

2003

Annual Report

“The purpose of the Association shall be to develop and promote through study, planning and publicity, the recreational, agricultural, industrial, natural and human resources of the region and to work for the economic and social betterment of the region.”

— NVDA Bylaws



NVDA

*Northeastern Vermont
Development Association*

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NVDA: Our Unique Mission

Much has been said and written of the fabled uniqueness of Vermont’s Northeast Kingdom. Like the region it serves, Northeastern Vermont Development Association has a history and mission that is unparalleled. NVDA was formed in 1950 – at the same meeting where US Senator George Aiken coined the term “Northeast Kingdom” to describe the area composed of Caledonia, Essex, and Orleans counties. At that time, the Kingdom was one of 12 state regions designated for the purposes of community planning and economic development. And of those 12 regions, the Northeast Kingdom was the only region to be served by a single entity. For more than a half-century, NVDA has worked to better the Northeast Kingdom by providing essential planning services *and* by promoting sustainable economic development.

NVDA’s uniquely dual focus is a tall order. As the Kingdom’s *regional planning commission*, NVDA addresses a broad scope of land-use issues. Our staff works closely with communities to navigate complex regulatory options, write and administer grants, create maps, and implement transportation and natural resource plans. As the region’s *economic development association*, NVDA promotes infrastructure improvements, helps companies relocate to the area, provides technical assistance to existing businesses, and administers revolving loan funds. Our St. Johnsbury office also hosts the Kingdom’s Small Business Development Center, which works with about 150 clients annually. NVDA also fosters key partnerships

with the Small Business Development Center, the Northeast Kingdom Collaborative, the Northeast Kingdom Travel and Tourism Association, and the various Chambers of Commerce in the region.

NVDA is supported by an annual appropriation from member towns, a share of the state’s property transfer tax fund, and by private, state and federal grants. Our funding sources are:

- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION –
US DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
- USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT – US DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE
- VT AGENCY OF COMMERCE AND COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT
- VT DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING
- VT DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION – US
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
- VT DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION –
WATER QUALITY DIVISION
- VT SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER – US SMALL
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
- VT AGENCY OF TRANSPORTATION – US DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION

NVDA is an equal opportunity lender, provider, and employer.

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In Our Own Words:

The Executive Director

This annual report is intended to give you a snapshot of the various activities of the Northeastern Vermont Development Association during fiscal year 2003.

It is a privilege and honor to serve as your Executive Director. Since my arrival in April, I have come to appreciate the broad scope of NVDA's responsibilities and services.

Praise for achievements noted in this report go to my predecessors, Charlie Carter and John Hall, and to an extraordinarily talented and dedicated staff. We are very fortunate to have these folks on board. They consistently turn out a high quality work product with very limited resources.

Listed on other pages of this report are our numerous partners. Without them, we would be unable to do our job. Our sincere thanks to all who have helped us through a productive year.

We will miss the tireless leadership of outgoing President John Ward. During his two years of service, he devoted many long hours to the work of NVDA. We thank him for that. Fortunately for us, he will remain on our Board of Directors.

While this report is about the year just passed, I eagerly look forward to the work ahead. We have huge challenges, but plentiful opportunities. Working together, I believe we can achieve our goal of improving the economic climate in a way that complements our unique way of life in the Kingdom.

I hope you find this Annual Report informative. We always welcome your questions and comments.

Sincerely,

STEVE PATTERSON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The President

As I was reflecting on this message, I realized that NVDA has been in operation for fifty three years, which is as long as I have been around. After having Charlie Carter lead our organization for 35 years and John Hall for the past two years, we now have a new Executive Director in Steve Patterson. I have only worked with Steve a few short months, but I feel that Steve is and will provide the leadership we need to move forward.

We are fortunate to have a very dedicated and experienced staff that is available at a moment's notice to help our communities in the Northeast Kingdom. Our Board of Directors is composed of municipal representatives and area legislators. As we continue to experience economic stress and a very complicated regulatory environment, we are fortunate to have a Board of Directors whose participation, support, and common sense provide a guiding light to our way forward.

NVDA is the only regional organization in the state that combines economic development, regional and local planning, and transportation programs under one roof. In our rural region, where we depend on our neighbors for success, this is a real plus in providing functional programs that work for our communities.

