2027-2028 Municipal Policy

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Developed by VLCT's Policy Committee, the VLCT 2027-2028 Municipal Policy was approved unanimously by all voting members at the VLCT Annual Meeting on October 6, 2026.

Municipal Guiding Principles

Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) supports:

1. a robust and transparent partnership between state and local government;
2. granting municipalities authority to develop and implement local ordinances and regulations to address matters that primarily concern their communities;
3. intermunicipal collaboration to develop regional governance structures that provide the technical, administrative, and financial scale necessary to tackle multi-jurisdictional issues without dismantling local control;
4. creating sustainable funding for municipalities beyond the property tax to ensure every municipality can meet its obligations, including sharing revenue collected or raised at the municipal level;
5. fair access to public services, the encouragement of broad participation in civic life, and the use of evidence-based approaches to improve communities and address documented disparities;
6. flexibility and discretion in implementing state statutory and regulatory requirements, consistent with applicable law and local circumstances;
7. local discretion to pursue sustainable housing, economic development, recovery, and resiliency, including substantial deference to municipal planning, zoning, and siting decisions;
8. including local officials in determining changes in local response to emergency situations;
9. state collection of fees and taxes assessed to implement statewide goals;

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10. resources to provide sustainable public safety, fire protection, and emergency medical services; and
11. direct aid to municipalities to mitigate the effects of economic distress.

Each new obligation imposed on municipalities without sufficient funding to cover its costs results in increased municipal property taxes or fees. VLCT opposes all unfunded mandates, pre-emption of municipal action, regulatory overreach by state agencies not supported in statute, and cost shifts to local government. We urge the completion of fiscal impact statements that itemize potential shifts in costs to local governments prior to action being taken by the legislature or administration.

1. FINANCE, ADMINISTRATION, AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS (FAIR)

1.1 Priorities

1. Provide municipalities with technical assistance and funding necessary to meet existing obligations;
2. Avoid the creation of new layers of government in solving local capacity challenges and instead focus on empowering local governments to band together to create councils of government and other intermunicipal agreements to reach scale;
3. Designate the State Ethics Commission to receive, investigate, and report on municipal ethics complaints for elected and appointed officials; and require the

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commission to establish a process to resolve municipal complaints within 90 days;

4. Provide adequate funding and resources to the State Ethics Commission to support municipal services;
5. Give Vermonters new tools to hold municipal officials accountable by authorizing municipalities, at a town meeting, to hold recall elections with appropriate safeguards for election integrity; and
6. Universally authorize municipal revenues beyond the municipal property tax rate.

1.2 Vermont Tax Structure Overhaul

1. Establish a municipal revenue sharing program that provides sustainable, reliable annual funding to every municipality to support the delivery of services, innovative programs, and maintenance of infrastructure;
2. Reform Vermont's tax system to ensure sustainability, affordability, equity, and balance;
3. Provide local voters with the authority to impose municipal service fees on properties that are exempt from property tax;
4. Authorize variable municipal property tax rates using the property tax classifications created in Act 170 of 2026;
5. Authorize municipal gross receipts tax for amusements, hotels, short-term rentals, and transportation use;
6. Authorize an additional 1% on existing Local Option Tax categories by a vote of the town;
7. Remit a share of state revenues from non-property taxes, including from land gains, property transfer tax, and consumption taxes, to the municipality where the property is located; and

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8. Support the recruitment and retention of the municipal workforce by making VMERS pensions exempt from state income tax.

1.3 K-12 Education

1. Establish a transparent education finance system that reduces the education property tax and links voters' actions in approving budgets to the taxes they pay to fund their school districts;
2. Revise Vermont's education funding system and annually evaluate school district budgets;
3. Use Education Fund monies only for pre-K-12 education;
4. Authorize the local legislative body to appoint a replacement member representing that municipality to a consolidated school board in the event of a vacancy until an election is held;
5. Establish a cap on the annual increase of education property tax rates that the legislature may enact;
6. Acknowledge the burden on education property taxpayers and assure that skyrocketing residential property values do not prevent Vermonters from staying in their homes;
7. Ensure that no property owner pays less than $0 in education property taxes; and
8. Hold municipalities harmless from paying education property taxes that are uncollected due to delinquencies; provide for zero interest borrowing to municipalities for the purpose of remitting state property tax revenues; and
9. Better inform state education tax policy by tracking and reporting state property tax delinquency and collection annually.

