



April 2022

Spring is here - almost - and field season will be starting soon. The Planners are excited to be getting out and about in the County. There's a lot going on - from ARPA funds to be allocated to Regional Plan updates to road maintenance. Read on to see what we're up to.

[LCPCVT.ORG](http://LCPCVT.ORG)

## Introducing our Board Members

### Cody Marsh

Cody Marsh was born and raised in Waterville, VT, graduating from Lamoille Union High School in 2006. He then moved on to college at the University of Maine where he graduated in 2010 with a bachelor's degree in civil engineering. He then made a big change in his life by moving from "the country" to the "big city" when he accepted a position with a large general contractor in the NYC metropolitan area. He spent 3 years as an engineer/estimator on several large-scale construction projects, before accepting a position with GW Tatro Construction in Jeffersonville in 2013 where he still works to this day as a project manager. Cody settled back in Lamoille County, eventually building a home in Cambridge where he lives with his wife, their dog Bunker, and their cat Wolowitz.



Cody became a Vermont Licensed Professional Engineer in 2015, was elected to the Cambridge Selectboard in 2019, and has served on the LCPC Board of Directors, representing the town of Cambridge, since November 2020.

In 2020, Cody married his wife Kristy and they are happily expecting the birth of their first child in the fall of 2022. In his free time, he enjoys working at the family sugarbush in Cambridge, playing softball, and watching his favorite sports teams, the Boston Red Sox, Boston Bruins, New England Patriots, and the Maine Black Bears.

### Judy Bickford

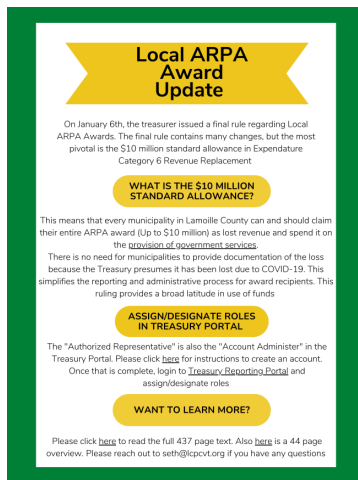
Judy grew up in a small town in Western Pennsylvania, received her Bachelor's degree in Health, Physical Education, and Recreation from Slippery Rock College (now a University), earned a Master's Degree in Special Education from the College of New Jersey (formally Trenton State College). She was certified in Elementary Education, Physical Education, and as a Special Educator. She taught in New Jersey, Massachusetts, and Vermont. Judy served as a member of the Rutland School Board, and the local Parent Teacher Organizations in Rutland and Morrisville. After she



retired from full time teaching in 2016 she became a member of the Morristown Board of Civil Authority, and later was elected to the Morristown Selectboard. She is currently the Volunteer Coordinator for Lamoille Habitat for Humanity, past Secretary for Morristown Parks and Recreation, is the Vice President of Lamoille County Retired Educators, and is on the Board of the Vermont Retired Educators. She is married to David, they have two grown children, Channing and Lydia, and is an active member of the United Community Church of Morrisville.

Judy was appointed to the LCPC Board in March of 2020. She is currently on the Morristown Selectboard and has served as a valued liaison between the town and the commission.

## ARPA Updates and Reminders



Treasury has issued revised [Compliance and Reporting Guidance](#). It includes helpful summaries of the requirements all Municipalities must follow under Uniform Guidance and the Award Terms and Conditions.

We strongly recommend that you begin preparing for your first Project and Expenditure Report, which is due April 30th. The report will cover any expenditures made between March 3, 2021 and March 31, 2022. You will need to file a report even if you have not yet expended any funds. The process must be started by the person whom your Municipality designated as the Municipality's authorized representative when you first certified for your award. Gaining access to the portal is a multi-step process; we recommend you clear those hurdles now so that you don't find yourself hitting technical difficulties at the last minute. For more information, review the following resources:

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[Project and Expenditure Report User Guide](#)

[Supporting Documents User Guide](#)

[Webinars on VLCT's website](#) (Scroll down to "Resources and Information")

We continue to encourage Municipalities to delay expenditures until after the end of the first reporting period, March 31st, in order to make the first Project and Expenditure Report as easy as possible. We also encourage Municipalities to keep an eye out for state grant funding that they might be able to leverage, using local ARPA dollars as match.

As we have noted in previous communications, the [Final Rule](#) has made the Revenue Replacement category the easiest and most flexible path for our communities to use their ARPA awards. We are recommending that Municipalities categorize the entirety of their awards under Revenue Replacement, which will allow those funds to be used for "any service traditionally provided by a government," excluding the restricted uses outlined in the Final Rule. Reporting under this category is much easier than it will be under other categories. For more information, see Treasury's [overview document](#).