Lastly, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to serve these past two years as your President. As I said last year, I am proud to be part of an organization that is making a positive difference in the lives of our neighbors.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN O. WARD JR.
PRESIDENT

Economic Development: Building Quality of Life, One Job at a Time

Small firms employ two-thirds of our nation's workforce. They have a dramatic impact on our economic well-being. NVDA takes the long view on economic development, building a better future one job at a time. To attract more employers to the Northeast Kingdom, we're working to expand the availability of industrial and business sites, improve access to information and energy technologies, and foster the development of a highly skilled workforce. The construction of the new Charles E. Carter Business Resource Center, for example, will empower local business entrepreneurs. The bottom line: *We are working to help small businesses prosper and grow in a way that complements our unique way of life in the Kingdom.*

Vital Partnerships

NVDA has forged highly productive working relationships with other regional entities. We continue to enjoy dynamic partnerships with the Northeast Kingdom Collaborative, the Workforce Investment Board, the Economic Development Council of Northern Vermont, the Northeast Kingdom Travel & Tourism Association, and others. These relationships allow us to marshal all available resources so we are working in unison on common goals. This "team approach" has been successful with issues ranging from business-specific assistance to broad marketing efforts that benefit the region.

NVDA also supports ongoing economic initiatives. As an active member of the Northeast Kingdom Collaborative, we work with other partners to update the REAP Strategic and Work Plans, which outline both existing conditions and a vision for the region's economic future. NVDA was also a key player on a task force that assessed the telecommunications needs of the tri-county area. This task force will be able to develop a request for proposal to telecommunications providers who may be able to provide better rates and services to our region.

Real-World Technical Assistance

NVDA planners provide ongoing support to entrepreneurs and small business owners, helping them navigate complex matters of state and federal governments, such as zoning, permitting, licensing and regulations. We also offer guidance on HUB zone certification, which is part of a federal program to help businesses in economically disadvantaged areas.

The regional Small Business Development Center, located conveniently in NVDA's St. Johnsbury and Newport offices, is perhaps the most critical component of NVDA's technical assistance resources. Our day-to-day work with SBDC is one of our valuable partnerships – and one that allows us to mobilize quickly when business opportunities arise. (See our inset story on WT Solutions.)

In a typical year, SBDC will provide confidential, one-on-one business consulting to 150 new and existing businesses. Entrepreneurs can gain practical insights in business planning, financial analysis, marketing, and financing. Our SBDC belongs to the Vermont SBDC and works in concert with the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development, the Vermont Technical College and the US Small Business Administration. NVDA regularly refers prospective businesses to the Kingdom SBDC. Recent referrals include food producers, retailers, innkeepers, spa operators, and a variety of service providers.

Our SBDC is headed by Area Business Specialist Jon Freeman, who possesses a rich and varied background in engineering including project management, product development, and quality improvement. Prior to joining the SBDC, Jon's most recent position was the Director of Engineering for a wholly owned subsidiary of a multinational company headquartered in Germany. Jon also has owned his own business, a small manufacturing company in Connecticut. NVDA will continue to work closely with Jon as we pursue shared goals of a strengthened local economy.

Improved Infrastructure

In a region that's known primarily for its pristine meadows and woodlands, NVDA faces a unique challenge in connecting businesses with sites and services that best meet their needs. NVDA has helped develop five fully-serviced industrial parks, and we can help business owners select a site in one of these parks – and even build to suit and lease space at or slightly above cost. This year we completed major road, sewer and power improvements to NVDA's St. Johnsbury-Lyndon Industrial Park. This \$1.87 million-dollar project completes the service infrastructure to all 13 new lots.

In June of 2003, the St. Johnsbury-Lyndon industrial park also hosted an important groundbreaking event when construction was commenced on the Charles E. Carter

Business Resource Center. Named after the man who served as NVDA's director for 35 years, the 21,000 sq. ft. center will house a "Center for Excellence" workforce training facility, business incubator space, and warehouse space. The business resource center will help small business operators by providing much-needed access to training, storage, and otherwise costly "overhead" resources, such as photocopiers, and communications equipment. NVDA has already fielded several serious inquiries from businesses about use of the new facilities.

This ambitious project epitomizes all that is possible through NVDA's effective partnerships. NVDA had already worked with the Town of Lyndon to secure a \$700,000 Community Development Block Grant to fund this center. Construction was able to move forward, thanks to the Economic Development Council of Northern Vermont, who obtained a \$1 million grant from the Economic Development Agency. In addition, the Center for Excellence will rely largely on a partnership with Lyndon State College for their expertise and training resources.

Another exciting development is our online commercial and industrial database. The design of this comprehensive database is nearly complete and will soon be accessible from NVDA's new Web site. Users will be able to view four to five records at a time. Drill-down capacity will allow for easy access to a wealth of specific details, including digital photos, square footage, ceiling height, nearest interstate, water and sewer, onsite rail use, use-of-space specifications, and contact information.



Pictured from left to right are Ed Zuccaro, Charlie Carter, and Mary Paull, at the groundbreaking of the Charles E. Carter Business Resource Center.