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1.4 Open Meeting, Public Records, and Election Laws

1. Apply the Open Meeting Law and Public Records Act to the legislative branch of state government;
2. Provide adequate funding and practical recommendations to municipalities that enable them to comply with Open Meeting Law and Public Records Act mandates;
3. Modernize public records law to support compliance and allow municipalities to recover the true cost of producing records; clarify statute to allow municipalities to charge fees for reviewing records;
4. Amend the Public Records Act to reduce individuals' ability to harass public officials with repetitive public records requests; and
5. Extend period to comply with initial public records requests.

1.5 Protecting and Enhancing Municipal Finance

1. Adequately resource the transformation of Vermont's property valuation, parcel identification, and property tax system; appropriately provide for the state's share of training, compensation, and overhead expenses of municipal listers, assessors, and boards of civil authority;
2. Provide collectors of delinquent taxes the resources and authority to collect unpaid taxes in compliance with Act 106; and allow municipalities to change method of delinquent tax collection without a vote of the town if the delinquent tax collector is unable to fulfill their duties;
3. Eliminate the mandate that local governments take over non-municipal cemeteries unless the state pays for the expenses to do so;

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4. Continue state funding of education for local officials whose responsibilities include complying with state performance standards;
5. Revise the formula for payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) for state-owned property specified in 32 V.S.A. § 3701–3707.
6. Return existing and any future surplus in the PILOT fund to municipalities;
7. Provide aggregate data to municipalities assessing Local Option Taxes that demonstrate which sectors are paying LOT; establish a mechanism for auditing LOT revenues to the assessing municipality;
8. Make PILOT payments to assessing municipalities on a quarterly basis;
9. Increase clerk fees and establish a three-year cycle for reviewing and updating them consistent with the schedule for state fees; and
10. Adopt for municipalities the monetary damages cap that the legislature has enacted for the State but not municipalities.

1.6 Intermunicipal Cooperation and the Regionalization of Public Services

1. Assure that intermunicipal agreements and regional efforts that provide for delivering services at a scale of two or more municipalities are optional and self-directed;
2. Promote intermunicipal efforts by funding and supporting the necessary technical assistance, legal guidance, and local capacity necessary to implement new intermunicipal authorities;
3. Maintain authority and oversight for intermunicipal services at the municipal legislative body, or to an authority appointed by the legislative body;
4. Allow municipalities and other subdivisions of state government to jointly exercise shared authorities similar to the Minnesota Joint Powers Act; and

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5. Authorize collaborative procurement between municipalities and other subdivisions of state government.

1.7 Intergovernmental Relations

1. Support the recruitment and retention of municipal workers by reforming the VMERS system to control increasing contribution costs and allow for more flexible benefit plan enrollment, later career revisions, and better coordination with the state pension system;
2. Make accurate and timely aggregated tax return data available to municipalities to address a range of issues, including short-term rentals and local option tax collections, to facilitate audits and inform local decision making;
3. Require local legislative body approval of the county operating budget;
4. Transition county sheriff's office to two-year terms; and
5. Ensure equitable access of public safety services statewide by creating minimum qualifications for candidates running for county sheriff.

1.8 Health Care

1. Assure that every community has access to affordable, accessible, quality health care; and
2. Address the root causes of the escalation in cost for health care services and commit to controlling the costs of the health care system.

2. TRANSPORTATION

2.1 Priorities

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1. Simplify funding, permitting, and program administration to maximize use of all state and federal dollars;
2. Ensure transparency and collaboration with municipalities when developing the transportation budget and allocating funds to cities, towns, and villages;
3. Provide enough funding to municipalities to build and maintain a modern transportation system that can withstand increased use, the impacts of climate change, and other safety demands;
4. Develop diverse and sustainable Transportation Fund funding sources that achieve the state goal of reducing fossil fuel usage, are commensurate with use of state and local transportation infrastructure, capture usage by out of state visitors, consider the reality of rural residents' road usage, reduce total vehicle miles traveled, and reduce crash fatalities;
5. Secure additional funding for core municipal transportation programs (Town Highway Aid, Town Structures, Town Bridges) sufficient to pay for statutory obligations to provide safe transportation for the traveling public;
6. Encourage adoption of the "Complete Streets" program, finalize updated State Design Standards, and incorporate their principles into projects, including in rural villages and on town highways;
7. Establish policies that empower municipalities to reduce local emissions, increase resiliency to the effects of climate change, and participate in the transition to a cleaner energy economy;
8. Authorize municipalities to set speed limits on roads below 25 mph; and
9. Provide new funding to electrify vehicles and equipment and install charging infrastructure.

