

# TRORC

## Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee

### REGIONAL COMMISSION



## News & Notes

### March 2023



*Topsham, Vermont | Photo by: John Knox*

## PROJECT UPDATES AND REMINDERS



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## Preparing Towns for Grant Applications: April 5, 2023 6 p.m. - 7 p.m.

This training will focus on all aspects of how your town can prepare itself to apply for and manage state and federal grants. We will walk you through what towns should consider prior to applying for grants, what information your town needs in order to apply, how grants differ in implementation requirements, and how, once you get the funding, the grants are managed. There will also be a list of grants available. There will be a Q&A segment at the end for all of your questions. If you have questions, we'd welcome them to be sent ahead of time to Connor Rigney at [crigney@trorc.org](mailto:crigney@trorc.org).

[Register in advance for this meeting](#)

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting. This meeting will be recorded and uploaded to the TRORC YouTube channel.

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*Bourdon Maple Sugarhouse | Photo by: Connor Rigney, staff*

## Vermont Maple Open House Weekend Continues April 1st

Maple Open House Weekend celebrates Vermont tradition and invites you to join in on the festivities as sugarmakers show off their craft throughout New England!

3CVT, TRORC, and MARC are partnering with Bourdon Maple Farm, who will be boiling and offering tours of the sugarhouse throughout the day (no reservation required). Come learn how maple syrup is made - from the forest to the sugarhouse - and why organic, bird-friendly maple syrup is a more sustainable choice. You can also explore our Maple Trail up into the sugarbush with your own snowshoes or by renting some at the sugarhouse. Trails will be marked with different routes available following our handy map. Along the way, keep an eye out for hidden tokens to win prizes!

Our forester, Pat Bartlett of [Bartlett Forestry & Wildlife](#), is giving Forest & Wildlife Tours on Saturday, March 25 and Saturday, April 1 from 10am to 12pm. \$20 for adults and \$5 for kids. Please arrive at the sugarhouse right at 10am!

A map of all participating sugarhouses and establishments can be found at [www.vermontmaple.org/mohw](http://www.vermontmaple.org/mohw). We'll see you at the sugarhouse!

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## Local Emergency Management Plans (LEMP) are due May 1st

LEMPs are due between the first Town Meeting Day and May 1st every year. This plan helps your town prepare for emergencies and qualifies the municipality for more funding through the Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund in the event of a federally declared disaster. Municipalities can submit their LEMP to TRORC the same way as last

year, but also have the option of submitting online through WebEOC. More information on LEMPS, WebEOC, and template documents can be found at <https://vem.vermont.gov/plans/lemp>.

Contact Sydney Steinle by phone 802-457-3188 ext. 3006 or [ssteinle@trorc.org](mailto:ssteinle@trorc.org) with questions.

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## Brownfield Redevelopment Spotlight

With funding from the US Environmental Protection Agency and the State of Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development, TRORC has been able to support the assessment of many brownfield sites throughout our region, enabling them to return to productive use in our communities. Here are a handful of sites that have been revitalized after working with TRORC on assessment:

**Former Bridgewater Elementary School:** This building was slated to be demolished until the Bridgewater Area Community Foundation decided to renovate it as a community center. Assessment was completed in early 2021 with assistance from TRORC. Redevelopment efforts are underway and a child care center opened in the building in June 2022. Additional spaces will open for various community uses in summer 2023.

**North Tunbridge General Store:** The general store was a fixture in the community for decades, then entered foreclosure and was at risk of being lost. TRORC assisted with brownfield assessment to facilitate the property's transfer to a new owner. Assessment was completed in September 2021, and the store is now open and serving the community.

**Former Jiffy Mart, Wells River:** The property has been vacant since the gas station closed in 2013. Little Rivers Health Care purchased the property with the intention of redeveloping it as a dental clinic, a project that will help to fill a critical service gap in our region. With TRORC's assistance, assessment work was completed in September 2022. Redevelopment is now underway and the clinic is slated to open in Fall 2023.

**Former LW Greenwood & Sons Property, Randolph:** TRORC helped the new owners, KAD Models, make sure the site was safe and ready to host their manufacturing operations. The assessment process was completed in December 2020, and KAD's business is contributing to the local economy.

**Former Tip Top Tire, Hartford:** This site sat vacant for many years after being destroyed by a fire in 1993. TRORC assisted with a lengthy assessment process that was completed in April 2020. The site was remediated and redeveloped as 4 units of affordable housing in summer 2021.