Financial Assistance Programs

NVDA helps new and existing businesses with low-interest financing through two loan programs: **The Intermediary Relending Program (IRP)**, and the **Regional Revolving Loan Program (RLF)**. Loans generally range anywhere from \$5,000 to \$100,000, and may account for no more than 75% of a project's total financing.

Intermediary Relending Program (IRP)

Funded by the USDA Rural Development, the IRP provides low-interest loans to establish or expand small businesses, as well as provide jobs and economic stability to the region. USDA funds the IRP by making a lump-sum, low-interest loan to a lending agent, who in turn, establishes a revolving loan fund for local businesses.

NVDA has successfully applied for two loans from USDA to fund active IRPs. The first IRP, in the amount of \$275,000, was established in 1995. It has now provided local businesses with nearly \$360,000 in financing, and has leveraged \$1.7 million in other financing. In November of 2001, NVDA received a second USDA loan in the amount of \$300,000. NVDA will use this loan to recapitalize the original IRP, making the entire amount available to local business. By the end of this fiscal year, one local manufacturer had submitted an application for funding from this second IRP. The application is still pending.

Revolving Loan Program

NVDA's revolving loan program is an older, smaller fund geared to meet the needs of clients whose proposals may not readily fit in with other programs. Loans will typically cover working capital, fixed assets and purchase of inventory. Because the funding comes from local sources, NVDA is able to provide a relatively fast turnaround on applications. This year, NVDA made more than \$44,000 available to four businesses: Newport Plastics in Lyndonville; Party Central, a retail start-up in downtown St. Johnsbury; Landry Trucking in Orleans; and Kingdom Brewers, a microbrewery in Victory.

2003 Economic Development Highlights

NVDA submitted a Vermont Community Development Program implementation grant application - part of a larger funding package for the **Dirigo Paper Company** to reopen in Gilman. This application is now pending.

We continue to work with a company interested in operating its wilderness training business in the Northeast Kingdom.

NVDA assisted **Cheebea**, a manufacturer of glucose-free bread products in locating in Orleans.

We were able to assist a women's exercise franchise open a Newport location.

NVDA is currently working on the possible relocation of a Canadian gift packaging manufacturer to Newport. This move could create about 15 jobs within a few years.

Our staff assisted Governor Jim Douglas with his job summits in the Kingdom.

We consulted with the **Burke Mountain Operating Company** to assess funding options to improve their ski-

Where the Wild Things Are

This spring, the local headlines told of an all-too typical and heartbreaking scenario: On a Friday afternoon in late May, Quality Controlled Stitching, a manufacturer of fleece products for the ski industry, announced the immediate closure of its St. Johnsbury plant. Although a soft economy had taken its toll on the business in recent years, the announcement still came as a sudden and stunning blow to its 45 employees.

What the public didn't know is that efforts to reopen the plant were already afoot.

Exit Quality Controlled Stitching; enter Marie-Odile "Titoune" Meunier-Bouchard, a seasoned mountain climber and successful entrepreneur. Titoune, a native of Chamonix, France, is the founder of **Wild Things**, a supplier of state-of-the-art, lightweight clothing and gear to expedition, alpine, ice and rock climbers. Her company, which operates a retail store in North Conway, NH, had relied on Quality Stitching for some of its contract work. After Quality Controlled Stitching closed, Meunier-Bouchard simply bought the company's left-over equipment, secured the existing customer base, and hired about 52 people. Wild Things' new contract stitching company, **WT Solutions**, was now open for business.

And all of this happened within a matter of days.

"This was an amazing, *practically overnight* success story," said Jon Freeman of the SBDC. "WT Solutions has been in business for only three weeks and they are already productive, with more than 50 experienced people utilizing their skills once again."

Steve Patterson, Executive Director of NVDA, concurs. "We've helped take a significant economic setback and transform it into a net gain in jobs for the region." Patterson credits the dynamic partnerships between NVDA, the Northeast Kingdom SBDC, as well as the Town of St. Johnsbury and the Department of Economic Department, all of whom scrambled to provide Wild Things with technical and financial assistance to get up and running so quickly.

Behind this successful team effort are players who know the value of doing business in the Kingdom. Wild Things serves a highly specialized market that includes expert climbers and military commandos like Navy Seals – customers whose lives depend on the safety and reliability of their products. Wild Things therefore keeps a watchful eye on all aspects of production. Bucking the trend of using overseas mass production, Wild Things keeps all manufacturing operations under a watchful eye here in the U.S. Everything is produced in small batches, allowing staff to personally field-test all gear and equipment and make improvements as needed. With its access to pristine natural resources and a ready supply of eager employees, the wild Northeast Kingdom is just the right place for a company like Wild Things.