2.2 Additional Funding Priorities

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1. Ensure that funding for local transportation meets current local assessments of documented needs and design standards;
2. Remit a portion of vehicle registration fee to the municipality in which the vehicle is registered to support the municipal road maintenance budget;
3. Provide funding and technical support so town highways, culverts, and bridges are accurately rated for weights they carry;
4. Fund, design, and build resilient infrastructure that can withstand more extreme weather and meet stormwater management standards through construction, upon completion, and in the next storm;
5. Ensure that funding for the Town Non-Federal Disaster Fund is sufficient to cover municipal costs resulting from natural or human-caused disasters, regardless of a Federal Disaster Declaration;
6. Appropriately fund programs such as Complete Streets, alternative transportation, and bike–pedestrian improvements through block grants to achieve implementation success;
7. Establish adequate state funding of right-sized, efficient public transit services that , preserve existing routes, support social services and advance transportation priorities of a state-wide system;
8. Support the design-bid-build process in all VTrans funded projects;
9. Use mileage-based user fee revenue to leverage federal match dollars and support local transportation investment;
10. Retain revenues from the Vehicle Use and Purchase tax within the state Transportation Fund;
11. Authorize municipal non-property tax revenues – including special assessments for town highway frontage, local fees assessed on vehicle registration, local fuel consumption tax, and tolls on non-interstate highways – to fund town highways, bridges, and structures; and

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12. Authorize new and increased state investment in town highways, bridges, and structures, including low- and no-interest revolving loan funds and enhanced funding from state revenues for the Local Option Transportation Fund.

2.3 State and Local Cooperation

1. Improve VTrans's response, communication, and cooperation with municipalities;
2. Provide incentives to municipalities to take over state highways that function as main streets;
3. Eliminate provisions in VTrans's master license agreements that require municipalities to indemnify VTrans or the railroads on activities related to municipal projects;
4. Establish deference to local experience and conditions when studying speed limits on state highways;
5. Allow VTrans district transportation administrators to enter into agreements, and intermunicipal agreements, to allow municipalities to use specialized equipment;
6. Establish state tracking of municipal paving projects and town highway to inform funding needs and prioritize Class 1, 2, and 3 highway paving needs statewide;
7. Consult with municipalities when deciding where to install rumble strips on state highways and paved Class 2 highways;
8. Require advance notice to municipalities and the opportunity to attend bridge inspections conducted by state engineers; and
9. Make the town highway and bridge rating standard commensurate with the state rating of 80,000 pounds.

2.4 Commercial Vehicles

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1. Develop a statewide and state-run process for permitting overweight or oversized vehicles on all roads administered at the district level;
2. Index and raise vehicle registration fees to axle weight and remit fees to the Transportation Fund;
3. Remit a portion of overweight permitting fees to municipalities; and
4. Require commercial, forestry, and agricultural custom service vehicles to comply with all motor vehicle laws when operating on state and local highways.

2.5 Rail

1. Require all railroad-related projects to comply with all environmental regulations;
2. Require rail companies to notify municipalities of hazardous materials they are transporting through or storing within a municipality;
3. Work with railroad companies to prohibit trains from speeding in downtown areas;
4. Extend and enhance passenger rail service between Vermont and major northeast metro areas as soon as practicable;
5. Authorize municipalities to extend municipal amenities and infrastructure under or across railroad tracks to serve residents with no railroad-imposed annual charge, ensure access to maintain them, and protect municipalities from liability for accidents caused by the railroad or VTrans that affect those lines; and
6. Require all railroads and railroad-related projects to maintain stormwater and flood resiliency infrastructure so as not to damage municipal infrastructure and to disclose the condition of such infrastructure to host municipalities.

