and pop" gas stations in village centers. Brownfields programs support redevelopment of these properties through assessment, limiting liability, and financial support.

- **Vermont Brownfields Reuse Initiative:** The Initiative's programs focus on three areas: limitation of environmental liability; technical assistance; and financial assistance. <http://www.anr.state.vt.us/dec/wastediv/sms/brownfields-home.htm>
- **Regional Planning Commissions:** Several of the state's regional planning commissions have brownfields programs that support redevelopment planning, environmental assessments, clean up planning, and/or remediation. <http://www.vapda.org/>
- **US EPA:** Includes basic information on brownfields, types of grants available, success stories, and other EPA programs. http://www.epa.gov/swerosps/bf/basic_info.htm
- **Community Planning Toolbox: Brownfields:** Coming soon! <http://vnrc.org/resources/community-planning-toolbox/issues/>

Buy Local Campaigns: Buy local campaigns advocate for purchasing of locally produced products and services. This helps to support local farmers and businesses, and also helps to keep money circulating in the local economy instead of leaving the region or state.

- **Local First Vermont:** Local First Vermont, a program of Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility, is committed to preserving the character and prosperity of Vermont's economy, community networks and natural landscape. The project operates the Local First Campaign, supports local business networking efforts, and promotes legislation that promotes locally-owned businesses. http://vbsr.org/local_first_vermont
- **Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development:** View case studies and find information about downtown revitalization efforts. The Program Coordinator of the Vermont Downtown Program can also assist with "Buy Local" efforts. http://accd.vermont.gov/strong_communities/

Carbon inventory: Some towns choose to measure their carbon footprint, which helps them quantify town greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) and energy use. This gives a comparison point for the future and can help target efforts in energy efficiency and GHG reductions.

- **Clean Air Cool Planet's Small Town Carbon Calculator:** Helps towns understand and assess where they spend the most money on energy as well as the sources of the majority of greenhouse gas emissions. http://www.cleanair-coolplanet.org/for_communities/stocc.php
- **Developing a Greenhouse Gas Inventory - US EPA** — http://epa.gov/statelocalclimate/local_activities/ghg-inventory.html

Capital improvement plan: Capital improvement planning is a process for linking the annual budget for public facilities to the long-term goals of the municipal plan, which is important to ensure land use patterns and infrastructure costs that are sustainable over time.

- **Land Use Planning and Implementation Manual, topic paper 4, "Capital Improvement Program."** <http://www.vpic.info/pubs/implementation/>

Climate change: Global shifts in weather and climate conditions. These include an average 1.4 degree F increase of the earth's temperature over the past century, melting glaciers, rising sea levels, warming oceans, and changing storm patterns.

General background information on climate change

- **U.S. EPA** — <http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/basics>
- **Vermont ANR** — <http://www.anr.state.vt.us/anr/climatechange/Adaptation.html>

Resources for communities

- **Union of Concerned Scientists: Confronting Climate Change in the U.S. Northeast-Vermont** — http://www.climatechoices.org/assets/documents/climatechoices/vermont_necia.pdf
- **Clean Air Cool Planet's Community Toolkit** — http://www.cleanair-coolplanet.org/for_communities/toolkit_home.php
- **ICLEI: Local Governments for Sustainability** — <http://www.iclei.org/>

Complete Streets: Complete Streets is a policy that integrates the needs of users of all ages and abilities into street designs. This means pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and public transportation users are all considered when constructing a new road or re-paving an existing one. Vermont passed a

Complete Streets law in 2011. It requires that state and local transportation agencies design and operate in ways that enable safe access for everyone on the road.

- **Community Planning Toolbox tool: Complete Streets.** <http://vnrc.org/resources/community-planning-toolbox/tools/complete-streets/>
- **National Complete Streets Coalition:** Provides basic information, fact sheets, policy guidance, and advocacy advice. <http://www.completestreets.org/>
- **Walkable and Livable Communities Institute:** Great visuals and resources on what makes a place walkable and livable. <http://www.walklive.org/>
- **See also “bicycle and pedestrian networks” above.**

Conservation Commission: Conservation Commissions can be created by Selectboards as advisory bodies to help promote the long-term stewardship of a community’s natural resources.

