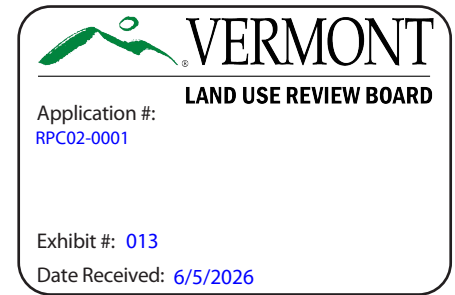


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Agency of Transportation



DATE: June 5, 2026
TO: Land Use Review Board
FROM: Vermont Agency of Transportation
RE: BCRC Regional Plan and Future Land Use Maps

Section 2 – Part A – 11. Goal 4: To provide for safe, convenient, economic, and energy efficient transportation systems that respect the integrity of the natural environment, including public transit options and paths for pedestrians and bicyclers. (A) Highways, air, rail, and other means of transportation should be mutually supportive, balanced, and integrated. 24 V.S.A. § 4302(c)(4)

The Vermont Agency of Transportation (Agency) has reviewed the Bennington County Regional Commission (BCRC) Regional Plan. The plan thoroughly considers four theme areas including transportation infrastructure, each with a description of current conditions followed by a statement of goals, actions, and policies. The plan's transportation section addresses the required elements of 24 V.S.A. § 4302(c)(4), as it states overall priorities including safety, convenience, and economic viability. It includes discussions of environmental benefits and burdens of different transportation modes and notes the importance of connectivity between travel modes. Additionally, the transportation section of the plan includes a list of improvement priorities for each topic area (e.g., highway system, public transportation, walking and bicycling, rail and air). The Agency appreciates two recurring sections throughout the plan, which highlight BCRC's key learnings from the public outreach phase and summarize how BCRC can use their expertise and role as the regional planning entity to participate in implementing the goals of the plan. We also appreciate the plan's inclusion of references to several Agency resources and to BCRC's related transportation studies including the access management study for the VT-67a corridor, the transportation project guide, and others.

Section 4 – Part C – 27. A transportation element consisting of a statement of present and prospective transportation and circulation facilities, and a map showing existing and proposed highways, including limited access highways, and streets by type and character of improvement, and where pertinent, anticipated points of congestion, parking facilities, transit routes, terminals, bicycle paths and trails, scenic roads, airports, railroads and port facilities, and other similar facilities or uses, and recommendations to meet future needs for such facilities, with indications of priorities of need, costs, and method of financing.

The transportation section of the Regional Plan includes statements of present and prospective transportation and circulation facilities, along with infrastructure improvement priority projects, some of which are connectivity-focused (including multimodal connectivity). This section includes helpful guidance and best practices for transportation infrastructure growth, such as access management principles, traffic calming, parking management, and roadway maintenance.

The plan presents *Map 25: Transportation* showing existing highways, park and ride facilities, rail lines, and the regional airport. Each of these elements is also described in the plan's narrative. The Agency understands the region does not have port facilities and the plan does not propose any new highways. Map 25 shows the region's roadways by type and character of improvement (i.e., road classification). Limited access highways are included as state and U.S. highways on Map 25, and a description of limited access highways (expressways) is included in the narrative (page 210). The Agency recommends, however, that Map 25 be amended to include major highway numbers and road names, and to label limited access highways to facilitate precise location of these facilities and create cohesion between the mapped and narrative portions of the plan. The Agency notes that it maintains a data layer of limited access highways at <https://geodata.vermont.gov/datasets/VTrans::vt-limited-access-highways/explore?location=43.723687%2C-72.855787%2C8>.

The Agency recommends amending Map 25 (or including a new map) to depict designated scenic roads. This map could also include historic bridges to complement the narrative section on scenic roads and historic bridges (p. 216).

The plan's public transportation section includes a discussion of existing transit services and opportunities to grow connectivity both within the region and with nearby hub cities like Albany, NY and Boston, MA. This section includes *Map 26: Public Transit*, which shows regional and local transit routes. The Agency recommends Map 26 be amended to include bus stops and regional terminals/transfer facilities.

The walking and bicycling section of the plan is robust, and the Agency appreciates the inclusion of both existing and prospective bike and pedestrian facilities in Maps 27-29. The narrative discussion of safety hazards and other unique considerations for nonmotorized transportation is also useful.

Because Map 25 includes all the region's transportation infrastructure, the map becomes crowded in certain areas, notably the urban areas of Bennington and Manchester. Maps 26-29, while displaying fewer data layers, depict finer scale transit routes and bicycle and pedestrian paths, which also become crowded in urban areas. The Agency recommends that Maps 25-29 be included on BCRC's website in a format that allows for more detailed viewing. Alternatively, detail map insets could be developed for the areas with higher transportation infrastructure complexity.

The plan would benefit from additional discussion and mapping of points of congestion in the region, known or anticipated. This is particularly relevant with respect to areas mapped as

planned growth areas in the Future Land Use Map. Such a discussion could include reflections on roadway and intersection safety issues observed in the region (e.g., high crash locations, truck turning constraints, multimodal concerns). This would further support the plan's existing notes on safety best practices for each transportation mode.

Finally, recommendations to meet future transportation infrastructure needs are specifically documented throughout the transportation section of the Regional Plan, though the recommended methods of financing are presented more generally (e.g., state or federal grant programs, capital planning). The Agency recommends including cost estimates in each list of improvement priorities to indicate the relative *high, medium, or low* cost to implement.

Future Land Use Map Comments:

The Agency agrees with the classification of the William H. Morse State Airport, railyards, and rail sidings in the region as part of the enterprise land use category. Rail sidings, even if not currently used, can in the future be developed into rail-related enterprise land use functions.