Note that ARPA grant administrative expenses can be reported under Revenue Replacement as personnel expenses.

If you are undertaking a project that pools funds from multiple Municipalities, and if you will be doing so under the Revenue Replacement category, then in your federal reporting you will not be required to formally demonstrate that your Municipality is receiving a benefit that is proportional to its investment. However, it is good practice to informally document the benefits for your community.

If you are contemplating transferring money to organizations, businesses, or individuals, be aware of the distinction Treasury makes between beneficiaries and subrecipients. A subrecipient is operating under an agreement/contract to provide services on behalf of a Municipality. More information can be found in the [Compliance and Reporting Guidance](#).

One possible approach to minimize the administrative burden on your Municipality is to use your ARPA monies to pay off the non-contract portions of your regular operating budget (e.g., salaries and benefits). Doing so avoids federal procurement regulations, and it frees up money in your budget that is not restricted by ARPA regulations. If your Municipality is interested in taking this approach, keep in mind the following guidance from VLCT:

- Accounting Considerations: As with any funding source, effort should be made to document the

use of the funds clearly and thoroughly for audit purposes. Examples of documentation could be a memo describing what the funds were used for and a supporting spreadsheet showing the budget lines, actual expenditures, and how much ARPA money was spent toward that line.

- If it's illegal to spend taxpayer money on it, don't spend ARPA money on it.
- If spending money on it will create a conflict of interest, or even the appearance of a conflict of interest, then don't spend your ARPA money on it.
- If you would not bring it before the voters on Municipality Meeting Day, then maybe you should not spend your ARPA money on it.
- VLCT can provide tailored accounting guidance if you have questions about fund assignment procedures. Because each Municipality has different policies and practices, they cannot provide one-size-fits-all budgeting guidance.
- Note that the Davis-Bacon Act does not apply to projects that are funded solely through your local ARPA dollars.

As always, please reach out to Seth Jensen with any questions: [seth@lpcvt.org](mailto:seth@lpcvt.org), (802) 851-6337



## Growing the Weatherization Workforce to Help Vermont Meet Climate Goals

*This is an Efficiency Vermont report on workforce needs in this critical sector*

Have you struggled to find a weatherization contractor recently? You might not be alone. Efficiency Vermont's hardworking network of professional contractors wants to help. But there aren't enough trained workers to serve the volume of Vermonters who want to weatherize.

That problem isn't going away. Vermonters want to weatherize. It can save money and improve a home's comfort. Weatherization is also an important part of Vermont's climate goals. The Energy

Action Network (EAN) estimated that Vermont needs to weatherize 13,400 homes each year by 2030 to meet its climate goals. Today, about 2,000 homes each year are weatherized. That is a big gap. To meet those ambitious goals, EAN estimates the workforce needs to grow five-fold in the next five years.

In 2021, the Vermont Legislature created a working group to look into how to grow that workforce. Legislators selected Efficiency Vermont to lead the working group. In October, the working group submitted its final report back to the Legislature. The report included an overview of barriers to growing the weatherization workforce. The working group also recommended actions for the legislature to consider. Barriers to workforce development include: an unclear path for students interested in entering Vermont's construction trades; difficulties in hiring for jobs with sometimes challenging working conditions; wage competition; uncertainty around funding for future weatherization initiatives; shortage of affordable housing for workers.

The report included six recommendations to help grow the workforce. Some of these recommendations would also support broader economic vitality across sectors.

- **Weatherization workforce training & certification.** The working group designed a worker training and certification program to provide a clear career path for weatherization workers.
- **Marketing the trades as a future.** Young people are rarely encouraged to join the trades as a viable career opportunity. Marketing should include demonstrating field experiences and career growth potential.
- **Reaching out to New Americans.** New Americans are a growing part of our population. They are often looking for jobs when they move to Vermont. Some options to help open the door for employing New Americans include: offering construction-oriented English as a second language, expanded soft-skills training, and working with employers to support cultural awareness and improve communication.
- **Transparency around wages and job rates.** Vermont should track and report wages by position to spotlight wage disparities and prove long-term career opportunities.
- **Creating workforce housing.** Vermont should build new affordable housing for weatherization workers. Public-private partnerships could support this development.
- **Sustaining demand for weatherization.** Predictable, long-lasting incentives are critical to maintain and grow the weatherization workforce.

The working group proposed a career path for weatherization workers. For each step of the path, they identified the skills needed. After getting training, the state would certify the worker at that level. They would then be eligible for higher pay and better jobs. This path builds on established career levels used in construction. It also includes a certification for Residential HVAC Contractors. These are specialists in heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) in cold climates. HVAC and weatherization go hand-in-hand. Today, many employers already hire staff with expertise in both

areas. As they progress, this may be a natural career opportunity for interested workers.