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3. PUBLIC SAFETY

3.1 Priorities

1. Implement initiatives that reverse the critical shortage of public safety personnel statewide and that implement new ways to recruit and retain them;
2. Implement law enforcement principles of procedural justice and continued efforts to ensure:
3. fair, equitable, and impartial law enforcement;
4. building trust and legitimacy in communities including marginalized, vulnerable, and disadvantaged populations;
5. sound policy and oversight mechanisms in accordance with the governance structure of the municipality;
6. best practices in the use of technology and social media;
7. community policing principles that include crime reduction strategies;
8. ongoing training and education to employees;
9. officer wellness, safety, mental health, and critical incident stress management; and
10. sufficient funding to attain these goals;
11. Provide public safety officials with the technology, authority, information, training, funding, and revenue to ensure the above law enforcement services;
12. Ensure statewide access to affordable state-of-the-art telecommunications services that benefit public safety and first responders and builds the economy;
13. Support Fire Departments and Emergency Medical Services in meeting OSHA/VOSHA standards;
14. Preserve qualified immunity for law enforcement and all government officials; and

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15. Permit municipalities to provide tax incentives to assist in recruiting firefighters and explore other possible means of increasing Fire Department staffing.

3.2 Opioid Crisis

1. Establish funding to increase the availability of on-demand substance use disorder and mental health treatment services, including inpatient services;
2. Extend eligibility for Medicaid reimbursement to substance use disorder treatment;
3. Provide funding to establish and maintain sober housing alternatives;
4. Increase efforts to disrupt, arrest, and prosecute drug dealers and suppliers;
5. Assure that policies balance and deliver treatment, accountability, and enforcement services;
6. Support the expansion of syringe exchange service programs; reimburse or fund municipal safe needle collection;
7. Support new models of delivering mental health crisis and public inebriate beds; and
8. Implement authorized administration of buprenorphine by EMTs and paramedics for all municipal emergency service agencies.

3.3 Judiciary and Accountability

1. Improve the judicial system's capacity to require accountability for offenders' actions;
2. Sufficiently fund and staff the Vermont Statewide Treatment Court and implement recommendations for improvement;
3. Establish accountability for transparent, accurate, and timely reporting of data on judicial disposition of cases, individual recidivism, and recovery rates, to assure the safety of the public;

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4. Modernize retail theft laws and allow for flexibility in sentencing for repeat offenses, including when repeat charges are made while the defendant is released with condition;
5. Create a felony charge for reckless endangerment with a firearm;
6. 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; and
7. Fund and implement accountability court for repeat offenders statewide, using data-informed program improvements that address recidivism.

3.4 State, Local, and Regional Cooperation

1. Incentivize and provide ongoing funding and assistance to support municipalities that explore, consolidate, integrate, or regionalize public safety services;
2. Establish systemic criminal justice reforms that address the drivers of crime and reduce re-offending;
3. Provide for sealing of criminal records in place of their expungement to ensure protection of victims and the public;
4. Authorize a Vermont law enforcement officer to make an arrest based on a warrant from another state;
5. Maintain the independent status and function of the E-911 Board;
6. Assure that all dispatch systems are compatible and can communicate with one another;
7. Ensure that equal access to emergency services exists in rural communities;

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8. Establish a default statewide ban on firearms in designated municipal buildings/property, from which an individual municipality may opt out; and
9. Provide clarity and education on state regulation of electric powered bicycles, motos, and other recreational vehicles and allow for appropriate local regulations and enforcement of their use.

3.5 Corrections

1. Develop collaborative solutions among all affected stakeholders to manage incapacitated persons;
2. Require the Department of Corrections (DOC) to notify local officials of changes in offenders' status, particularly those at risk to re-offend, collaborate with local officials in the placement of released persons, and assure that reasonable support and supervision are in place to protect the community, victim, and offender;
3. Adhere to municipal zoning in approving and providing housing for offenders in state custody or under pretrial supervision, and ensure adequate support services for those individuals;
4. Authorize DOC officials to serve citations and domestic abuse orders to offenders in correctional facilities in lieu of municipal police officers serving them; and
5. Encourage corrections department personnel to provide field-based services, including for pretrial supervision.

