

Volume I

REGIONAL GOALS & STRATEGIES

I. INTRODUCTION

The Northeastern Vermont Development Association (NVDA), the regional planning and development organization for the northeast region of Vermont, strives to assist and promote the interests of all municipalities in Caledonia, Essex, and Orleans Counties; and to support economic development initiatives that provide quality job opportunities in this region. The Association is enabled under the Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act (24 V.S.A., 117, Section 4341). NVDA is the only combined Regional Planning Commission and Development Corporation in Vermont.

The mission of NVDA is to:

- Provide leadership and technical expertise to local communities, agencies, and organizations to facilitate cooperative planning within and among the Northeast Kingdom.
- Work to improve the quality of life for people in the Northeast Kingdom through planning and by promoting economic development while preserving the region's natural environment.

Purpose

The previous version of the *Regional Plan for the Northeast Kingdom* was adopted in 1995, and readopted in 2000. A new plan was adopted in 2006 and amended in 2013.

The purpose of the *Regional Plan for the Northeast Kingdom* is to provide a guide for managing change and an informational framework within which municipalities, businesses, individuals, and other organizations can make decisions regarding growth and development. In no particular order, there are three principal uses for this Plan:

1. Guidance in regional and local planning and decision making
2. General information
3. As a basis for state review processes

Organization

The Regional Plan is composed of three volumes. Foremost among the three is Volume I Regional Goals & Strategies, which presents the goals, policies, and objectives for the region. Volume I should be considered a quick reference to regional goals and policies. Volume II, the Regional Analysis, is a presentation of existing conditions and background information intended to give readers a picture of life in the Northeast Kingdom. Maps, tables, and photographs have been inserted throughout the second volume. The third volume is titled *Regional Transportation Plan for the Northeast Kingdom*.

This summary and the supporting narrative document are each divided into chapters addressing distinct elements such as housing, land use, energy, etc. The transportation plan focuses solely on transportation issues. All three volumes constitute the NVDA regional plan.

II. REGIONAL VISION

Vermont's rural traditions have been better preserved in the Northeast Kingdom than in other areas of the state. Respect for individual rights and a genuine neighborliness toward others are values that continue as part of the social fabric here. The physical landscape has essentially remained unchanged with compact village centers surrounded by working farms and productive forests. When one examines local town plans throughout the region, one quickly gets the sense that most people in this region prefer gradual change over rapid growth. Nevertheless, most Northeast Kingdom residents stand firmly behind development that promotes job creation and sustained economic development.

The natural beauty and wholesome quality of life experienced in the Kingdom are things no longer enjoyed exclusively by the region's residents. With the Northeast Kingdom within a day's drive of more than 70 million people, the region has become a recreational playground for many out-of-area visitors. Others are seeking to permanently escape the rigors of urban life elsewhere and relocate to the region. Such outside interest in the region presents both opportunities and problems. While towns appreciate the additional revenue associated with seasonal residents and visitors, a large influx of new, year-round residents can strain local infrastructures and services. New residents sometimes seem to have unreasonable expectations, but they often bring fresh perspectives and new ideas. With longtime and new residents alike, the communities of this region are encouraged to plan for their future, so that growth is expected and welcome rather than haphazard and problematic. Over time, the cumulative effects of unplanned or uncoordinated growth can be dramatic, and may negatively affect local economies and the quality of life Northeast Kingdom residents have come to enjoy.

In both regional and local planning processes, we need to retain and strengthen existing businesses while creating new economic and employment opportunities for residents from all walks of life. We must provide quality educational opportunities and skills training for all job seekers to make the region's workforce more attractive to employers. With an economy that is to a great extent linked to our natural resource base, the region and its municipalities should also embrace strategies to protect the environmental quality in the Northeast Kingdom.

The availability of quality, affordable housing is a regional goal also shared by every local community, and upgrading existing, substandard housing is a particularly urgent priority. Northeast Kingdom residents are also encouraged to work with their local, regional, and state agencies and officials to revitalize downtowns, village centers, and cultural institutions to preserve our cherished way of life.

Local communities and state agencies must continue to upgrade public infrastructure in a coordinated manner, in order to protect the health, safety, and welfare of local residents. As a region, we must strive to provide a reliable and safe transportation system with improved access to destinations within and outside the region for a greater number of people. Achieving these broad goals will ensure that the residents of the Northeast Kingdom will prosper and live satisfying lives in communities of their own making.

III. TOOLS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

A good plan provides a full range of options to its residents and citizens. Implementation – whether it is regulatory or otherwise – will ultimately depend on the political will of each member municipality of NVDA. NVDA can and should serve a vital role as facilitator for each endeavor by providing the knowledge, resources, expertise, and skills that will empower each municipality to make informed decisions and act decisively. Implementation options are organized in the following broader categories:

A. Non-regulatory – Planning Initiatives:

Implementation Option	NVDA's role	Examples
A. Planning	NVDA will continue to update the regional plan, municipal plans, and supporting planning products in accordance with its statutory duties.	Regional Plan Municipal Plan Housing Studies Capacity Studies Hazard Mitigation Plans Food System Plans Solid Waste Management Plans Wastewater Planning Studies