## Vermont Department of Health & LCPC Health Equity Grant



Starting in March of 2022, LCPC will be coordinating a statewide regional planning effort to increase Health Equity in the State of Vermont. The Vermont Department of Health (VDH) is awarding \$532,835 of Center for Disease Control Federal funds for a coordinated effort of Regional Planning Commissions to focus on health equity in municipal planning. This grant goes through the end of May 2023. As the lead Regional Planning Commission, LCPC will be coordinating the project with the other ten Regional Planning Commissions to design a Health Equity Toolkit, increase our knowledge of health equity through specific training, and work with the target population to create a sustainable approach to improving long term health outcomes for all Vermonters.

The Toolkit will be used by planners and municipal staff to include health and equity language and policies in town plans and municipal bylaws. The purpose of the toolkit is to help municipal leaders increase their understanding and capacity for including health equity language in municipal plans and to support municipalities in mobilizing local partners to enhance equitable, community-based resources for physical activity and healthy food access. While developing the toolkit, all Regional Planning Commissions will also participate in health equity training to help prepare for community implementation in municipalities.

The equity focus of this grant designates the following as the target populations:

- People of color
- Indigenous people
- Refugees & English language learners
- LGBTQ+ individuals
- People experiencing homelessness
- Vermonters who are Justice involved
- People living with disabilities
- People living in rural communities

Each Regional Planning Commission has funds to provide stipends to individuals who help contribute to the planning process and review of documents within these target populations. Together with the support of VDH, we will work to support the creation and dissemination of health equity planning resources and help municipalities implement pilot community-based health equity and physical activity projects with the goal of improving at least one of the following:

- The natural environment
- Aesthetic elements
- The built environment
- The social environment
- Recreational settings
- Across-sector partnerships
- Physical barriers
- Community inclusion efforts

For more information on this project, contact Melanie Riddle, Assistant Planner, at [melanie@lcpvvt.org](mailto:melanie@lcpvvt.org) or (802) 851-6342



## Fair Housing Month

*This report is from **FairHousingMonthVT** a project of the Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity*

Fair Housing Month is almost here and we have a great lineup of activities and events - including some in person! We're busily adding events to the online calendar and will have it updated by mid-week at <https://fairhousingmonthvt.org>.

**There are several ways for housing committees and other groups to get involved, including:**

- Share the attached news release in your networks
- Ask your Selectboard to issue a Fair Housing Month proclamation. This is an excellent way to raise awareness about housing equity in your community. You can see examples from Burlington

- and Montpelier here <https://fairhousingmonthvt.org/fair-housing-month-proclamations>.
- Host a Fair Housing Month event or community housing discussion - and please let us know about it by submitting the info here: <https://forms.office.com/r/Kfia9Qe6LE>
- And for those of you directly connected with housing sites or community groups, you can request all-ages HeART & Home art kits for distribution at <https://forms.office.com/r/Kfia9Qe6LE> or simply direct people to this page for downloadable art prompts and info about how to submit art and enter to win prizes: <https://fairhousingmonthvt.org/community-art-project>.

## The Regional Plan Update is Underway

The Regional Plan Committee of the Lamoille County Planning Commission (LCPC) have begun the update of the Lamoille County Regional Plan. The Regional Plan is a policy and reference guide developed by LCPC to address issues of common concern among the municipalities in the region. As a Regional Planning Commission, LCPC is required to prepare a regional plan every eight years by soliciting input from member municipalities, regional organizations, and the public. **On May 24, 2022, LCPC will host the first information session on proposed updates to Sections 1 (Introduction) and 2 (Getting to Know Lamoille County) of the Regional Plan. This information session will be held in conjunction with the LCPC Board of Directors meeting beginning at 6:30pm on May 24<sup>th</sup>.** Participants can attend virtually or in person. Meeting details and the May information session will be posted with the Board of Directors agenda on LCPC's website at [www.lcpcvt.org](http://www.lcpcvt.org).

### 2015 – 2023 LAMOILLE COUNTY REGIONAL PLAN



*A Policy and Reference Guide*

Adopted: November 24, 2015    Effective: December 30, 2015  
Amended: September 26, 2017  
Amended: May 22, 2018

A timeline highlighting the Regional Plan update process and future committee meetings and information sessions is available online on the Lamoille County [Regional Plan Committee](#) page. Community engagement is important to the Plan update process. LCPC plans to hold three information sessions throughout the Plan update to gather input from local municipalities, members of the community, and regional partners. To view the current Regional Plan in effect please visit the [Regional Plan](#) page on LCPC's website.

For questions or comments regarding the Regional Plan update contact Meghan Rodier, Regional Planner, at [meghan@lcpcvt.org](mailto:meghan@lcpcvt.org) or (802) 851-6339.