3.6 Public Safety Funding

1. Urgently establish a systemic approach to financially support call handling and dispatch emergency services for implementation by FY29;

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2. Increase cooperation of state agencies for incident response on interstate and state highways to share the burden currently placed on local public safety departments;
3. Authorize local emergency service agencies to recover all costs associated with complying with any federal, state, or court-ordered licensing, registration, training, or testing requirements;
4. Provide funding to municipalities to undertake drug investigations at the local level;
5. Continue to support and fund state increased Medicaid reimbursement rates for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) to cover the actual cost of care; and
6. Share a portion of the state excise tax on the sale of recreational cannabis products with the municipality where the cannabis retailer is located.

3.7 Public Safety Training

1. Institute flexible no residency and low residency alternatives to the existing Vermont Police Academy training program;
2. Provide adequate funding and resources to the Vermont Fire Academy, the Vermont Police Academy, and the Department of Health for certified training programs and activities for all emergency services personnel;
3. Ensure that statutorily authorized training mandates and the associated impacts on public safety personnel and agencies are current, necessary, and appropriate to an officer's level of experience;
4. Focus Vermont Police Academy funding and training on core law enforcement responsibilities, including the VLCT Board adopted document entitled Perspectives on Police Reform;
5. Provide adequate funding to ensure appropriate levels of staffing and training to each sector of the public safety community;

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6. Implement standards for providing reciprocity with other states' training programs;
7. Continue to fund training for emergency medical service providers; and
8. Create additional opportunities outside of existing state-sponsored programming – such as through tech centers, colleges and universities, and non-traditional education providers – to enable more Vermonters to become certified public safety officials, including police, fire fighters, and emergency medical service providers.

4. QUALITY OF LIFE AND HOUSING

4.1 Priorities

1. Enable every municipality in the state to grow economic vitality by encouraging and facilitating community-driven economic development;
2. Establish new sources of adequate, ongoing funding to invest in infrastructure in downtowns, new town centers, villages, and any area in which state or local policies encourage housing or economic development;
3. The state is responsible for providing transitional and supportive housing for Vermonters. The state must lead homelessness prevention and response efforts including establishing and following a plan to address unit production, mental health service delivery, substance misuse treatment, and homeless shelter creation; and
4. Protect and support statutory authority and local processes for municipalities to determine the form and density of future development through local planning and regulation; oppose state and regional preemption of municipal zoning and subdivision bylaw.

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4.2 Housing and Economic Growth

1. Establish funding and incentives that support the variety of housing needed across the state and which have been encouraged through recent housing legislation;
2. Authorize municipalities to raise revenues sufficient to appropriately regulate short-term rentals for life safety and to protect against negative impacts to the environment and local housing inventory;
3. Implement policies that encourage, but do not mandate, models of high-density, multi-unit housing, because solutions to the housing crisis must be appropriate to the size and planning priorities of every municipality;
4. Direct housing incentives and programs to areas designated in municipal plans and provide for potable water and wastewater system capacity in those places;
5. Prioritize funding and regulatory reform to facilitate design, construction, and maintenance of infrastructure to support development and redevelopment of the wide variety of housing Vermonters need (workforce, elderly, downsizing, middle income, affordable, and supportive);
6. Allow for flexible posting requirements for municipal permitting bodies;
7. Create and maintain programs to enable municipalities to invest in infrastructure that supports a transformational economic development project in the community;
8. Continue to authorize tax increment financing for public infrastructure that supports housing and economic development, including through the Community Housing and Infrastructure Program; ensure that all Vermont municipalities may participate and benefit; and
9. Authorize state and local property tax stabilization agreements for small scale, priority economic and housing developments.

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10. Improve quality of multi-unit housing by supporting providers to directly manage disruptive guests and home takeovers.

4.3 Local Land Use and Act 250 Regulatory Reform

1. Oppose the preemption of local zoning and subdivision bylaw in state law or regional plans;
2. Provide adequate funding and support, and ensure municipal input when implementing new land-use mapping and Act 250 location-based jurisdiction;

3. Ensure that the Community Investment Program (replaces Downtown Designation Program) defers to municipal plans and authority when transitioning existing designated areas, granting new areas, and offering benefits;
4. Base development decisions upon adopted municipal plans and use adopted regional plans as guidance documents;
5. Advance strategies to reduce the volume and burden of permit appeals;
6. When state law creates new bylaw preemptions, allow the municipality to expedite updates to local zoning and bylaw through an action of the legislative body; and
7. Allow penalty-free disenrollment from the Current Use program specifically for the creation of workforce housing for agricultural and working lands enterprises.