B. Programs and Incentives	NVDA will continue to advise communities on such programs and incentives to direct public and private investment in a manner that meets state planning goals. It will also participate in public comment and review of policies and plans that guide these incentive plans. (See E. Other Regulatory Jurisdictions.)	Downtown and Village Center Designation Neighborhood Development Areas Growth Centers New Market Tax Credits Low Income Housing Tax Credits Vermont Employment Growth Incentive (VEGI) Use Value Appraisal Program (Current Use) Conservation Easements
C. Infrastructure Investments	NVDA will provide technical support, as appropriate to ensure municipalities invest in public infrastructure wisely.	Capital Budget and Planning Bridge and Culvert Inventories Bonds Revolving Loan Funds Tax Increment Finance Districts
D. Regulatory	NVDA will provide support, as appropriate to assist municipalities develop and enforce local regulations.	Zoning Subdivision Regulations Flood Hazard Regulations Junkyard Ordinances Freestanding ordinance (noise, outdoor wood boilers, etc.)
E. Other Regulatory Jurisdictions	While the Regional Plan does not have the same regulatory effect as municipal land use regulations, the policies and recommendations within this Plan guide decision making at the state, regional and local level. NVDA will review and provide testimony on proposed initiatives that impact our member municipalities.	Act 250 Review Section 248 proceedings Proposed legislation or policy
F. Grant Writing and Administration	NVDA provides ongoing grant writing and administration assistance to its member municipalities, which generally lack the in-house resources to obtain and administer grants. While grants serve other underlying purposes – such as planning,	Municipal Planning Grants Vermont Community Development Program Economic Development Administration USDA Rural Development Northern Border Regional Commission

	feasibility, studies, infrastructure upgrades, and economic development initiatives – grant writing and administration requires RPC staff time and resources and therefore is a significant implementation activity in its own right.	
G.Outreach and Education	Education of not only those entities which coordinate daily with the Regional Commission but the general public as to the Plan policies and its implementation is essential. Plan implementation without public input is destined to fail. A deliberate effort to involve the public in all aspects of the Plan implementation process is essential. Education of the public on the overall values of multiple town planning for an area will continue to be an on-going function of the Regional Commission as it seeks to implement this Plan with others.	Training and workshops Legislative Breakfasts Industry Visits Municipal Consultations

IV. TIMEFRAMES

Ongoing, routine and immediate:

This includes annual statutory duties carried out by NVDA, such as outreach and education, as well as sustained effort, such as maintenance of existing plans (such as municipal plans, Local Emergency Operations Plans, Solid Waste Plans), and ongoing participation in designation or incentive-based programs (such as Downtown and Village Center Designation).

Short-term implementation (1-5 years):

These include specific projects that can be carried out within five years, such as development of new supporting plans (agriculture/food systems, transportation plans, inventories and assessments, regional plan update, substantive updates to municipal plans and new municipal plans).

Long-term implementation:

These include initiatives that can be started, but cannot be completed within five years, including initiatives that currently lack funding or resources for full implementation. Includes major infrastructure upgrades and studies and future needs.

V. GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Forest Land Use Goals	Strategies	Ongoing	Short-term	Longer-Term
Sustainable forestry will remain an economically viable tool to preserve woodlands, open space for recreation, and local character.	Continue to provide planning assistance to communities seeking to conserve valuable forest land. Encourage landowners to enroll productive forestland in the “current use” program. In communities that have land use regulations, encourage the use of planned unit development coupled with low density zoning to preserve larger blocks of forestland while facilitating efficient residential and commercial development.	G	B	A, D, F
Mixed-use forests will allow for expanded economic benefits to forest owners while encouraging sound ecological practices and recreational access to the public. Value-added processing opportunities for wood resources in the region will increase. Residential and commercial development patterns will occur in such a way as to retain the productivity of the region’s accessible forests. State and federally-controlled land is an important resource for passive recreation and will continue to be accessible to the public. Municipalities with land in municipal forests will have	Connect municipalities with appropriate agencies and resources providing management assistance with municipal forests.	G, E		
	Provide management, financial, and technical assistance to local forest product industries, including wood product manufacturers, sawmills, paper mills, and wood-powered electrical generators (cogeneration).	G	A	F, B
	Support the development and marketing of distinctive wood products identifiable with Vermont and/or the Northeast Kingdom.	G	A	F
	Support owners of forestland who implement sustainable forestry practices to market their wood and wood products.	G	A	F
	Expand usage of existing rail infrastructure for shipping and interface with trucking. Explore the creation of forest-related industrial zones (i.e. rail sidings for sawmills)			A

<p>the capacity to manage the land for its resource value and public recreational use.</p> <p>Maintain enough forest land to support wood-related industries, retain the region’s natural beauty, protect fragile areas, encourage wildlife, promote recreational usage, and maintain a healthy, sustainable forest based economy.</p>				
Agriculture Land Use Goals	Strategies	Ongoing	Short-term	Longer-Term
Farming and agriculture will remain an important and viable sector of the regional economy.	Continue to provide planning assistance to communities seeking to conserve productive agricultural land. Encourage the use of “planned unit development” coupled with low density zoning and other tools to preserve agricultural resources.	G		A, D, F
Contiguous tracts of agricultural soils will be preserved.	Provide technical assistance to towns seeking to encourage on-farm enterprises, through the use of land use regulations or incentives.	G		A, D, F
Development of residential and commercial uses will not significantly reduce the amount of open and productive farm land.	Provide support to farmers interested in diversification and/or product development. Assist with grants and low-interest loans for value-adding businesses and diversification.	G	A	F, B
	Identify funding sources for, and market existing and new food ventures in the region.		F	F B
	Support education efforts that teach sustainable agricultural practices, and the tax benefits of enrollment in the “current use” program.	G		
	Support succession planning and efforts to connect new and expanding farmers with affordable land.	A, B, G		
Recreation Land Use Goals	Strategies	Ongoing	Short-term	Longer-Term