- **Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions:** The mission of the Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions (AVCC) is to build the effectiveness of conservation commissions and community groups working to sustain their natural and cultural resources. To join the Association listserve, send an email to vtconservation+subscribe@googlegroups.com.
- **Land Use Planning and Implementation Manual, topic paper 18, “Open Space & Resource Protection Programs.”** <http://www.vpic.info/pubs/implementation/>
- **Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department:** Basic information on Conservation Commissions. http://www.vtfishandwildlife.com/cwp_nonregulatory_tools.cfm

Conservation and forest zoning districts

- **Community Planning Toolbox tool: Resource Conservation Zoning Districts.** <http://vnrc.org/resources/community-planning-toolbox/tools/resource-conservation-district/>
- **Land Use Planning and Implementation Manual, topic paper 19, “Open Space & Resource Protection Regulations.”** <http://www.vpic.info/pubs/implementation/>

Cultural competency: the ability to work with people of different backgrounds and life experiences and understand how your own experience shapes your worldview.

- **The Community Tool Box-Building Culturally Competent Organizations – the University of Kansas Work Group for Community Health and Development.** http://ctb.ku.edu/en/tablecontents/sub_section_main_1176.aspx

Density and clustering <http://vnrc.org/resources/community-planning-toolbox>

Department of Health District Offices: The Department of Health operates 12 district offices located throughout the state. All Vermont residents have a local health office to use as a resource for health information, and for disease prevention and emergency response services. http://healthvermont.gov/local/district/district_office.aspx

Design charrette: The design charrette brings together a wide range of stakeholders along with a

team of architects and designers to translate community ideas into workable plans in a very short time period. It's hands on, different than a typical meeting, and can help to build consensus by helping people focus on specifics that they can agree on rather than getting stuck on broad philosophical differences.

- **Community Planning Toolbox tool: Design Charette.** <http://vnrc.org/resources/community-planning-toolbox/tools/design-charrette/>

Design review regulations: As communities change, especially when encouraging smart growth with high densities and compact settlement patterns, careful attention to building design is an important means of building public support and ensuring that new development enhances community character. An efficient design review process, with clear design standards, is an effective way to achieve that.

- **Community Planning Toolbox: Design Review Regulations.** <http://vnrc.org/resources/community-planning-toolbox/tools/design-review-regulations/>

Energy Efficiency

- **Efficiency Vermont:** Created in 1999, Efficiency Vermont is the state's energy efficiency utility. EVT is responsible for creating energy efficiency savings for Vermont homes and businesses through financial incentives and technical assistance. As an energy efficiency utility, EVT is essentially providing energy by saving energy. <http://www.encyvermont.org/>
- **EPA Portfolio Manager:** The EPA's online energy management tool that is able to track and assess the energy performance, water efficiency, and carbon emissions of municipal buildings. Buildings are "benchmarked" through an initial data collection effort that is then easily updated periodically, allowing a municipality to identify poorly performing buildings or track the success of energy upgrades. http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=evaluate_performance_bus_portfoliomanager_benchmarking
- **"Improving Efficiency in Municipal Street and Public Space Lighting":** Efficiency Vermont's municipal lighting guide walks through the step-by-step process of identifying inefficient municipal lighting and either removing inefficient lighting or replacing it with LED lighting. http://www.encyvermont.com/docs/for_my_business/lighting_programs/StreetLightingGuide.pdf

Energy committees: Vermont communities are enabled by statute to plan for their energy futures. Energy committees can serve as the fulcrum for energy planning in a town. There are three general forms that an EC can take: (1) as an ad hoc committee organized by local energy advocates to raise awareness about energy issues and push more progressive energy policies; (2) as a subcommittee of an existing municipal committee, typically the Conservation Commission, that offers policy recommendations to the planning commission and Selectboard; (3) as an officially appointed committee of the municipality that helps develop and carry out the energy policies of the town plan.

- **Vermont Energy and Climate Action Network:** VECAN is the network of support organizations and over 100 energy committees that are active throughout the state. www.vecan.net

Fluvial erosion hazards (FEH): Fluvial (river-related) erosion hazards refer to streambed and streambank erosion, often associated with catastrophic physical changes in stream channel width, depth and location that can occur during flooding.