Titoune Meunier-Bouchard, WT Solutions, confers with Jon Freeman of the SBDC.

lifts, allowing them to be more competitive with other ski areas.

The region has seen the continued growth of Vermont Teddy Bear in the Newport plant, which has about 80 employees and is now housed in two (connected) buildings with a total of 24,000 square feet.

Spencer Supports (Stanstead, Que.) has expanded its operations to a Derby warehouse and now employs 10 people, some of whom were Ames employees.

NVDA's Legislative Breakfasts in Orleans County continue to be well-attended.

The Kingdom's traditional "downtown" centers remain a largely untapped resource. Although these areas have suffered decades of economic decline and physical neglect, local advocacy groups are now beginning to reverse this trend. NVDA worked with the **Barton/Orleans Development Committee** on village revitalization issues and the rehabilitation of Barton's historic Pierce Block. We also secured funding for a **Take Charge Derby** program to explore and quantify development potential of four properties in historic downtown Derby Line. We also provided critical support to St. Johnsbury's downtown development organization, **St. Johnsbury Works!**, and worked with the Town of Brighton to develop a welcome center for Island Pond.

NVDA spearheaded ongoing communications between **Ethan Allen** officials and those on the state and local levels to address the company's concerns about taxes, worker's comp, and power costs. All of these issues are receiving attention.

NVDA worked with **Tivoly USA** to obtain funding from the Vermont Economic Progress Council. The funding allowed Tivoly to expand operations in Derby Line, creating 45 new jobs.

NEK Physical Therapy opened in the Newport Incubator Building in November. With more than 30 physical therapy clients and 70+ members for its state-of-the-art exercise equipment, NEKPT is doing exceptionally well.

We assisted communities, including Hardwick and Canaan, in assessing the potential for establishing business incubators.

Vermont Beef Jerky purchased its neighboring building, the former Comstock's, and is using a portion of the building to smoke cheese for Cabot.



The Town of St. Johnsbury will establish a welcome center in its historic 1888 railroad station.

NVDA assisted the **Orleans County Development Committee** in selling the final three lots in the Newport Industrial Park. The new owner has mentioned the possibility of an industrial condo where a small plumbing, electrical, etc. operation could house a truck, storage, and a small office.

Referrals to the **Small Business Development Center** continue to rise. There is a great deal of interest in agri-business and agri-tourism at this time.

NVDA continues to make regular visits to Northeast Kingdom manufacturers and other businesses.

We continue to support the efforts of the **Island Pond Woodworkers Alliance**, a business formed by employees of the now-closed Ethan Allen plant in Island Pond. The IPWA has secured impressive contracts and is in full production.

NVDA obtained a \$99,000 **Rural Business Enterprise Grant** to establish a technical assistance fund for small and emerging businesses. This fund requires only a 10% match, allowing small businesses to embark on a number of activities, including market studies and plans, location studies, site evaluations, environmental testing, and Act 250 and other permitting assistance.

Planning and Zoning:

Managing Growth From A Local Perspective

Planning and zoning allows communities to manage growth in ways that reflect their own values and priorities. Our staff offers comprehensive on-site consulting, making professional planning and zoning capabilities affordable to even the smallest communities. This year, we helped 10 communities prepare, revise or adapt town plans, zoning bylaw, or flood hazard area regulations.

Technical Assistance

A substantial portion of NVDA's staff time is devoted to helping planning commissions, zoning boards, and zoning administrators carry out their responsibilities. Daily phone calls from town officials run the full gamut of procedure and planning law. *How do we handle a zoning appeal? How do we write a plan? What's the difference between a town plan and zoning bylaw?* This year we took a proactive role by making presentations to member communities on a variety of subjects such as permitting, the role of the zoning officer, and the role of the zoning board. We will continue these efforts to reach out, educate, and empower.

Grant assistance is another major component of NVDA's technical services, since many of our communities don't have the time or resources to meet the complex requirements of state- and federally-funded programs. In 2003, NVDA successfully obtained grants or administered grants for a number of communities and organizations, including the Town of Derby, Barton, Hardwick, Newport, St. Johnsbury, Jay, Lyndon and Greensboro.

Downtown Revitalization

Vermont was the first state to promote "smart growth" by encouraging economic development in established community centers rather than dispersed commercial development. The State's Downtown Program provides a number of economic incentives to create designated downtowns. These incentives include tax credits, loans, and priority consideration for state and federal grants. Recent expansion of the Downtown Act now extends economic opportunities to Designated Village Centers. While there is currently only one designated downtown in the Northeast Kingdom, smaller communities have expressed an interest in obtaining village center designation. We will continue to encourage communities to participate in this exciting program.