<p>Sufficient open space will be available for current and future outdoor recreational pursuits.</p> <p>A variety of year-round and seasonal, indoor and outdoor recreation opportunities will be available for residents and visitors.</p> <p>Public access to water bodies will be protected.</p>	Assist towns to plan for future recreation needs, recognizing that privately-held land may not be available for passive recreational use in the future.	G	A, F	B
	Assist with financing to develop additional facilities such as sports fields, playgrounds, trail systems, ice rinks, skateboard parks, and recreation/bike paths, coordinating actions with the goals in the SCORP in order to access dedicated federal funds.		F	
	Identify and protect public access to water bodies.	G	A, F	
	Identify the recreation facilities and activities most needed by youths and seniors and help towns identify and secure funds for their development.		A	F
	Support local and regional recreation events (e.g. fairs, festivals, etc.).	G		
Future Land Use and Development Use Goals	Strategies	Ongoing	Short-term	Longer-Term
<p>Established centers will be an economically vital mix of commercial and residential uses, and will offer a variety of housing types available at different price points to support long-term sustainability.</p> <p>Towns will be supported in identifying and implementing strategies that reverse the current trend of new residential development occurring primarily outside of centers.</p> <p>Traditional development patterns will be maintained and linear “strip”</p>	Direct public investment and create financial incentives for the development of a balanced mix of low-income, work-force, and upper-income housing in and adjacent to village centers and downtowns, with the goal of allowing all communities to develop into high-opportunity areas.	G , B , E	B, A	E
	Direct public investment for new elderly and affordable housing to town and village centers in locations with access to public transportation routes. Aside from promoting traditional settlement patterns, this will put seniors closer to such amenities as shopping, and community facilities, and enable income-stressed residents to have cost-saving access to services, employment centers, and public transportation options to places of employment.	A, G	A, B, F	
	Work with housing developers and communities to assure that all residents have the opportunity for access to high-performing schools and economically-sustainable employment.	A, G	B, F	E
	Assist communities applying for designation under the Vermont Downtown, Village Center, and/or Neighborhood Development Programs where appropriate to encourage mixed-use development (residential, commercial and appropriate light-industrial) in centers.	G	B	

development will be avoided. New development will be compatible with existing land uses, and consistent with local plans. Historic structures, community facilities, and other buildings will be preserved and adapted for re-use. Brownfield sites will be reclaimed. Significant development proposals will consider the impact on adjacent regions.	Encourage adaptive reuse of historic structures through tax incentives, tax credits, grants, and loans, assistance in location of funding, etc.	G, B	B	
	Encourage desired town center development through investment, maintenance, and expansion of appropriate infrastructure (sidewalks, water and sewer, parking, public spaces, etc.).	G	B, A	F
	Support beautification efforts in town centers and downtowns.	B	F	
	Encourage towns to plan for community recreational and social needs.	G, B	A, C	F
	Avoid the development of agricultural lands with auto-dependent residential subdivisions by encouraging towns with land use regulations to lower the permitted residential density in agricultural zones, coupled with planned unit development or clustering provisions to ensure efficient and well-designed developments.	G	A	A, D, F
	Protect against the fragmentation of rural lands by the piecemeal development of residential lots by providing financial incentives for the development of attractive work-force and upper-income housing in and adjacent to village centers and downtowns.	G	B, A	G
	Support local conservation efforts.	G	A, F	B, F, D
	Encourage community open space plans and recreation infrastructure, recognizing that privately-held land will not be available unless protected through the purchase of conservation and access easements.	G	A, F	B, F, D
	Assist towns in identifying in their Town Plans appropriate areas for the development of industrial or manufacturing uses, based on the location of natural resources and existing transportation and utility infrastructure.		A, F	
	Assist towns in marketing potential locations for industry to the business community.	G	B	
Assist towns with the assessment and remediation of Brownfields in order to revitalize and re-use existing industrial infrastructure where appropriate for future industrial uses.		A, F	F	
Energy Goals	Energy Strategies	Ongoing	Short-Term	Longer-Term
	Promote a diversified energy portfolio for the region.	E	A, B	C

An adequate, reliable, diverse, and secure energy supply will benefit the region.	Support the upgrade of regional transmission systems to continue to reduce constraints.	E	A, B	C
	Support the maintenance and upgrade of existing energy generation facilities and related infrastructure.	E	A	C
	Encourage local responders to plan for emergency energy resources (VEM Emergency Generators Grant Program generators.)	G	F	
Affordable energy alternatives will be available for the region's users.	Assist in the development of businesses that support alternatives energy use.	B, G	A, D	C, F
	Work with Tier 3 energy service providers to promote the installation of cold climate heat pumps and geothermal systems by facilitating outreach and education on their benefits.	G		
	Partner with Efficiency Vermont and Tier 3 energy service providers to increase the use of efficient wood heat and biomass systems.	G		
	Support the development of small-scale renewable resources, such as wind and solar and the use of supplemental sources (wood) to stabilize energy costs.	G, E	F	C
	Promote and support rail infrastructure as a cost-effective transportation resource for the energy industry.	E.		C
	Encourage and support agricultural production of biofuels and oilseed crops, and explore ways to broaden access to processing infrastructure.	G	A, B, F	
	Identify potential users of district heating and wood heating systems and provide assistance to communities seeking to develop them.		A	
	Encourage the legislature to increase incentives and rebates for efficient wood heat systems.	E		
	Provide outreach and education among vendors, contractors, and the general public through venues such as tradeshow and workshops.	G		
	Provide communities with an analysis of potential areas that are suitable for ground source heat pumps.		A	
	Support upgrade and trade-out programs and incentives for older, higher emission wood-burning stoves and boilers.	G		