*Bridgewater Community Center | Photo by: Connor Rigney, Staff*



*North Tunbridge General Store | Photo by: Connor Rigney, staff*



*Wells River Clinic | Photo by: Connor Rigney, Staff*

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## Municipal Planning Grant Awards

Earlier this month, several towns in TRORC's region were awarded Municipal Planning Grants from the state to fund crucial local projects. TRORC is proud to have worked with these towns in writing these applications. The towns and projects are:

- **Bradford**, awarded \$23,000. The project will identify gaps in housing and removal of barriers to growth which will foster sustainable economic development in Bradford. The focus on additional housing will be in the Bradford central "Core" served by municipal water and sewer.
  - **Hartford**, awarded \$20,000. Since it has been 20 years since the last update, Hartford seeks to update their Town Plan Economic Development chapter, create an extensive public process & develop a vision, goals, strategies & actions to guide the Town to achieve a stronger local economy.
  - **Newbury**, awarded \$14,594. This project will update the Town Plan to ensure it meets all requirements, can get both regional approval and a determination of energy compliance, and addresses the latest challenges facing Newbury, including a housing shortage.
  - **Vershire**, awarded \$11,330. The Town will comprehensively review and revise policies in its Town Plan to bring the document into compliance with statutory requirements and to ensure that the Plan supports the kind and pattern of development the Town wants.
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## Newbury and Wells River Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Approval!

Earlier this month, Newbury and Wells River's multijurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) was approved by the State of Vermont and FEMA. TRORC is proud to have assisted the Town and Village in the LHMP update process. TRORC is under contract with many of our region's towns to update and rewrite their LHMPs to keep their residents safe and informed in the event of a natural disaster. Please give us a call if you would like assistance writing your LHMP.

More information on LHMPs, why they're needed, and what they do, [can be found here](#).

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### 3CVT New Steering Committee Member

M.K. Harrelson went to the Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts in Connecticut as a dance major, and Hampshire College in Massachusetts for dance therapy before moving to Springfield, Vermont in 2017. She was the director and choreographer for the 62nd Annual Apple Blossom Cotillion in town, and the Steampunk Festival Coordinator for their year back after hiatus. She then mentored under Karen Longo at Dragonfly Designs as a graphic designer for a few years before becoming the Digital Creatives Coordinator at Black River Innovation Campus (BRIC). She also professionally edits videos for large and small YouTubers, and as a hobby is the film and editing crew for Springfield's Paranormal Investigation team called Déjà Vu Paranormal, where she is constantly scared out of her mind.

3CVT (Cornerstone Creative Community) is a Zone of the [Vermont Creative Network](#). If you're located within the 3CVT Zone and consider yourself to be part of the Creative Sector, you're a member of 3CVT! The Zone is led by the 3CVT Steering Committee of working volunteers convened by Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission, the Green Mountain Economic Development Corporation, and the Vermont Council on the Arts. The goal of this committee is to broaden and build the future partnerships that will be needed within the creative economy at all levels.

*Photo by: M.K. Harrelson*

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### Fairlee Village Center Designation Renewal

At its meeting on February 27, 2023, the Downtown Development Board approved Fairlee Village's application for Village Center Designation. This designation opens the village up to several benefits, including tax credits, priority consideration for state grants, priority consideration by state Building and General Services, and Neighborhood Development Area Eligibility. TRORC is proud to have assisted Fairlee in their application for VCD renewal.

If you are interested in pursuing Village Center Designation in your town, please contact TRORC for assistance.

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### Advance Transit Debuts Electric Bus



Congratulations to Advance Transit debuting their first electric bus on Monday, March 13 on the Green Route. Advance Transit was awarded a grant to purchase an electric bus from the Federal Transit Administration's Low and No-Emissions program that invests in bus fleets and facilities.

*Photo by: Adams Carroll, 2023*



*Photo from the TRORC Archive*

## Is Your Town Safe From Flooding?

New [FEMA Flood Maps](#) are on the way. With flooding as Vermont's most costly and dangerous natural hazard, learn more about how your town can better prepare for future flood events. Ensure your town's flood regulations meet the National Flood Insurance Program requirements prior to the rollout of the new maps.

Contact Kyle Katz for more information at [kkatz@trorc.org](mailto:kkatz@trorc.org) or 802-457-3188 x3005

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## Vermont Fair Housing Month

April marks the beginning of Vermont's Fair Housing Month celebrating the fifty-fifth anniversary of the passing of the Fair Housing Act. TRORC has long been an advocate for housing equality in our region, in Vermont, and in the country. TRORC is proud to co-sponsor a Fair Housing Month event this April.

More information on Fair Housing and Anti-Discrimination can be found on the State of Vermont Website [here](#).

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## WORK WITH US?

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### Planner

The Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission (TRORC) in east-central Vermont is seeking an energetic, multi-faceted Planner as part of our team of professional staff.

The Planner will be responsible for individual projects, as well as assisting other planning staff. General planning duties include writing comprehensive plans, hazard mitigation plans, zoning and subdivision bylaws; grant writing and management; and natural resource planning.