- **Municipal Guide to Fluvial Erosion Hazard Mitigation.** http://www.anr.state.vt.us/dec/waterq/rivers/docs/rv_municipalguide.pdf
- **ANR River Management Program- Fluvial Hazard Areas- FAQs.** http://www.vtwaterquality.org/rivers/docs/rv_vtfehqa.pdf
- **River Management Program NFIP & FEH Fact Sheet** http://www.anr.state.vt.us/dec/waterq/rivers/docs/rv_NFIPFEHFactSheet.pdf

Fragmentation and connectivity

- **Subdivision and Parcelization Trend Information:** A 2011 report by VNRC analyzed subdivision trends in Vermont by using state Grand List data for 2003 and 2009. The project also established a searchable online database that includes information such as the number of large parcels in each town, and the percentage of large parcels that have been subdivided, the percentage of large parcels enrolled in Current Use, and more. <http://vnrc.org/subdivisionreport>
- **Community Planning Toolbox:** New issues, tools, and case studies coming soon! <http://vnrc.org/resources/community-planning-toolbox/>

Healthy community design: Planning that weaves together compact development, transportation choice, and open space can prevent sprawl but can also improve people's health and well-being. This scorecard focuses on active living and healthy food, but "healthy community design" includes many additional issues, such as air quality, tobacco use in public venues and events, preventing injury, and more. Information on all of these topics and more is available here: <http://healthvermont.gov/index.aspx>

- **Vermont Fit and Healthy Communities Program:** Includes assessment tools, available grants, ways to promote active living and healthy eating, and presentations from various Healthy Community Design trainings. <http://healthvermont.gov/family/fit/target.aspx#comm>
- **Centers for Disease Control: Designing and Building Healthy Places:** This website discusses healthy community design broadly, describing its links to children's health, injury, mental health, transportation, and more. <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/>
- **Inventory of Resources Related to Health for Cities and Towns in Vermont:** This survey of Vermont municipalities was conducted in 2005 and reports the presence of street and trail networks, parks and recreation spaces, sports fields and rinks, nutrition resources, policies, and more, for 93% of Vermont's municipalities. It is a good resource for assessing local infrastructure and determining next steps. <http://crs.uvm.edu/townhealthresources/>
- **Land Use Planning and Implementation Manual, topic paper B, "Healthy Community Design."** <http://www.vpic.info/Publications/Reports/Implementation/healthycommunitydesign.pdf>

Health impact assessment – Health impact assessments are an approach to evaluating development projects (including commercial, residential, and public buildings; public works projects; and transportation projects) with an eye toward the potential public health impacts – good and bad – of the project. The Health Impact Assessment also takes a careful look at how the effects of a project are distributed throughout a population, and whether they affect any one group disproportionately. It can be

a way to improve communication about development, design, community needs, and equity.

- **Human Impact Partners:** HIP is a non-profit organization that focuses on capacity building offering policymakers, project leaders, public agencies, community groups, and advocacy organizations the support they need to conduct HIAs and use the results to make informed choices. Check out especially the Summary Guides under “Tools and Resources.” <http://www.humanimpact.org/hia>

Health promoting language

- **Community Planning Toolbox tool:** Health in the Municipal Plan. <http://vnrc.org/resources/community-planning-toolbox/tools/>

Historic district, historic preservation group

- **Community Planning Toolbox issue: Historic Preservation** - <http://vnrc.org/resources/community-planning-toolbox/issues/historic-preservation/>
- **Land Use Planning and Implementation Manual, topic paper 11, “Historic Preservation”** <http://www.vpic.info/pubs/implementation/pdfs/11-Historic.pdf>

Impervious surfaces: Human-made structures such as pavement, roofs, and gravel road beds. Water cannot penetrate these and so instead runs off, carrying pollutants and sediment with it.