Decrease the region's reliance on single-occupancy vehicle trips and gas/diesel powered vehicles.	Continue to advocate for better telecommunications infrastructure so employees can work from home.	E	F	C
	Encourage local employers to reduce VMTs through programs such as ride sharing and Go Vermont.	G		
	Support and expand access to liquid biofuels for use in commercial vehicles and heavy equipment.	E	F	C
	Support and expand the use of electric powered busses and vans among the public transportation providers serving the region.	E, G	F	C
	Work with cycling advocacy groups such as Local Motion by hosting safe on-road cycling workshops.	G		
	Provide training to local zoning and development review boards to consider infrastructure for alternative transportation in their review of site plans.	D, G	F	C
	Provide technical and grant writing assistance to local planning commissions who plan for multi-modal circulation and better connectivity with alternative transportation modes.	F, G		
	Promote the use of the region's cycling infrastructure, such as the Cross Vermont Trail and the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail and support the efforts of local groups who work to maintain them.	G		C
	Supports municipalities and local businesses to install EV charging stations at convenient locations, such as in front of restaurants, stores, businesses, or entertainment or recreational facilities, where users would want to park for periods of two to four hours. Explore and pursue incentives to defray the cost of installation and administration so that users pay only for electricity.	B, G		C
Net-metering capacity in the region will be maximized.	Encourage municipalities to become "clean energy districts" and participate in the PACE program (Property Assessed Clean Energy). This would provide consumers with options to more affordably implement grid-tied renewable energy systems.	G.)	B)	
	Support solar panel safety training programs for fire fighters and first responders.	G		
Energy efficiency and weatherization will be an	Assist municipalities in reducing their energy costs through conservation, efficiency, and weatherization programs.	G		

integral part of the energy portfolio.	Support and promote the Energy Action Network (EAN) energy dashboard and education communities about its use and benefits. Support crowdsourcing on efficiency and weatherization efforts at the local level (e.g. Vermont Community Energy Dashboard.)	G		
	Support Local Energy Committee/Coordinator efforts to reduce energy consumption, improve efficiency and weatherization, and develop new generation programs.	B, G		
	Encourage municipalities to conduct energy audits and weatherization programs.	B, G		
	Encourage businesses to make energy efficiency investments and develop energy efficient production methods.	B, G		
	Promote energy efficient building design and construction methods (e.g. Green Building Design, LEED certification, and Passive Design).	B, G		
	Promote Energy Efficiency Utility program resources by making web links available on municipal/regional web sites.	G		
	Work with partner organizations and Energy Efficiency Utilities EEUs to offer workshops and educational opportunities to businesses on efficiency in new construction, retrofits, and conservation practices.	G		
	Identify large energy usage customers (including large businesses, manufacturing facilities, and schools) as a target audience and encourage participation in commercial and industrial EEU programs.	G		
	Facilitate strategic tree planting to maximize energy benefits by encouraging communities to participate in the ArborDay Energy Saving Trees Program.	G		
	Support local zoning initiatives that incent the development of small and/or net-zero homes.	D		
	Ensure that developments subject to Act 250 consider new energy requirements by encouraging the compliance with commercial energy stretch codes, particularly among proposed commercial uses that are high energy consumers.	D, E		

	Showcase the cutting-edge work of local architects and contractors who incorporate green building practices through NVDA’s web site and newsletters.	G		
	Promote the use of the Vermont Home Energy Profile among prospective buyers and sellers of homes. Work with local contractors to become BPI certified in energy-efficient retrofit work in order to assist with these profiles.	G		
	Ensure that local zoning administrators have information on Residential Building Energy Standards and Commercial Building Energy Standards (RBES and CBES). Host and facilitate training sessions for local officials. Encourage communities with zoning to require Certificates of Occupancy. Encourage the local adoption of “stretch codes”.	D, G		
	Work with local affordable housing organizations to promote and improve the supply of the region’s net-zero and near-net zero housing supply, such as Vermod homes.	G		
	Review local zoning bylaws and offer technical assistance to development review boards when evaluating the energy efficiency implications of site plans for proposed developments.	D, G		
Weatherize at least 25% of the region’s housing stock by 2020.	Actively advocate for the continuation and expansion of funding programs that support thermal efficiency and renewable energy improvements, especially programs that are targeted to middle- and low-income households.	E		
	<p>Coordinate with and promote efficiency programs and weatherization assistance programs (such as Efficiency Vermont, NE TO, 3E Thermal, and Heat Squad) for low-income households and apartment buildings.</p> <p>Cosponsor and organize weatherization workshops for home and businesses with EEs.</p> <p>Facilitate or sponsor a workshop for owners of rental housing (including farm labor housing) to encourage implementation of energy efficiency.</p> <p>Encourage residents to hire Efficiency Excellence Network (EEN) contractors when completing energy efficiency projects by including links to the EEN on municipal/regional websites.</p> <p>Make information available about lending programs that can improve the efficiency of older housing stock, such as Efficiency Vermont’s “Heat Saver”</p>	G		

	loan and USDA Direct and Guaranteed Loan Programs, for single homes and multi-family homes.			
Energy generation that provides the best cost-benefit to the region will be promoted.	Promote wood-based energy generation to support the region’s forest industry. Encourage the development of energy facilities and resources that help sustain local agriculture and forestry (i.e. grass/wood-pellets, small wind, solar, farm-methane, wood-chip, biodiesel).	B, G	A, E	G
Environmental and aesthetic impact of energy generation and usage will be considered. There will be broad public participation in the decision-making process.	Encourage the Vermont Legislature to develop policies that support the development of solar, small-wind, hydro-electric, farm methane and biomass generation facilities, while respecting current local land use and the culture of the region. Encourage the PUC to examine the long-term sustainability of proposed facilities	G, E		
Assessment of local needs and values on new energy development will be encouraged.	Encourage towns to address energy development in town planning and zoning. Provide assistance to businesses/municipalities to develop cogeneration and other alternative energy strategies.	G	A, G	

