

February 24, 2025

# **Testimony on Several Housing Issues to the House Committee on General and Housing, 2/21/25**



Testimony of the Vermont League of Cities and Towns  
Josh Hanford, Director, Intergovernmental Affairs  
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to the House Committee on General and Housing  
February 21, 2025

### **Infrastructure Needs**

In VLCT's membership survey last October, 35 municipalities reported that they currently have plans to build or expand municipal water or sewer systems. From those 35 projects:

- 28% have received some state funding, 16% have received some federal funding.



- The average total cost for the project is about \$14 million, the median is about \$10.2 million
- Anticipated date of completion from 2025 to 2030
- Total anticipated costs from all survey respondents is \$393,871,000 and the funding secured to date is \$151,912,000.

That means that Vermont needs to find over \$240 million just to meet expected costs for local infrastructure projects underway.

### **\$9.1 Million Infrastructure Sustainability Fund**

- VLCT supports investments for municipal infrastructure to enable housing
- Eligible activities: VLCT survey found the top three needs for funding assistance were construction, planning and design, and project management (including finance/grants management)
- Consider expanded geographic application criteria, such as settlement areas, villages, fire districts
- Consider investment above \$9.1 million

### **Municipal Zoning Appeals**

- VLCT supports efforts to enable the development of housing that communities have envisioned, planned for, and allow.  
Consider eliminating petitioner appeals
- 60-day measure should not be applied to municipal panels due to predictable resource constraints

### **Act 250 Appeals**

- Consider commensurate, interim reforms pending Appeals study



- Consider tasking the report to also study standing for appellants, and the costs and impact of permit defense to builders and the public.
- Prior DHCD study has found that initial Act 250 exemptions saved \$50k and an average of 7-months, without studying the legal and professional costs related to permit defense.

### **Municipal Zoning Preemptions**

VLCT supports the option to adopt zoning preemptions without a hearing. Municipalities are on track to implement Act 47 & Act 181, with only 13% of survey respondents reporting they have "not started". Reasons include: other priorities, lack of TA, lack of funding.

[View the recording of this testimony being delivered.](#)

Attachments

[house\\_generalhousing\\_2025-02-21.pdf](#)