8. Allow penalty-free disenrollment from the Current Use program specifically for municipal lands required for clean water projects, potable water and wastewater systems, and other public infrastructure necessary for safe and affordable housing.

4.4 Homelessness and Human Services

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1. Reform the General Assistance Hotel/Motel Emergency Housing program to ensure equitable and proportionate impact on municipalities;
2. Coordinate with municipal officials when the state creates or provides temporary housing or shelter in a municipality and require the state provide necessary support services and/or appropriate local funding;
3. Establish a statewide, integrated approach for wellness, critical incident stress management, mental health, and substance use disorder services across health, human services, first responders, and public safety departments and agencies;
4. Work to create opportunities for state leaders to work with local leaders and area stakeholders to create additional shelter capabilities;
5. Provide municipalities with resources to provide basic public health amenities and remove hazardous materials from encampments and public spaces;
6. Prioritize funding for providers of field-based services (municipal, non-profit, and designated agencies), including for day shelter, emergency shelter, community outreach, and case management services; and
7. Support existing state case management personnel in providing field-based services.

5. ENVIRONMENT

5.1 Priorities

1. Authorize and support municipalities in developing regional governance structures that provide the administrative and financial scale necessary to tackle environmental issues that cross municipal boundaries;
2. Provide municipalities with new resources, authority, and avenues for intermunicipal collaboration to respond to the impacts of climate change;

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3. Charge the State with the responsibility of managing rivers, streams, and watersheds for resiliency and recovery;
4. In collaboration with local governments, develop coordinated, long-term, statewide recovery plans that address the wide range of resiliency and rebuilding needs across agencies, services, and municipalities;
5. Provide proactive support through outreach, technical assistance, increased state funding, and user supported financing for brownfield assessment, clean-up, and redevelopment;
6. Reform the 3-Acre Rule General Permit implementation to consider cost, feasibility, and effectiveness in reducing stormwater impacts and maintain municipal authority to operate stormwater utility districts;
7. State land conservation goals and Act 59 implementation must balance private property rights, municipal grand list values, statewide equity in conserved lands, and environmental justice principles;
8. Ensure that state environmental regulations and requirements align with state housing goals and support economic and community development in designated areas;
9. Promote a culture and system framework in the Agency of Natural Resources that prioritizes feasibility and outcomes; and
10. Reduce duplicate regulatory frameworks and permitting requirements.

5.2 Climate and Environment

1. Share federal and state resources to assist in local resilience and adaptation efforts;
2. Ensure ongoing funding for the Flood Resilient Communities Fund (the state buyout program for flood-impacted properties) including relocation and rebuilding of municipal properties in flood danger;

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3. Implement policies that empower municipalities to reduce emissions across all sectors, plan for and increase resiliency to the effects of climate change, and transition to cleaner energy sources;
4. Increase state energy code compliance without clouding property titles or imposing further mandates or administrative burdens on municipalities;
5. Provide accessible, low-barrier funding for weatherization efforts at scale;
6. Ensure local input and control over siting and permitting of energy projects, including decisions about building close to where energy will be used;
7. Hold municipalities harmless from liability for presence or consequences of forever chemicals;
8. Relax regulations that require relocation of lightly contaminated urban soil, accounting for policies to encourage economic development and housing in urban locations;
9. Increase funding for brownfield cleanup and redevelopment; and
10. Allow municipalities to protect habitat blocks, forest blocks, river corridors, wetlands for carbon sequestration and resiliency, flood and stormwater mitigation, and aquifer recharge through established local planning processes.

5.3 Agency of Natural Resources System Improvement

1. Produce efficient and coordinated permitting, grant management, program management, and enforcement of regulations across the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR);
2. Direct and authorize leadership in ANR and the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to:
3. Provide leadership in developing regional solutions in pursuit of conservation and resiliency initiatives.