Preserving the vitality of our town and village centers is smart public policy. Our downtowns represent substantial capital investment — both public and private — in buildings, water and sewage systems, streets, sidewalks and parks. Nearly one-fifth of Vermont's economic activity and jobs are based in downtowns. Who will assume ultimate responsibility for the development of Vermont's town and village centers? There's no easy answer to this question, since municipalities usually lack the manpower and resources to go it alone. Some communities, including St. Johnsbury,

"Why does our town need a plan?"

Northeast Kingdom communities face unique land-use and development challenges. Some have large-lot, piecemeal subdivision of farmland and forests and rising housing costs. Some "vacation home" towns see a seasonal surge in population and traffic congestion. Many towns are struggling to update antiquated water and sewer systems. All of these issues can be addressed in the planning process. Planning is all about **grass-roots empowerment**. An effective town plan will allow a community to meet challenges strategically — *and in a manner that reflects the community's own values and priorities.*

Some of the advantages to having a town plan are:

It's a highly democratic process. Planning depends largely on citizen involvement, allowing community members to play a role in determining a long-range vision.

Planning can allow communities to designate key growth areas to stimulate desirable business development.

Your community may get priority consideration for grants. In fact, some State grants programs require a plan.

A town plan is needed to write zoning bylaws. If you want to create land use ordinances, you **MUST** have a town plan.

There are numerous disadvantages to NOT having a town plan. Today there are 26 communities in the Northeast Kingdom with expired town plans. These towns may encounter a number of challenges, including reduced eligibility for state and federal funding and fewer tax credit opportunities. They may not even be able to receive FEMA assistance in the event of a natural disaster. NVDA will work harder to demonstrate to these communities the importance of developing a town plan.

Derby Line, Brighton, Hardwick, and Barton, have created volunteer-driven downtown committees with a “Main-Street” flavor. NVDA staff have actively served on these committees and will continue to do so.

Affordable Housing

The 2000 US Census shows that in the Northeast Kingdom, 22% of homeowners and 36% of renters pay more than 30% of their income on housing. (30% is considered to be the benchmark for affordability.) In 2003, NVDA supported three affordable housing projects in Newport City, Coventry, and Groton. Working on behalf of Gilman Housing Trust, we reviewed grant applications and wrote letters of support to help secure funding to make these projects possible. NVDA will continue to help private landlords locate subsidies for housing improvements. We also will continue to educate property owners on available funding sources and tax breaks for sprinkler systems and elevators.

Energy and Environmental Resources

When working with towns on planning and zoning issues, NVDA considers all water-related issues from a watershed perspective. We are currently collaborating with the Agency of Natural Resources to produce watershed plans for the Northeast Kingdom and address issues related to the Clean Water Act, Section 604b program. We also worked with the Connecticut River Joint Commissions to promote resource conservation and recreation uses along the Connecticut River.

NVDA’s regional energy plan supports ongoing exploration of energy sources that are efficient, sustainable, and environmentally sound. Local renewable energy sources will keep jobs and dollars in the state. Wood burning in its various forms has the potential to play a significant role in moving toward a sustainable energy future. Direct use of solar power can also play a role in meeting local energy needs – even though Vermont is one of the cloudiest states in the nation. There also is mounting interest in wind energy. NVDA is actively encouraging towns to include significant dialog on the implementation of renewable energy sources in their town plans.

2003 Highlights

This year we worked with representatives of the Department of Housing and Community Affairs to explain recent on-site sewage reform and its impact on communities.

NVDA secured funding to hire architectural and economic development consultants to create a five-year action plan for revitalizing the historic Derby Line business district.



NVDA responded to a request for assistance from the Town of Charleston, which is currently without a town plan or zoning bylaw. Town promoters are now beginning to see the usefulness of having a town plan – particularly in light of upcoming community and economic development projects. The decision to create a town plan was approved at Charleston’s town meeting, a Planning Commission has been appointed, and work is now underway.

NVDA’s regional GIS maps supported grant projects in several towns, including Derby Line, Lyndon and Irasburg.

In June we completed a Rural Development (RBOG) grant for Ethan Allen’s Beecher Falls Division to fund an engineering study of cogeneration alternatives. The mill is searching for ways to reduce its high energy costs.

Our staff assisted the Island Pond Forum, which is moving ahead with plans to build a downtown welcome center. NVDA planners wrote or endorsed grants to hire personnel and consultants for fledgling downtown development organizations in Barton, St. Johnsbury, and Derby Line.