Reduce the region’s carbon footprint through the expansion of a closed loop soil-to-soil regional food system that sustains and feeds the people of the Northeast Kingdom.	<p>Coordinate movement and storage of goods to achieve maximum efficiency.</p> <p>Redirect food scraps and other organics from the waste stream in a manner that maximizes efficiency and minimizes hauling.</p> <p>Support and further the goals and strategies of the NEK Food System Plan through its Leadership Group.</p> <p>Explore the feasibility of establishing a leased storage facility.</p> <p>Assess market demand for products and existing shippers and distributors already moving to external (New York and Boston) markets (including opportunities for backhauling).</p> <p>Identify infrastructure needed to maximize inbound, outbound, and internal freight movement.</p> <p>Explore the use of compost heat recovery; identify challenges, opportunities, and funding sources.</p> <p>Explore the feasibility of a developing a “food miles” measurement that can be used in marketing local foods.</p>		A	
	<p>Identify and publicize opportunities for shared truck space among existing growers and producers.</p> <p>Generate better awareness of existing distribution resources, such as freight service.</p> <p>Identify and publicize opportunities for shared storage space among existing growers and producers.</p> <p>Promote the use of and increase the amount of on-farm power and community energy generation and the use of renewable energy for farming and food production (such as anaerobic digesters, solar, wind, biomass, and biodiesel, in accordance with local and regional planning priorities).</p>	G		
	<p>Support local incentives for siting solar installations away from most productive agricultural soils.</p>		A, B, D	

	<p>Provide and increase opportunities for onsite and commercial composting training and education, sustainable farming methods focused on reduction and reuse of wastes (closed-loop nutrient systems), and shared facilities and infrastructure to transfer and store compost.</p> <p>Establish a coordinated marketing campaign that dispels the perceptions around local food costing more and extols the long-range benefits of staying local (e.g. dollars re-circulated into the economy, food miles travelled).</p>			G
Utilities and Facilities: Educational Facilities Goals	Educational Facilities Strategies	Ongoing	Short-Term	Longer-Term
School districts will seek to maximize educational opportunities for students, including extracurricular offerings, and increase economic efficiency by sharing services with neighboring school districts when feasible.	Investigate opportunities for shared facilities between municipalities and institutions.	A G		
To provide the most favorable outcomes for students, school districts should be economically integrated.	<p>Provide opportunities for the involvement of school officials in the local planning process.</p> <p>Promote the development of economically integrated school districts through policies and programs that promote a range of housing options for all income levels within each school district.</p>	G	B	
Adult literacy resources will continue to be available to residents of the Northeast Kingdom to increase the percentage of residents that have earned a high school diploma.	Support the efforts of local and regional libraries to provide quality facilities and materials for independent learning and education.		F	
Post-secondary institutions in the region are vital to the economic development	Support the expansion of post-secondary institutions in the region, to continue to build a highly-educated workforce.	A		

potential of the region and will be supported.				
Post-secondary schools will be closely integrated with the local communities they serve, including the business community, and should have a mutually beneficial relationship.	Support local and regional efforts for workforce development and adult education. Promote cooperation between institutions of higher learning and local businesses to support quality training and employment opportunities for local residents.	G	A	
Affordable educational and training opportunities should exist for all persons within the region.	Support the efforts of local and regional libraries to provide quality facilities and materials for independent learning and education.		F	
Utilities and Facilities: Recreational Facilities Goals	Recreational Facilities Strategies	Ongoing	Short-Term	Longer-Term
Towns in the region will provide recreational facilities according to the population's particular needs.	NVDA will assist municipalities in identifying recreational needs and securing appropriate funding sources to develop new facilities.		F	C
State-managed lands in the region will continue to be accessible to the residents of the region, and improvements will be made as appropriate to serve the identified needs of the population, as articulated in municipal plans (e.g., blaze new trails, maintain parking areas and points of entry into state-controlled lands used for passive recreation,	NVDA will direct municipalities to appropriate resources (e.g., Northeast Kingdom Travel and Tourism Association) to develop strategies to increase visibility of existing recreational resources to residents and potential visitors. NVDA will assist municipalities in identifying recreational needs and securing appropriate funding sources to develop new facilities.	G	F	C

create improved access to waterbodies)				
Utilities and Facilities: Child Care Goals	Child Care Strategies	Ongoing	Short-Term	Longer-Term
Child care entrepreneurs and child/family service centers should be supported.	Provide assistance to municipalities and non-profits seeking to develop child care facilities and/or programs.		A	
	Assist municipalities in assessing the future local need for and supply of childcare services, and whether local barriers exist for the provision of needed services, and assist in developing an action plan.		A	
Additional site-based or community child care centers that offer high quality, affordable care should be developed in employment centers and as a component of affordable housing developments.	Municipalities should encourage the inclusion of childcare facilities in the plans for any multi-family housing development that will accommodate families with children, and any large commercial development, to provide more options for employees.		A, D	
The efficiency and effectiveness of existing child care, early education, and family service programs should be improved.	Employers, schools, and community organizations should collaborate to ensure that affordable, quality child-care services are available to meet the different needs of households.	G		
Child care issues will be integrated into the planning process	Municipalities periodically should review land-use and development regulations to identify needed amendments to authorize quality child-care services in appropriate locations convenient to households, including as home occupations.		A, D	
Utilities and Facilities: Telecommunications Goals	Telecommunications Strategies	Ongoing	Short-Term	Longer-Term
Northeast Kingdom residents, business,	Solicit input from towns in the region to determine where gaps in broadband and cell coverage may still exist.	A, E		