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4. Undertake a comprehensive review of all rules with the objective of reducing burdens and liabilities to municipalities.
5. Require rule revisions that balance conservation and resiliency objectives with municipal capacity and societal needs in Vermont and prohibit “Interim Strategies” and “Guidelines” as substitutes for duly adopted rules.
6. Resolve regulatory conflicts in favor of the programs or requirements that produce the most economically feasible environmental benefits whenever compliance projects encounter conflicting requirements among programs.
7. Whenever possible, provide a “service provider model” for technical and planning assistance; and
8. Ensure timely responses from ANR at all levels and in all programs regarding permit and permit renewal requirements, and clear guidance for implementing those requirements.

5.4 Vermont Clean Water Act Funding and Implementation

1. Ensure that federal and state funding instead of competitive grants pay for federal and Vermont Clean Water Act priorities;
2. Provide sufficient funding for project development including research, planning, design, and scoping to ensure that projects will successfully implement mandates such as Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) General Permits, Vermont’s Stormwater Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs), Combined Sewer Systems, and Municipal Road General Permits (MRGPs);
3. Afford relief from permit compliance deadlines when corresponding funding is delayed or eliminated;
4. Prohibit diverting Revolving Clean Water funds to other purposes;

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5. Update river corridor plans and develop a hazard mitigation plan that promotes reductions to the impacts of natural disasters including flooding;
6. Direct VTrans to develop a statewide inventory of private properties where owners have installed stormwater and flood resiliency controls and make the inventory available not only to the state but also to municipalities;
7. Authorize municipalities to require private property owners to install and maintain stormwater and flood resiliency controls outside of the public right-of-way to prevent damage to municipal and state highways;
8. Revise the technical assumptions underlying the original TMDL modeling to determine whether current compliance obligations remain appropriately calibrated using today's science prior to assessing or enforcing per parcel fees and implementation of clean water projects on developed lands;
9. Reform the 3-acre permit rule to allow cost to be a factor in determining the feasibility and approval of engineered treatments, remove dispersed residential neighborhoods without common ownership, and only require treatment at the time of redevelopment; and
10. Allow municipalities to separate publicly owned facilities (such as town roads) from private parcels under 3-acre permits.

5.5 Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLS)

1. Direct ANR to track and publish up-to-date data on the cost to construct TMDL-compliant projects to ensure consistency, transparency, and unified standards;
2. Allow permitted entities to pursue water quality gains elsewhere in the drainage basin when the cost of treatment at facilities within regulatory boundaries reaches an excessive benefit-to-cost ratio;
3. Ensure fair, effective, efficient spending of local, state, and federal dollars to achieve TMDL goals;

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4. Subject potential mitigation efforts to a cost-effectiveness analysis and base implementation on that analysis; and
5. Reduce and cost-effectively infiltrate runoff from non-point sources of pollution on all properties.

5.6 Potable Water and Wastewater Permitting

1. Enforce provisions of the Wastewater Systems and Potable Water Supplies Program, including requirements to repair or replace failed on-site septic systems;
2. Establish sufficient funding to municipalities to protect public health by ensuring availability of potable water supplies and to test for, remediate, and manage per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) contamination;
3. Regulate emerging contaminants at the source instead of the point of discharge in a science-based and economically feasible manner;
4. Redefine “waters of the state” to exclude constructed waterworks such as reservoirs, settling ponds, and any infrastructure related to water supplies;
5. Apply new permitting requirements only upon expiration of the permit term and renewal; and
6. Adopt modernized septic and well regulations.

5.7 Materials Management

1. Hold municipalities harmless from liability for any hazardous material incident at any facility or property that conforms with all state and federal permits and regulations;
2. Hold municipalities harmless from liability for any PFAS-related contamination;
3. In state regulation and permitting, consider the entire treatment cycle and the useful life or capacity of the facility, and ensure in-state disposal for septage, residuals, recyclables, contaminated soils, and solid waste;

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4. Develop a plan for locating solid waste management facilities (landfills) closer to the point of waste production to reduce the carbon footprint of waste transportation, increase efficiency, and protect Vermont's waters; and
5. Incentivize and fairly compensate municipalities for hosting solid waste facilities and transfer stations.

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