- **A Basic Primer on Nonpoint Source Pollution and Impervious Surface, Ohio State University Fact Sheet:** <http://ohioline.osu.edu/aex-fact/0444.html>
- **UNH Stormwater Center- Pervious Concrete and Porous Asphalt fact sheets:** http://www.unh.edu/unhsc/sites/unh.edu.unhsc/files/pubs_specs_info/unhsc_pervious_concrete_fact_sheet_4_08.pdf http://www.unh.edu/unhsc/sites/unh.edu.unhsc/files/pubs_specs_info/porous_ashpalt_fact_sheet.pdf
- **Reducing impervious surfaces:** http://www.vtwaterquality.org/stormwater/htm/sw_ReducedImperviousSurfaces.htm

Inclusiveness: A quality of a group or organization that embraces diversity, is culturally competent, and values the perspectives and contributions of all people regardless of their background. An inclusive organization is welcoming to new and different group members and their varied viewpoints and interests, and creates an environment where all people feel comfortable participating.

Inventory: Having up-to-date maps and inventories of natural heritage features can greatly enhance conservation work. The Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department can assist in the mapping of wildlife or habitat corridors. Private consulting firms can also assist by performing field inventories of important ecological resources on public or private land (with consent). Other resources include:

- **Agency of Natural Resources – Natural Resources Atlas:** This online GIS tool allows users to map the location of various natural resources – including wetlands, deer wintering areas, and rare, threatened and endangered species. The Natural Resources Atlas incorporates stream geomorphic assessment data, the well locator, and the Environmental Interest Locator into a single tool. <http://anr.state.vt.us/site/html/maps.htm>

- **“Conserving Vermont’s Natural Heritage:”** Contains valuable information, including sample language, about planning for natural resources at the landscape, natural community, and species levels. http://www.vtfishandwildlife.com/library/maps/Community_Wildlife_Program/complete.pdf

Land conservation, land trusts

- **Land Trust Alliance:** Promotes voluntary land conservation and works with nonprofit land trusts by providing information, skills, and resources land trusts need to conserve land for the future. <http://www.landtrustalliance.org>
- **Vermont Land Trust:** <http://www.vlt.org/>
- **Vermont Housing and Conservation Board:** The Vermont Housing and Conservation Board is an independent, state-supported funding agency providing grants, loans and technical assistance to nonprofit organizations, municipalities and state agencies for the development of perpetually affordable housing and for the conservation of important agricultural land, recreational land, natural areas and historic properties in Vermont. <http://www.vhcb.org/>
- **Landowner outreach:** Strategies, information, and ideas for reaching out to landowners. <http://www.engaginglandowners.org/>

Low Impact Development (LID): LID practices are used for managing stormwater by maintaining natural drainage patterns, allowing more stormwater to infiltrate into the ground where it falls. These techniques improve water quality and decrease the risk of flash-flooding.

- **Low Impact Development Guide for Residential and Small Commercial Sites- VT DEC :** http://www.vtwaterquality.org/planning/docs/pl_LID_Guide.pdf
- **Vermont League of Cities and Towns Municipal Assistance Center Technical Paper #5- Managing Stormwater through Low-Impact Development Techniques:** http://www.vlct.org/assets/Resource/Models/o_LID-Tech_Paper.pdf
- **Low Impact Development Tools for Vermont Towns-Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission:** <http://swcrpc.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/LID-for-VT-Towns.pdf>
- **A model bylaw for LID prepared by the Vermont League of Cities and Towns:** http://www.vlct.org/assets/Resource/Models/o_LID%20SW.pdf

Official map: The official map – which can show future street alignments, planned trails, sites reserved for public buildings, and areas reserved for stormwater and flood control – is a planning tool that provides a clear picture to property owners, developers, and the public of the municipality’s intentions with regard to its future physical form and design.

- **Land Use Planning and Implementation Manual, topic paper 17, “Official Map.”** <http://www.vpic.info/pubs/implementation/>

Open space plan

- **Land Use Planning and Implementation Manual, topic paper 18, “Open Space &**

Resource Protection Programs.” <http://www.vpic.info/pubs/implementation/>

Open space requirements

- **Land Use Planning and Implementation Manual, topic paper 19, “Open Space & Resource Protection Regulations.”** <http://www.vpic.info/pubs/implementation/>
- **Community Planning Toolbox: Conservation Developments.** <http://vnrc.org/resources/community-planning-toolbox/tools/conservation-developments/>
- **Community Planning Toolbox: Subdivision Regulations.** <http://vnrc.org/resources/community-planning-toolbox/tools/subdivision-regulations/>
- **Land Use Planning and Implementation Manual, topic paper 2, “Planned Unit Development.”** <http://www.vpic.info/pubs/implementation/>

Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) PACE is a financing tool that enables homeowners to pay for energy improvements on their homes (weatherization, solar PV, pellet stoves etc.) via a special assessment that is paid alongside homeowners’ property taxes. PACE assessment payments can be extended over a 20 year period—creating what is called a “positive cash flow”— which means that the homeowner’s energy savings can pay for the periodic payments while still providing net overall savings. <http://www.vecan.net/index.php/pace/>
http://www.encyvermont.com/about_us/energy_initiatives/pace.aspx

Park and ride

- **VTrans:** Information on the state park and ride program, along with information on grants for developing municipal park and rides: <http://www.aot.state.vt.us/ParknRide/default.htm>

Public buildings (location of) – Local policy and spending decisions can exert a significant influence on how our communities grow, as well as on where private investors decide to locate new homes and commercial space. This is particularly true with policy and spending decisions about public buildings, such as town halls and schools. A community can promote the vitality of civic life, encourage kids to walk to school, and reduce sprawl by developing policies that prioritize putting these buildings in existing downtowns and village centers. The resources below relate to schools, but many of the same principles can be applied when considering public buildings (needs assessment, parking issues, renovation costs vs. the cost of building anew).

- **National Trust for Historic Preservation: Helping Johnny Walk to School: Sustaining Communities through Smart Policy:** When a community considers renovating or constructing a new school, its first objective is to provide a safe, healthy place for children to get a good education. In addition to meeting education goals, however, the school building and its surroundings can also support the community’s vision and goals for its future – goals such as preserving the vitality of the surrounding neighborhood, encouraging a healthier population, and conserving open space. This website follows up a National Trust for Historic Preservation Report, Why Johnny Can’t Walk to School, with case studies, policy approaches and other resources. <http://www.preservationnation.org/information-center/saving-a-place/historic-schools/helping-johnny-walk-to-school/>
- **Smart Growth Schools:** The Smart Growth Schools website is designed to make it easier for people to understand how they can improve their communities and schools by considering issues

that are often ignored in the school planning process. The website includes a “Smart Growth Schools Report Card” that helps communities evaluate the location of new schools. While some aspects of the scorecard are geared toward larger communities than exist in Vermont, it provides a good framework for conversations about where schools can be located, and why. <http://www.smartgrowthschools.org>

Public engagement: Effective public engagement is necessary to gain public confidence and establish credibility for the planning and implementation process. Creativity, transparency and clear two-way communication is needed to provide diverse opportunities for involvement and feedback and prompt response to ideas and concerns presented by the public. Success of any project is much more likely if a wide range of community members have a direct and active role in the process.

- **Community Planning Toolbox: Public Engagement** <http://vnrc.org/resources/community-planning-toolbox/issues/public-engagement/>

RPC-Regional Planning Commission: Please see General Resources for more information about RPCs

Renewable Energy

- **Renewable Energy Atlas of Vermont:** An online mapping tool created by the Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund that allows users to analyze existing energy resources and estimate the renewable energy potential of a user-defined region. All data from the analysis can be exported. <http://www.vtenergyatlas.com/>
- **Renewable Energy Vermont:** A nonprofit, nonpartisan trade association representing businesses, individuals, colleges and others committed to reducing reliance on fossil fuels and expanding the availability of renewable sources of power in Vermont. REV members are a resource for information and implementation of projects. <http://www.revermont.org>
- **Solar Powering Your Community: A Guide For Local Governments:** A Department of Energy publication that comprehensively covers how local government policies can create conducive conditions for solar development. Includes a thorough section on solar-ready building guidelines and community solar purchasing and financing. http://www4.eere.energy.gov/solar/sunshot/resource_center/sites/default/files/solar-powering-your-community-guide-for-local-governments.pdf

Riparian buffers: Riparian areas include the banks of rivers, streams, and lakes. Riparian buffers are areas of vegetation on the edges of water bodies. These areas have many benefits including reducing the intensity and duration of floods, reducing the impact of storm events, improving bank stabilization, and providing water quality and ecosystem benefits.