organizations and public entities will be served by an up-to-date telecommunications infrastructure.	Continue to work with state and regional agencies, as well as the private sector, to attain the coverage goals as set forth in the State Telecommunications Plan.		C	
Affordable fixed and wireless communications systems, as well as high-speed Internet broadband, will be available throughout the region.	Encourage communities to set up wi-fi zones in public areas (libraries, municipal buildings, etc.) that are available free of charge to residents.		C	
	Support development efforts that reduce the cost of high-speed telecommunications throughout Vermont and the Northeast Kingdom.		C	
Telecommunications projects will be reviewed and permitted in accordance with the land conservation measures and policies for the protection of scenic resources identified in local and regional plans.	Assist municipalities in creating directive language in the municipal plan that clarifies the location and treatment of important natural and scenic resources.		A	
Utilities and Facilities: Security and Emergency Service Goals	Strategies	Ongoing	Short-Term	Longer-Term
Emergency services should be provided to all residents	Support regional approaches to disaster planning and mitigation, including partnerships between neighboring communities and states and Canada.	G		

of the Northeast Kingdom through Enhanced 9-1-1, local departments, and mutual aid districts.	Ensure that adequate emergency services (personnel, facilities, and equipment) are available for new developments prior to placing additional demands on existing services.	G	C	
	Assist Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs) and Towns to identify gaps in disaster planning, such as increased flood and drought protection, and work to eliminate gaps through an interagency, inter-jurisdictional approach.			
Towns should have up-to-date Local Emergency Operations Plans (LEOP).	Provide technical assistance to municipalities to help them maintain up-to-date LEOPs.		G	
All buildings should meet current state fire code and safety standards.	Assist communities to apply for safety and emergency equipment grants by disseminating information on available funding programs.		F	
	Assist interested municipalities with the adoption of building and fire codes for non-public buildings and rental properties.		D	
	Encourage all communities to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and to adopt the Vermont Transportation Highway Codes and Standards.	G		
	Discourage development in identified or known flood prone areas to avoid costly potential damage to life and property.		A, B	

Emergency services training should be available to keep all emergency service providers current with regard to service provision and certification.	Support local efforts for disaster planning, response, recovery and mitigation.	G		
Utilities and Facilities: Water Supply Goals	Strategies	Ongoing	Short-Term	Longer-Term
There will be sufficient quantities of water to meet existing and future residential, agricultural, commercial, industrial and recreational needs.	Support local proposals to upgrade existing water supply systems.		C	
	Support water conservation measures to reduce the demand for water and protect water supplies.	G		
Water supplies and water systems will not be contaminated, depleted, or degraded	Discourage development in Source Protection Areas, identified groundwater recharge areas, or other areas where water supplies are likely to be adversely impacted.		A D	
	Assist interested communities to identify, map, and plan for the protection of surface and groundwater resources.		A	
Public investments will be made in utility facilities, services, and lands to support existing and future development within town centers, villages, or other designated and planned growth areas. Expansion of systems will not facilitate sprawl or strip development.	Assist towns and communities with the preparation of capital improvement plans and budgets to complement local plans and this plan.		C	

Effective, efficient, and accessible public services will be promoted.	Assist municipalities seeking to share services and infrastructure with neighboring municipalities in order to reduce costs and increase efficiency	A		
Utilities and Facilities: Wastewater, Sewage and Stormwater Management Goals	Wastewater, Sewage and Stormwater Management Strategies	Ongoing	Short-Term	Longer-Term
The region's towns will have adequate wastewater treatment facilities with sufficient capacity to meet current needs and projected future development.	Support proposals to upgrade and improve existing wastewater treatment facilities.		C F	
	Encourage the proper disposal of hazardous materials, particularly household hazardous materials that are difficult to treat in secondary systems.	G		
	Assist communities with advanced planning activities for future upgrades and financing of local systems.		A	
Public investments in new or expanded facilities and services shall be in agreement with local plans, shall be directed toward town centers, villages, or other designated and planned growth areas, and shall support the revitalization of established centers.	Provide advice and technical assistance to communities and groups interested in developing community wastewater systems.	G		
	Assist communities to interpret and abide by changes to state and federal laws regarding municipal and on-site wastewater systems and stormwater regulations.	G		
	Assist municipalities seeking to share services and infrastructure with neighboring municipalities in order to reduce costs and increase efficiency	G		

Municipalities will incorporate Green Stormwater Infrastructure in planning improvements to local road infrastructure and public facilities; and will incorporate them into land use regulations, as appropriate.	Conduct educational outreach to municipalities regarding the benefits of Green Stormwater Infrastructure.	G		
Utilities and Facilities: Solid Waste Management Goals	Solid Waste Management Strategies	Ongoing	Short-Term	Longer-Term
Municipal and regional solid waste disposal systems shall be cost-effective, environmentally sound, and promote reduction, reuse, and recycling, and will support the State-wide goal of reducing the disposal rate of Municipal Solid Waste. Increase solid waste diversion rates to 50% by the year 2020. Hazardous wastes shall be disposed of facilities permitted by the Agency of Natural Resources to ensure proper handling.	Assist member towns and solid waste management districts in the implementation of solid waste management plans.		A	C, F
	Encourage communities to meet the waste management and recycling goals established by the Northeast Kingdom Waste Management District and municipal waste management plans.	G		
	Support public education to promote efforts to reduce and properly manage waste.	G		
	Assist municipalities to adopt illegal dumping and burning ordinances.		D	
	Encourage communities to create or expand local recycling facilities.		A	C, F
	Assist communities in sustainable reclamation of brownfields in the region.		A	F
Support efforts to reduce food waste by half by the year 2020.	Promote opportunities for schools and institutions to reduce food waste through best management 19 practices and performance-based contracts. Provide technical assistance to entrepreneurs who are interested in food scrap hauling and 21 composting-related businesses.	G		