Transportation Planning:

You CAN Get There From Here

Here in the rural Northeast Kingdom, it's easy to forget that we're just hours away from major metropolitan areas. Our economic wellbeing, however, depends entirely on staying connected with the outside world. If we want to bring more commerce and tourism to the area, we'll need a fully functioning transportation network. That means improving our roads, bringing bridges up to minimum sufficiency standards, and expanding amenities in our three airports. It also entails making better use of our railways. Some abandoned railroad right-of-ways can be refurbished and used to ship the freight of local businesses. Other rails can be converted into recreational trails.

More than 85% of the population of the Northeast Kingdom is classified as rural. Providing transportation across a vast rural area poses a unique challenge. If we approach transportation with a short-sighted, "asphalt" mentality, we'll lose our precious rural landscape. Effective transportation planning requires careful incorporation of all transportation models – car, rail, air, bicycle and pedestrian – into a network that moves people, goods and services in and out of the Kingdom without compromising the quality of life.

NVDA provides transportation planning services under the auspices of the state's Transportation Planning Initiative (TPI), which was established in 1992 to bring the visionary planning of ISTEA and TEA-21 to rural Vermont. The TPI strives to encourage public involvement in all transportation planning activities and designates the regional planning commission as the intermediary with the public. Each year, the VTRANS Policy & Planning Division contracts with us to:

Facilitate public involvement. Our planners work to educate the public on the regional transportation infrastructure, as well as the planning processes, the projects currently in the works, and the funding opportunities. Much of this public dialogue takes place in NVDA's monthly Transportation Advisory Council (TAC) meetings, a public forum that is of special interest to planners, engineers, town planning commissions and selectboards. These meetings give citizens an opportunity to express their own views on transportation issues in the Northeast Kingdom and promotes a "grass-roots" involvement in the maintenance and improvement of local pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

Carry out long-range planning objectives. Sound transportation policies and practices require extensive and reliable data. NVDA is actively involved in amassing critical data, such as GIS maps, traffic counts and usage statistics. This information forms the basis for important regional decisions, such as location of business development, prioritization of transportation needs, and policy making for human services.

Implement short-range transportation initiatives. NVDA assists the region's communities with a broad range of local transportation issues. We help communities obtain funding for transportation projects and assist human services providers apply for Section 5310 assistance. Other short-range activities include exploring ways to improve and expand use of the three airports in the Northeast Kingdom and identifying and cataloging deficiencies in town highway drainage structures.



2003 Highlights

NVDA completed an 88-page five-year plan to meet the mobility needs of both individuals and commerce, and protect the environment by reducing our reliance on single-occupant vehicles. Our regional plan also takes into account populations with special needs, such as the elderly and disabled.

Our planners continued to attend monthly TPI meetings to share ideas and concerns with other regional planning commissions. We also held a series of outreach meeting to familiarize municipal officials with the state access management classification systems.

NVDA developed new roles for the monthly Transportation Advisory Council meetings, allowing more communities to get involved in transportation planning issues of regional significance. This year, our TAC actively supported the Connecticut River Scenic Byway Program, which promotes awareness of the unique historic, cultural, environmental, agricultural, and railroading traditions and resources along the river valley. On a related note, NVDA helped the Town of St. Johnsbury acquire the 1888 downtown railroad station. St. Johnsbury, a waypoint community in the byway program, will establish a Scenic Byway Interpretative Center in this historic building.

We completed an evaluation of unmet needs of specific populations, including low-income and those eligible for Elderly and Persons with Disabilities (5310) transportation services. A complete report on these findings will soon be available. Our staff also helped apply for and obtain 5310 funding for Rural Community Transportation and other human services providers. We will continue to work closely with regional groups who are affected by 5310 transportation issues.

This year, NVDA partnered with Lyndon State College to compile bridge and culvert data. While LSC students compile the data and print the GIS maps, NVDA organizes and presents the data in a way that is meaningful to town officials and planners. We're excited about this dynamic relationship with the college and will continue to pursue similar educational efforts.

NVDA's transportation planner worked with Orleans and Northern Essex Community Partnership to help them to establish protocol to maximize efficiency of their transportation resources. NVDA will present recommendations to the Vermont Agency of Human Services to assist in their reorganization efforts.

NVDA is now in its third year of conducting traffic counts, which provide a factual basis for designing safe intersections and reclassifying roads. By the end of fiscal 2003, NVDA will have completed counts in nearly 100 locations.

This year, NVDA contracted with the Bicycle Federation of America to research and map unpaved roads and bicycle routes. The result of this work was an extensive profile of road characteristics, recreation destinations, scenic views, services and links to other bicycle routes. This work—which will complement the work already done on paved

bicycle routes — will be incorporated into NEKTTA's marketing efforts.