- **Agency of Natural Resources Riparian Buffers and Corridors Technical Paper** <http://www.anr.state.vt.us/site/html/buff/buffer-tech-final.pdf>
- **Land Use Planning and Implementation Manual, topic paper 10, “Flood Control-Hazards Mitigation.”** <http://www.uvm.edu/crs/vpic/pubs/implementation/pdfs/10-Hazards.pdf>

Road policies (i.e., subdivision, new street standards, connectivity, Class IV roads)

- **Land Use Planning and Implementation Manual, topic paper 25, “Roads & Highways.”** <http://www.vpic.info/pubs/implementation/>
- **Community Planning Toolbox: Access Management:** Access management is a set of strategies designed to prevent traffic congestion, increase pedestrian and traffic safety and, in certain circumstances, preserve scenic views along road corridors. <http://vnrc.org/resources/community-planning-toolbox/tools/access-management/>

Sewer and water service areas:

- **Land Use Planning and Implementation Manual, topic paper 8, “Facilities Management.”** <http://www.vpic.info/pubs/implementation/>
- **ANR 2002 Wastewater Funding Rule “Sewer Rule.”** Since 2002, a limited effort has been made to address possible sprawl impacts of new sewer projects. The 2002 Wastewater Funding Rule – which targets funding to projects that encourage smart growth and limits funding for projects that will induce sprawl – remains in place. Though the rule’s implementation has been limited in its effectiveness thus far, communities may benefit from this rule by ensuring that expansion plans limit sprawl, and by citing conformance with this rule in any grant applications.

Smart Growth: Smart growth describes a pattern of land development that uses land efficiently, reinforces community vitality and protects natural resources. At the heart of Smart Growth is the idea of well-designed, compact development that provides diverse housing options; protects farm and forest land; allows for diverse transportation options and less dependence on the automobile; fosters greater social interaction with neighbors; and lowers the cost of public services by using existing infrastructure efficiently. <http://vnrc.org/resources/smart-growth-resources/smart-growth/>

Sprawl: Sprawl is a pattern of land use characterized by dispersed, automobile-dependent development outside of compact urban and village centers, along highways, and in the rural countryside. Sprawl development has low densities in comparison with older centers, a lack of transportation options, fragmented open space, separation of uses into distinct areas, and commercial buildings surrounded by expansive parking. <http://vnrc.org/resources/smart-growth-resources/what-is-sprawl/>

State designation programs: These programs are sponsored by the state, and provide incentives to municipalities who have applied and been accepted as “designated.” The program’s incentives encourage communities to maintain (or create) compact land use patterns for the many economic, environmental, housing, and transportation benefits they provide. Programs include Downtown Designation, Village Center Designation, Growth Centers and New Town Centers.

- **Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development:** Webpage contains information on different types of community revitalization programs, including application processes and available incentives. http://accd.vermont.gov/strong_communities/opportunities/revitalization
- **Community Planning Toolbox: Downtown Designation.** <http://vnrc.org/resources/community-planning-toolbox/tools/downtown-designation/>

Stormwater: Water that runs off impervious surfaces, carrying pollutants into waterways and contributing to flooding and channel instability (see also LID).

- **Low Impact Development Guide for Residential and Small Commercial Sites** http://www.vtwaterquality.org/planning/docs/pl_LID_Guide.pdf
- **US E.P.A. National Menu of Stormwater Best Management Practices.** These are a starting point for managing stormwater, but communities may choose to pursue measures beyond this. <http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater/menuofbmps/>
- **The Better Back Roads Manual:** This manual offers low-cost techniques for maintaining gravel backroads while also improving water quality in Vermont. http://www.nvtrcd.org/custom-2/2009/Better_Backroads_Manual.pdf
- **South Burlington Stormwater Services website:** In 2005 the city of South Burlington established a stormwater utility as an approach to managing runoff. The utility is responsible for developing and maintaining a “comprehensive stormwater program and plan for needed capital improvements.” It is funded by user fees that are based on the amount of impervious surface (such as rooftops, driveways, and walkways) on a property. <http://www.sburstormwater.com>

Support municipal board members: Good land use planning and implementation requires on-going training for all involved in the process. Volunteer boards put in countless hours doing the work of local government, and resources are available to make this work easier. As you review various needs and training opportunities, consider working with your selectboard or city council to ensure that there is a budget for your board or commission, and that it includes funds earmarked for training.