	Support efforts to aggregate and distribute gleaned agricultural products.	G	A, F	
	Support efforts to efficiently aggregate and distribute recovered food in a manner that minimizes spoilage and trucking miles.		A	C, F
	Support the expansion and viability of commercial composting operations.			C, G
	Help communities plan for and create municipal composting facilities, where feasible.		A, F	
	Explore and facilitate the sustainable use of food residuals and other waste byproducts.			
Historic, Cultural & Scenic Goals	Historic, Cultural & Scenic Strategies	Ongoing	Short-Term	Longer-Term
Future development should follow traditional development patterns, while providing for economic development opportunities and livable communities.	Promote local and regional tourism, since it an important part of our economic base.	B	A	
	Promote local traditions, skills, crafts, and the performing arts within the region.	B G		
	Assist communities to designate downtowns and village centers under the Vermont Downtown Program.	G, B	A,); B, F	
	Support local cultural resource initiatives to revitalize communities and downtowns.	G, B	A, B	F
Significant historic, cultural, and scenic resources within the region should be identified and preserved.	Assist communities to preserve and maintain historic downtowns, village centers, buildings, and rural and scenic landscapes.	G	A, B, D, F	C, F
	Rehabilitate and re-use significant cultural, architectural, and historic sites, and community facilities, whenever feasible.	G	A, B, D	C, F
	Utilize federal, state, and local programs for developing or preserving local cultural and historic assets.	G.	B, F	
	Disseminate information about historic tax credits to businesses and property owners.	G.		
	Assist municipalities with securing funding and technical assistance to conduct a comprehensive survey of local historic resources.		F, B	
Housing Goals	Housing Strategies	Ongoing	Short-Term	Longer-Term

An adequate supply of safe, attractive, and energy-efficient housing will be available to the region's residents in a proportionate balance of affordable, workforce, and market rate housing.	Encourage the use of innovative zoning incentives, including density bonuses or tax stabilization for mixed-income developments, universal access design, and small footprint housing.		A, F	D
	Review and comment on proposed plans and policies that will impact future affordable housing development (e.g. downtown designation, Qualified Allocation Plan).	E G	A (
Housing will be available in a variety of types that meet the needs of all income groups and ages, and will be located near employment, services, commercial, civic, and recreational uses.	Assist towns to create housing policies that address the affordable housing needs of low-income residents.	G E	A F	D
	Identify incentives for the development and rehabilitation of work-force and market-rate housing in established centers.	E	A F	D
	Facilitate fair housing trainings for municipal officials and other interested groups.	G, B, E		
Existing housing stock – particularly that located in downtowns, village centers, and older neighborhoods in existing centers of development – will be preserved.	Provide outreach and education on housing programs that improve housing stock and promote home ownership.	G, B, E		
Overall quality, safety, and energy efficiency of existing housing stock in the region will improve.	Provide outreach and education to property owners of old or substandard housing units in Designated Downtowns and Village Centers.	G, B		
	Assist communities interested in adopting local building codes, or in adopting and enforcing “junkyard ordinances.”	G	D	
Partnerships with regional housing and human service providers will be strengthened, allowing for more effective service provision.	Work with regional housing and human service providers, including Rural Edge, NEK Enterprise Collaborative, Lamoille Housing Partnership and NEK Community Action to identify housing needs and support economically integrated communities.	B, A,G	A, F	

New housing development in downtowns and villages will conform to existing traditional patterns.	Assist communities applying for designation under the Vermont Downtown Program, Village Center Designation Program, and where appropriate, the New Neighborhood Designation Program.	G, A, B	B, A	
Municipalities will be supported in determining local housing needs.	Help communities evaluate needs through housing studies and build-out analyses.	G	A,F	
	Ensure that NVDA member communities remain eligible for Municipal Planning Grants	G		
Economic Development Goals	Economic Development Strategies	Ongoing	Short-Term	Longer-Term
Reduce the region's unemployment rate.	Provide technical assistance for new and expanding businesses, and recruit new businesses.	B, G.	F	
Train new and existing workers to meet the needs of area businesses and increase workers' salaries.	Market the resources of NVDA.	G		
	Assist existing manufacturing companies to grow by identifying new markets, products, and technology.	G	A	
Create higher wage jobs.	Assess opportunities for coordination of economic development organizations.	B.		
Coordinate economic development functions in the Northeast Kingdom.	Provide greater access to revolving loan funds.	B, G	F	
	Participate in regional and statewide economic development strategy efforts that involve the Northeast Kingdom region (CEDS, USDA REAP Zone, etc.).		D, G	
Assist municipalities in their economic development efforts.	Assist with the revitalization of distressed areas and and threatened employment sectors within the Northeast Kingdom.	B		A
Increase and diversify the region's agricultural output, especially value-added production using local staple products and raw materials.	When possible, provide grant and technical assistance and project management to towns, organizations, and businesses throughout the Northeast Kingdom.	G	F, G	
	Assist local planning commissions and development organizations in the Northeast Kingdom with economic development planning.		A, G	
Downtowns and village centers in the Northeast	Partner in economic development events with SBDC, PTAC, VMEC, VEOC, and others where regional businesses may benefit.	B	G	