Paul Kaza Associates kicked off an Airport Marketing Study with public brainstorming sessions in Island Pond, Newport and Lyndonville. NVDA contracted with the firm to assess hidden strengths and weakness of all three airports and identify ways to benefit from air tourism. When completed, this project should identify untapped markets and recommend ancillary services to expand usage. Over the coming year, we will follow up on this research with a baseline study of airport usage. This work is timed to coincide with the Agency of Transportation's implementation of new standardized acoustical counters.

Each year, NVDA takes on a number of planning and feasibility studies for community projects that may otherwise not move forward. In 2003, NVDA commissioned a conceptual alignment study of Irasburg sidewalks. A study of a very dangerous intersection in Lyndon is now underway. The study will explore, among other solutions, a traffic roundabout at the intersection of Routes 5, 122 and 114.

Grant activity included VTRANS Enhancement Application for the Town of Hardwick and the Village of Derby Line. NVDA also submitted a grant application to VTRANS for an access management pilot program in the Town of Lyndon.

NVDA produced numerous GIS maps for a variety of transportation projects.

In 2002, NVDA authorized a study to assess hidden strengths and weakness of all three airports and identify ways to benefit from air tourism.



Town Plans & Zoning Bylaw:

Status of Planning and Zoning in the Northeast Kingdom

<i>Town</i>	<i>Town Plan</i>	<i>Zoning Bylaw</i>	<i>Town</i>	<i>Town Plan</i>	<i>Zoning Bylaw</i>
Albany	None	None	Kirby	Adopted (1)	Adopted
Barnet	Adopted	Adopted	Lemington	Expired	Adopted
Barton	Adopted (1)	Adopted	Lowell	Adopted (1)	Adopted
Bloomfield	None	Flood only (1)	Lunenburg	Expired	None
Brighton	Adopted (1)	Adopted	Lyndon	Approved (2)	Adopted
Brownington	Adopted	None	Maidstone	Adopted (1)	Adopted
Brunswick	Adopted (1)	Adopted	Morgan	Writing (4)	Revising (3)
Burke	Adopted (1)	Adopted	Newark	Expired	None
Canaan	Adopted (1)	Adopted	Newport City	Adopted (1)	Adopted
Charleston	Expired	None	Newport Town	Expired	Adopted
Concord	Expired	Adopted	Norton	Expired	Adopted
Coventry	Adopted (1)	Flood only (1)	Peacham	Approved (2)	Adopted
Craftsbury	Expired	Flood only (1)	Ryegate	Adopted (1)	Proposed (2)
Danville	Adopted (1)	Adopted	St Johnsbury	Approved (2)	Proposed (2)
Derby	Adopted (1)	Adopted	Sheffield	Expired	None
East Haven	Expired	None	Stannard	Approved (2)	Adopted
Glover	None	Flood only (1)	Sutton	Expired	Adopted
Granby	Expired	Adopted	Troy	Expired	Adopted
Greensboro	Adopted (1)	Revising (3)	Unorganized Areas	Expired	Adopted
Groton	Expired	Proposed (2)	Victory	None	None
Guildhall	Expired	Adopted	Walden	Expired	None
Hardwick	Approved (2)	Adopted	Waterford	Approved (2)	Adopted
Holland	Expired	None	Westfield	Adopted (1)	Adopted
Irasburg	None	None	Westmore	Adopted (1)	Adopted
Jay	Adopted (1)	Adopted	Wheelock	Adopted (1)	None

Town Plan- Footnotes

(1) A plan has been adopted by the town but NOT approved by NVDA.

(2) A plan has been adopted by the town AND approved by NVDA.

(3) A plan has been written and is in the process of being adopted.

(4) A new plan is being written.

Zoning Bylaw- Footnotes

(1) Food hazard area zoning only.

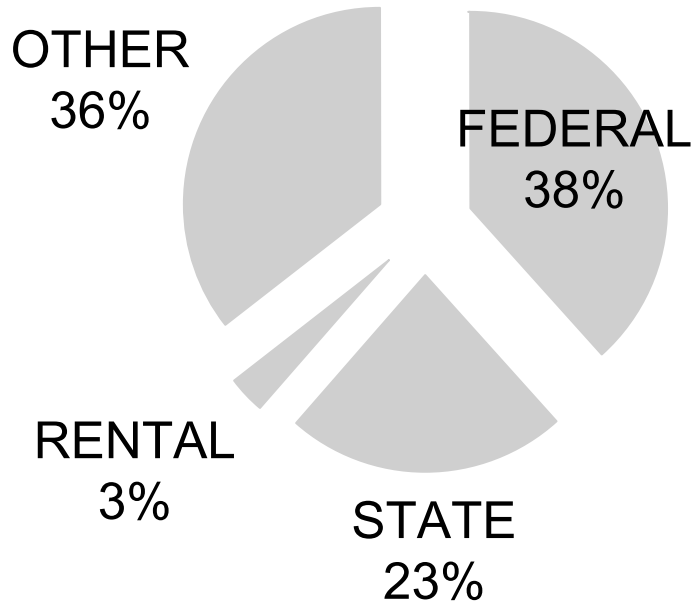
(2) A zoning bylaw has been written or revised AND is being adopted..