Candidates must have excellent public speaking skills, be adept at written communication, be proficient in Microsoft Office, have a public service-attitude and sense of humor, a high degree of operating independently, and have the ability to grasp technical concepts quickly. A Bachelor's degree is required, preferably in planning, natural sciences, or a related field. A master's degree, AICP or CFM certification, or experience in social media, GIS, grant management, or land use planning is desired. The position requires a reliable vehicle and attendance at night meetings. Partial remote work is possible.

TRORC's service area is comprised of 30 towns in east-central Vermont with a combined population of 56,000. While most of the region is quite rural, we also have excellent recreational assets, very low unemployment and a variety of cultural and educational opportunities. TRORC's offices are beautifully located on a conserved farm on the outskirts of Woodstock, Vermont.

Candidates are encouraged to learn more about TRORC at [www.trorc.org](http://www.trorc.org).

Starting salary is \$46-60k, depending on education and experience, accompanied by an outstanding benefits package. Applicants must submit the following by email to [pgregory@trorc.org](mailto:pgregory@trorc.org) as separate pdfs: a cover letter stating desired salary, three references with phone and email contacts, a resume, and a writing sample.

Cover letter should be addressed to:  
Peter G. Gregory, AICP, Executive Director  
Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission  
128 King Farm Road  
Woodstock, VT 05091

Position open until filled. TRORC is an equal opportunity employer.

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## GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

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### **\$4,000 Community Capacity-Building Mini-Grants—applications open now**

The first phase of the Municipal Energy Resilience Program (MERP) has officially launched! Towns can now apply for the Community Capacity-Building “Mini-Grants” of up to \$4,000. These funds can be used for a variety of outreach and education activities, such as:

- Starting a local energy committee
- Sending mailers to residents regarding efficiency programs, weatherization programs, and/or rebates
- Hosting a community energy fair or similar public energy event (can be used to provide refreshments, print/distribute materials, etc.)
- Hiring a grant writer, such as TRORC, to apply for other state and federal grants to stack with MERP
- Training for municipal official/town staff on energy efficiency topics (basics of weatherization, heat pumps, etc.)

For more information on the program, please visit TRORC's [MERP webpage](#) or contact TRORC's MERP coordinator Harry Falconer at [hfalconer@trorc.org](mailto:hfalconer@trorc.org).

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### **Vermont Community Development Grants**

The Vermont Community Development Program (VCDP) assists communities on a competitive basis by providing financial and technical assistance to identify and address local needs in the areas of housing, economic development, public facilities, public services, handicapped accessibility and modification planning.

Learn more on the ACCD website [here](#). Applications are accepted on a rolling basis

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### **Community Recovery and Revitalization Program**

In 2022, the Vermont Legislature, through Act 183 and 185, appropriated \$40,000,000 from American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) – Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Funds to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD) for the Community Recovery and Revitalization Program (CRRP).

The CRRP will provide funding for projects that spur economic recovery and revitalization in communities across the state. Eligible uses for these funds include capital improvements related to the renovation or creation of childcare and affordable housing for low and moderate income households, capital projects that assist nonprofits and small businesses in industries most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and municipal water supply and wastewater projects that build housing or create jobs through business creation and expansion. These recovery funds are intended to retain and expand existing businesses and nonprofit organizations with a preference for projects that primarily serve BIPOC populations and projects located in regions and communities with declining or stagnant grand list values.

Learn more on the ACCD website [here](#).

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## OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

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### Park Your Carbon Week – May 15-19, 2023

**You Can Make A Difference.** You can reduce carbon pollution in Vermont and impact worldwide climate change. Park Your Carbon is an initiative to help change Vermonters' transportation and commuting habits by encouraging green ways of travel. Try it for a day, a week, or make it an ongoing habit. **Bike. Walk. Share Your Ride. Bus. Work From Home. Every trip counts. Even small ones!**

<https://www.connectingcommuters.org/parkyourcarbon/>

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# 21ST ANNUAL VERMONT EMPLOYEE OWNERSHIP CONFERENCE



Thursday, June 1



UVM Davis Center



## VEOC

Vermont Employee Ownership Center

**KEYNOTER: DEREK PEEBLES,**  
DIRECTOR, PUBLIC POLICY &  
ADVOCACY FOR INCLUSIVE  
ECONOMY, AMERICAN  
SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS ALLIANCE

## 21st Annual Vermont Employee Ownership Conference

### Keynote speaker:

Derek Peebles, Senior Director Policy & Advocacy for Inclusive Economy at [American Sustainable Business Network](#).

**Date:** June 1, 2023

**Location:** UVM Davis Center, Burlington

[Click here to learn more and RSVP](#)

The VEOC conference is back this year for a day of in-person learning, featuring:

- 19 workshops with professional advisors and consultants
- Plentiful chances to network, socialize and relax
- Online participation options for select workshops