

**Testimony to House
Transportation Committee
Regarding VLCT's 2025
Priorities**



To: Chair Matt Walker, House Transportation Committee

From: Josh Hanford, Director of Intergovernmental Relations; Samantha Sheehan, Municipal Policy and Advocacy Specialist

Date: February 5, 2025

RE: 2025 VLCT Transportation Priorities: Build Resiliency, Invest Locally

We look forward to working in partnership with you in the coming biennium to help Vermont's cities and towns meet the obligations and functions of today's local government and take the action needed to solve the challenges of the 21st century. **Every city and town in Vermont, including yours, is a member of the Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT), the nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that was founded in 1967 to serve and strengthen Vermont local government.**

We ask that you join us in understanding the concerns and needs of selectboards, city councils, town managers, clerks, treasurers, planning commission members, police officers, fire fighters, road crews, and other municipal officials. Our [2025 Municipal Priorities](#) reflect the most urgent concerns facing Vermont's communities and the specific policy actions where we believe there is the greatest consensus among local officials, lawmakers, and our shared constituents. **Our current services and programs include:**

- Educational workshops and consulting for local officials so that they can provide excellent service to their residents, businesses, and visitors
- Comprehensive insurance coverage for municipalities
- A Municipal Assistance Center for low-cost professional services and confidential legal guidance from a team of experienced municipal law attorneys
- A new Municipal Operations Support team funded by a \$1 million USDA Rural Development grant to assist with financial management, grant funding, ARPA, project development, and more
- The Vermont Municipal Data Project to collect information about municipal operations, finance, land use law, and compensation and benefits
- Help for state agencies and legislative working groups to collect feedback, expertise, public comment, and facts from municipal officials

VLCT Transportation Policy Committee

The VLCT Transportation Policy Committee is created our policies for funding for municipal highway aid and water quality related to highways; communication among state, federal, and local officials on transportation issues; efficiency and effectiveness in transportation construction programs; trucks and oversized vehicles on municipal highways; and policy related to rail.

Members:

Delsie Hoyt, West Fairlee Selectboard Chair, Chair

Michael Hogan, Cabot Selectboard Chair, Vice Chair Christopher Baird, Mendon Road

Commissioner Gary Briggs, Lunenburg Selectperson

Marcey Carver, Bradford Planning Commission Chair Andy Watts, Essex Town Selectboard Vice Chair

Nick Zaiac, Arlington Town Administrator

Carole O'Connell, Newport City Planning Commission

Chris Jolly, Town of Stowe Assistant Engineer

2025 VLCT Transportation Priorities: Build Resiliency, Invest Locally

- Avoid cost shifting and limit increases to municipal tax burdens in the event of diminished federal funding or challenged state budget cycles.
- Adequately fund right-sized, efficient public transit services and prioritize the implementation of complete streets.
- Ensure that funding for the Town Highway Emergency Fund is sufficient to cover municipal costs regardless of a Federal Disaster Declaration.
- Diversify Transportation Fund revenue sources to align with our climate and safety goals.
- Remit a portion of registration fees to the municipality in which the vehicle is registered.
- Build resilient infrastructure designed for intended use, which can withstand more extreme weather and meets stormwater management standards.

Other VLCT Supported Transportation Policies

- Provide funding and technical support so town highways, culverts, and bridges are accurately rated for the weights they carry.
- Secure additional funding for core municipal transportation programs (Town Highway Aid, Town Structures, Town Bridges) sufficient to pay for statutory obligations.
- Authorize municipalities to set speed limits on roads below 25 m.p.h.
- Provide new funding to electrify vehicles and equipment and install charging infrastructure.
- Provide incentives to municipalities to take over state highways that function as main streets.
- Eliminate provisions in VTrans's master license agreements that require municipalities to indemnify VTrans or the railroads on activities related to municipal projects.
- Allow VTrans district transportation administrators to enter into agreements with municipalities for use of VTrans equipment for small projects when not in use by the district.
- Establish state tracking of municipal paving projects and town highways to inform funding needs and prioritize Class 1, 2, and 3 highway paving needs statewide.

Transportation and Education Funds History & Forecast

(as of Emergency Board Meeting January 22, 2025)



	FY2025	FY2026	Change	Change
	As Passed	Gov Rec	Inc./ (Dec.)	%
TOWN HIGHWAY BRIDGES	45,334,278	37,793,406	(7,540,872)	-16.6%
TH STRUCTURES	8,016,000	7,200,000	(816,000)	-10.2%
TH CLASS 2 ROADWAY PROGRAM	8,858,000	8,600,000	(258,000)	-2.9%
TH - NONFEDERAL DISASTERS	1,150,000	1,150,000	0	0.0%
TH - FEDERAL DISASTERS	180,000	4,000,000	3,820,000	2122.2%
TH AID PROGRAM	29,532,753	30,418,736	885,983	3.0%
TH CLASS 1 SUPPLEMENTAL GRANTS	128,750	128,750	0	0.0%
TH VERMONT LOCAL ROADS	481,452	481,452	0	0.0%
MUNICIPAL MITIGATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM	7,143,000	6,893,000	(250,000)	-3.5%
PUBLIC ASSISTANCE GRANTS	1,250,000	0	(1,250,000)	-100.0%
Total "Town Highway" Programs	102,074,233	96,665,344	(5,408,889)	-5.3%