## Clean School Bus Program

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) provides \$5 billion over five years (FY22-26) for the replacement of existing school buses with low and zero-emission school buses.



Under the Clean School Bus (CSB) Program, half of the available funding is dedicated for zero-emission school buses and half is for clean school buses. With this school bus program, EPA has an exciting opportunity to make significant investments in the health, equity, and resilience of our communities. EPA expects to release details on the specifics of the program over the coming weeks.

All program information and updates can be found at [www.epa.gov/cleanschoolbus](http://www.epa.gov/cleanschoolbus) and stakeholders can sign-up for the Clean School Bus News newsletter to stay up to date on program efforts.

EPA anticipates the CSB Program application period will open to the public in late April and close in July. Additional CSB funding opportunities are expected to follow later.

Lastly, EPA is attempting to reach as many stakeholders as possible about the CSB program. Please continue any amplification of this program by pointing relevant stakeholders to the website listed above which will continue to be updated as more information becomes available.

## Jeffersonville Receives \$560,000 for Water System Upgrades

Thanks to Senator Leahy, the appropriations bill that just passed



in Congress included \$560,000 for the Village of Jeffersonville to upgrade their water system. With this funding, the Village will be able to expand capacity for its citizens. The Village has been exploring options for additional water sources for several years, with support from LCPC.

Senator Leahy's office congratulated our own Deputy Director, Seth Jensen, for his tireless efforts on behalf of the Village. Water and wastewater infrastructure is critical to vibrant village centers, but upgrades can be expensive for small communities to manage. This support will enable the Village to

modernize its water system in a manner that is affordable for ratepayers and taxpayers.

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## Local Emergency Management Plans



Local Emergency Management Plans (LEMP) must be submitted by May 1, 2022 to Alec Jones at [alec@lcpcvt.org](mailto:alec@lcpcvt.org), as required by Vermont Emergency Management (VEM). The LEMP is updated annually by town officials and is critical for response efforts during natural disasters and is an incentive for communities to increase the state share of federally declared disasters through the Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund (ERAF). The adoption form, as well as templates for the Local Emergency Management Plan, can be found at <https://vem.vermont.gov/plans/lemp>. Alec has reached out to all 10 communities through email reminding each town to update and submit the LEMP by May 1, 2022. If your town needs a copy of their 2021 LEMP for reference, please email Alec at [alec@lcpcvt.org](mailto:alec@lcpcvt.org) to request a copy.

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## Transportation Junction

### 2022 Construction Season

As Town's work to tame the mud season effect on gravel roads, they are also busy getting ready for construction season. The State is also gearing up for work on several state roads in our region this year. Expect construction delays on Town and State roads, and plan your travels accordingly. Please be safe and be attentive to work zone signs and instructions from flaggers and road crews; we all share the obligations of ensuring safe work zones and minimizing construction costs. Contact [rob@lcpcvt.org](mailto:rob@lcpcvt.org) with questions about specific project schedules and financing planned for this coming season.



### Planning and Grant Writing Assistance

LCPC staff is available to municipalities for assistance with planning and grant writing. There are countless grant programs available for transportation related planning and implementation. Each funding program has specific requirements for eligibility and schedules. Review the ARPA information elsewhere in this newsletter as related to identification of federal funds available for transportation infrastructure, and contact LCPC staff with questions about ARPA or any other funding source. You know what your community needs, and LCPC staff knows about various funding program requirements; we are happy to assist with connecting the dots.

### VTrans Seeks Public Input on Lamoille Valley Rail Trail Management Plan

The Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) hosted a public meeting to seek input for a management plan for the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT) on March 29.

"We are excited to be undertaking this management planning process, which is the first of its kind for Vermont's State-owned rail trails," said Michele Boomhower, VTrans Director of Policy, Planning, and Intermodal Development. "This process is going to set the stage for the development of management plans for 149 miles of the State-owned rail trails as we move forward, creating a consistent approach to management and user experience."

The LVRT management plan seeks to develop a cohesive vision for the trail; identifies long-range strategies for management, maintenance, and operations of the trail; and supports opportunities for community and economic development efforts along the LVRT. Construction of the LVRT is scheduled to be completed in 2022; the 93-mile trail will connect 18 communities across five counties in northern

Vermont from Swanton to St. Johnsbury. The plan will provide a model rail trail management planning framework for all State-owned rail trails in Vermont, including the Missisquoi Valley, Beebe Spur, and Delaware & Hudson rail trails.

For more information on the management plan development and other information on the LVRT project, please visit <https://vtrans.vermont.gov/lvrt>.

Any questions concerning transportation grants or programs should be directed to [rob@lpcvt.org](mailto:rob@lpcvt.org).

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