- **Vermont League of Cities & Towns Municipal Assistance Center:** The Municipal Assistance Center (MAC) is comprised of six professionals with diverse backgrounds in municipal law, public management, municipal research and water quality protection. Their mission is to provide local officials with the education, training and professional assistance they need to fulfill their statutory duties. <http://www.vlct.org/municipal-assistance-center/overview/>
- **Education and Training:** <http://www.vpic.info/edtraining/>

Town center: “Town center” is the term used in this Scorecard to refer to Vermont’s historic, compact downtowns and villages. These compact areas are often surrounded by rural countryside, are walkable, and include a mix of business, residential, and civic buildings. See also “state designation programs” above.

Town forest

- **The Vermont Town Forest Stewardship Guide: A Community Users Manual for Town Forests:** This guide highlights best practices from model town forests across Vermont to help communities maximize the potential of their town forests, from forest management and timber production techniques to strategies for engaging the community through forest-based recreation and education. <http://www.communitiescommittee.org/pdfs/TownForestStewardshipGuide.pdf>
- **Urban and Community Forestry Program, Vermont Division of Forestry:** This program provides assistance to towns that are interested in promoting the stewardship of urban and rural landscapes to enhance the quality of life in Vermont communities. This program also runs the SOUL Tree Stewards Program for interested community members. http://www.vtfpr.org/urban/for_urbcomm.cfm

Town health officer: Town health officers can be a resource for local public health planning.

including healthy community design. <http://healthvermont.gov/local/tho/tho.aspx#about>

Town plan and planning

- **Community Planning Toolbox: Comprehensive planning:** Preparing a municipal plan provides an opportunity for a community’s residents and landowners to join together in an open dialogue about their shared future. The plan provides a structure to determine how the community will meet the future demand for services and public facilities, manage growth and ensure that residents have access to housing. It also articulates a vision of the future and the steps to achieving that vision. In Vermont, communities are strongly encouraged (but not required) to plan for their future as a means of achieving state goals in an inclusive manner that respects – and builds upon – the strengths and resources of local communities. <http://www.smartgrowthvermont.org/toolbox/issues/comprehensiveplanning/>

Transit (regional transportation organization): Transit providers exist throughout Vermont; review this list as a first step towards understanding what is available and how it might be expanded. <http://www.aot.state.vt.us/PublicTransit/providers.htm>

UVA (Use Value Appraisal, or Current Use): Use Value Appraisal, or “Current Use” as it is commonly known, is a property tax incentive available to owners of agricultural and forestland in Vermont. Eligible landowners can enroll in the program to have their land appraised at its Current Use (farming or forestry) value rather than fair market value. This method of appraisal results in significant property tax savings to the landowner in every year that the land remains enrolled in the program. <http://vnrc.org/resources/community-planning-toolbox/tools/current-use-taxation/>

Zoning

- **General information Land Use Planning and Implementation Manual, topic paper 30, “Zoning Regulations.”** <http://www.vpic.info/pubs/implementation/>
- **Business development** Regulations that promote Smart Growth principles also promote vibrant downtowns and businesses by placing housing – and as a result, customers – close to businesses. Please see “State Designation Programs” above and “Compact centers surrounded by rural countryside” below for ideas about planning and zoning for vibrant businesses
- **Compact centers surrounded by rural countryside Community Planning Toolbox: Mixed Use Development:** <http://vnrc.org/resources/community-planning-toolbox/tools/mixed-use-development/>
- **Supporting agriculture and related enterprises – Facilitating Innovative Agricultural Enterprises: Considerations and Example Language for Vermont Municipalities** This publication discusses the state of regulation surrounding on-farm enterprises, and provides sample language for how municipalities may consider and promote these via the municipal plan and bylaws. <http://www.vermontplanners.org/Documents/Publications/FIAGe052012.pdf>
- **For forest practices** – Zoning for forest practices ensures that sawmills and related processing facilities are allowed in appropriate zoning districts, so that they can support the local forest products industry. **Coming soon!** <http://vnrc.org/resources/community-planning-toolbox>