<p>Kingdom should be maintained and revitalized.</p> <p>Make quality, affordable child care available to workers with children in the Northeast Kingdom.</p> <p>Expand tourism in the Northeast Kingdom, and make eco-based businesses a part of the region's landscape.</p> <p>Increase research and start-up funds to aid value-added processing and to diversify the economy, especially for the region's farmers.</p> <p>Strengthen manufacturing, particularly in the forest products and industrial machinery sectors.</p> <p>Promote small business sectors, e.g. telecommuting, specialty foods, value-added businesses, arts and crafts and e-commerce.</p>	<p>Host business financing panels or workshops so that businesses are aware of capital resources available.</p>			
<p>Improve the economic infrastructure capacity (physical assets and workforce) in the Northeast</p>	<p>Develop and implement a comprehensive workforce development strategy for the region.</p>	<p>B</p>		<p>A</p>
	<p>Assist municipalities with the planning, development, and maintenance of infrastructure projects that will improve economic opportunities, e.g. water, sewer, industrial sites, broadband, and transportation.</p>		<p>A, F</p>	<p>C</p>

Kingdom to meet current and future needs. Modernize and expand the region's telecommunications infrastructure to allow telecommuting and information-technology-focused companies to grow and thrive.	Support telecommunications infrastructure and knowledge capabilities by creating effective partnerships, and by advocating for increased infrastructure.	B	F	
Maintain and revitalize the downtowns and village centers in the Northeast Kingdom.	Promote and advocate for economic development projects in downtown areas.	G, B		F
	Promote and maintain Downtown Designation and Village Center Designation where appropriate.	G, B		
Mitigate the negative effects that some past businesses have had on the environment.	Identify, prioritize, and implement brownfield mitigation projects within the region.		B, F	
Natural Resource Goals	Natural Resource Strategies	Ongoing	Short-Term	Longer-Term
The overarching goal for the region is to balance local economic needs with the protection of the natural resource that so many of the region's residents enjoy and depend upon. The quality and quantity of the region's surface waters should be protected, maintained, and restored.	Provide public education on state and local water quality issues as they relate to local planning and development.	G	A, D	
	Discourage inappropriate development in flood hazard areas and floodplains. Support compatible land uses in flood areas, such as agriculture and passive recreation.	B, G	A, D, E	
	Support the efforts of watershed organizations working in the region. Coordinate the region's basin planning efforts with local plans and related activities.	B, G	A	G
	Encourage and assist communities to identify and protect community water supplies. Education on water conservation and resource protection should accompany these efforts.	B, G	A	G
	Prevent the degradation of significant wetlands through public education.	B, G		
	Minimize the negative impacts of mineral and earth resource extraction and processing facilities.	A	A, D, E	

<p>The quality and quantity of existing and potential groundwater resources should be protected and improved.</p> <p>Significant wetlands within the region should be protected.</p> <p>The region's mineral and soil resources should be used in a manner that will support the sustainable growth and development of the region.</p> <p>A consistently high level of air quality should be maintained for the health, safety, and enjoyment of the region's residents and visitors.</p> <p>Adequate resource information for the region should be maintained to improve the region's ability to plan for protection of wildlife resources in the area.</p> <p>Critical wildlife habitat should be protected.</p> <p>The native biodiversity of the region should be</p>	Support development of new markets and uses for local mineral resources. Encourage the use of locally obtained minerals for building construction and highway construction and maintenance.	G		A
	Support efforts to reduce air pollutants generated in the region from the residential, commercial, industrial, and transportation sectors.	A	A, D, E	
	Support broader state and regional efforts to minimize pollutants entering the region from out of state.	B, E		
	Support local and state efforts that inventory, delineate and map important habitats and wetlands.		A, G	G
	Support local efforts to protect critical wildlife habitat and maintain habitat connectivity.	A	A, D, B	G
	Assist interested towns with planning and mapping for the protection of habitats and natural resources.		A, G	
	Support state and local efforts to mitigate the impacts of the non-native species through ecologically sound methods (e.g. insect control, etc.).	G, B		
	Support the protection of endangered and threatened native species.		A, B	G
	Maintain and improve the resource stewardship in the area by supporting and advocating for recreation and environmental education opportunities.	G B		
	Provide technical support for dark skies initiatives to prevent or minimize light pollution.	G	D	

<p>maintained, and restored when appropriate.</p> <p>Private, public and community interests should be considered in matters affecting local recreation and open space.</p>				
Flood Resilience Goals	Flood Resilience Strategies	Ongoing	Short-Term	Longer-Term
<p>Increase awareness of the most effective means of reducing future flood damage, as identified in Tactical Basin Plans and Stream Geomorphic Assessments (River Corridor Plans)</p> <p>Protect areas identified and designated as flood plains, river corridors and land adjacent to streams</p> <p>Mitigate risks to public safety, critical infrastructure, historic structures, and municipal investments.</p>	<p>Coordinate with the County Conservation Districts in hosting flood mitigation workshops for residential landowners and business owners, to educate them on measures to reduce flood risk and damage.</p>	G, B		
	<p>Encourage Towns to include restriction of development within River Corridors, as mapped by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources.</p>		A, D	
	<p>Encourage Towns to amend zoning and subdivision regulations to include limits on clearing and impervious coverage, and that avoids impacts to wetlands and steep slopes (slopes greater than 20%).</p>		D	
	<p>Encourage Towns to incorporate Planned Unit Development provisions in their bylaws as a means to minimize impervious coverage and clearing.</p>		D	
	<p>Encourage towns to engage in a working partnership with adjacent communities to address control of stormwater runoff and actions that will allow rivers and streams to regain access to floodplains.</p>	B		
	<p>Assist Towns in seeking funding to implement hazard mitigation projects identified in plans.</p>		F	

