Municipal Priorities

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VLCT's Municipal Legislative Priorities for 2026

The VLCT Board of Directors has adopted the **municipal priorities for 2026**. These priorities were drawn from the more comprehensive Municipal Policy in order to guide the VLCT Board of Directors, advocacy staff, and members in effectively advocating for Vermont local governments. In Vermont, local government resources and authority are severely constrained by state law (statutes). Cities and towns need the funding, flexibility, and professional capacity to meet today's challenges, and VLCT articulates these needs to the Vermont General Assembly (state legislature).



VLCT Municipal Legislative Priorities

Support municipalities in meeting the obligations and functions of today's local government and take **action** on issues of statewide importance.

2026

Lower Property Taxes

Authorize and enable municipalities to raise local revenue, control expenses, and avoid state-to-municipal cost shifts.

Build Housing

Support the creation of the new housing that municipalities need, have envisioned and planned for, and allow in local zoning.

Promote Public Safety

Support municipalities in delivering public safety and fulfill the state's obligation to deliver public health and human services.

Prioritize Transportation

Fund and fix the municipal roads and bridges that all Vermonters rely on.

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Lower Property Taxes

Authorize and enable municipalities to raise local revenue, control expenses, and avoid state-to-municipal cost shifts.

- Return the growing Payment In Lieu Of Taxes (PILOT) Fund surplus to the municipalities that raised it.
- Alleviate local tax burdens by holding municipalities harmless for uncollected state property taxes.
- Share revenue with municipalities supporting cannabis retail and cultivation industries.
- Create a monetary cap for municipal liability commensurate with the State's.
- Provide local voters with the authority to impose municipal service fees on properties with state-mandated property tax exemptions.
- Require local legislative body approval of the county operating budget.
- Increase per parcel payments and provide small-town minimums to cover the modern cost of grand list maintenance, appraisal, and appeal.
- Modernize Public Records Law to support compliance and allow municipalities to recover the true cost of producing records.

Build Housing

Support the creation of the new housing that municipalities need, have envisioned and planned for, and allow in local zoning.

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- Allow for new municipal authority to impose taxes and raise fees to regulate short-term rentals.
- Match state property tax relief with municipal stabilization agreements to support infill-scale housing development.
- Accelerate brownfield cleanup and redevelopment.
- Further limit appeals of housing projects within Tier 1 areas.
- Extend temporary Act 250 exemptions and delay implementation of the Road Rule and Tier 3 jurisdiction.
- Eliminate requirements for municipal enforcement of existing Act 250 permits within Tier 1A areas.
- Exempt agricultural activity from municipal regulation, except for in Act 250 exempted areas.

Promote Public Safety

Support municipalities in delivering public safety and fulfill the state's obligation to deliver public health and human services.

- Keep perpetrators of serious and violent offenses in Vermont state custody pending extradition, or waiver of extradition, to the state where the warrant is held.
- Establish a default statewide ban on firearms in designated municipal buildings/property, from which a municipality may opt out.
- Create felony charge for reckless endangerment with a firearm.
- Institute flexible alternatives to the residential Vermont Police Academy training program.

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- Require that existing state case management personnel provide field-based services including pretrial supervision and services by DOC.
- Mandate the Agency of Human Services to reinstate public inebriate programs.
- Provide stable, reliable, and ongoing funding for providers of field-based and other services that support individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness.
- Support the creation of emergency cold weather, temporary, and permanent shelters, including opening State buildings and/or land, sufficient to double the total shelter bed capacity statewide up to 1,200 beds.
- Provide municipalities with resources to remove hazardous materials from encampments and public spaces.

Prioritize Transportation

Fund and fix the municipal roads and bridges that all Vermonters rely on.

- Diversify and increase Transportation Fund revenue sources.
- Direct the full Purchase and Use Tax on motor vehicles to the Transportation Fund.
- Remit a portion of registration fees and excess weight permit fees to the municipality in which the vehicle is registered.
- Fully fund core municipal transportation programs – Town Highway Aid, Town Structures, and Town Bridges – according to need.
- Provide incentives for municipalities to take over state highways that function as main streets.
- Allow VTrans to enter into agreements with municipalities for use of state-owned equipment for small transportation projects.

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