(3) An existing zoning bylaw is being revised but adoption has not begun.

(4) A new zoning bylaw is being written but adoption has not begun.

2003 Financial Statement*

Revenue Sources: FY2003



NVDA is supported by an annual appropriation from member towns, a share of the state's property transfer tax fund, and by private, state and federal grants. Our total funding sources for FY2003 are \$1,706,794. They are:

Economic Development Administration – US Department of Commerce

USDA Rural Development – US Department of Agriculture

VT Agency of Commerce and Community Development

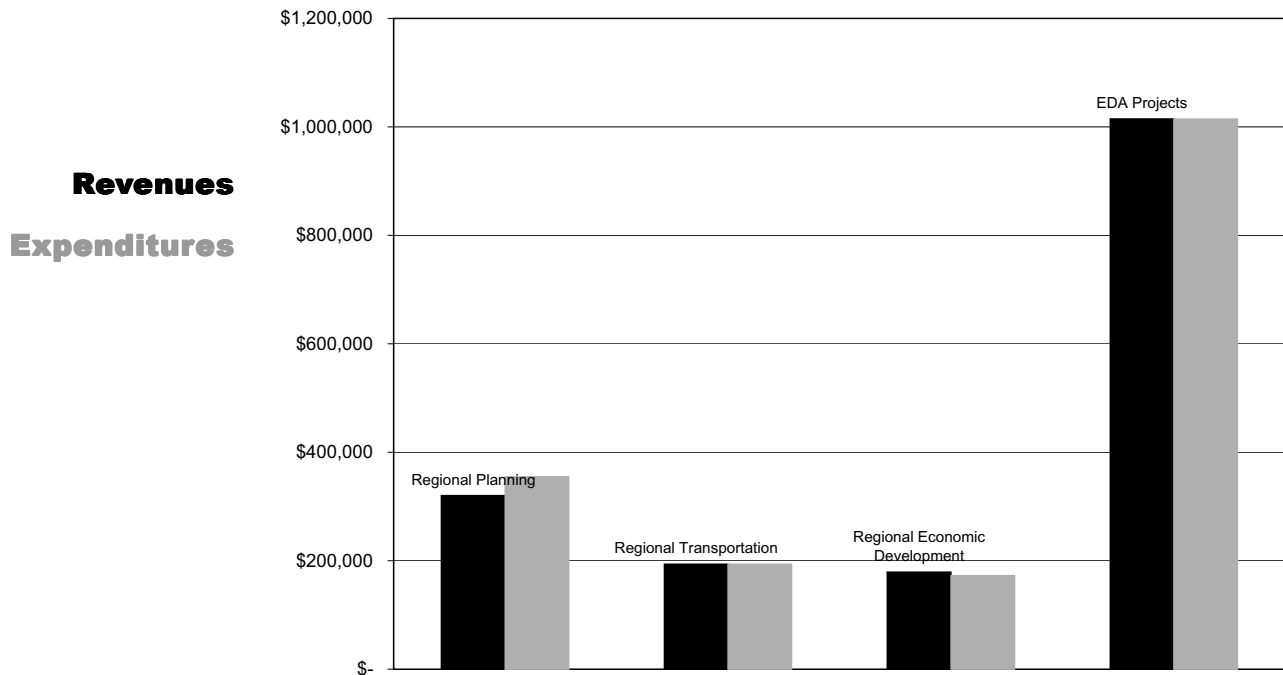
VT Department of Employment and Training

VT Department of Environmental Conservation – US Department of Environmental Protection

VT Department of Environmental Conservation – Water Quality Division

VT Small Business Development Center – US Small Business Administration

VT Agency of Transportation – US Department of Transportation



*Audited figures will be available in October, 2003.

Who We Are...

Board Members and Staff

At Large Members

KELLY DESLAURIERS
LAWRENCE DONNA
CONRAD DOYON
CAROL MOORE
KATHLEEN O'CONNOR
FERN TANGUAY

Caledonia County

EDWARD BATES
BRENT BECK
WENDY BORA
HOWARD CRAWFORD
ELWIN CROSS
KENNETH DAVIS
MARTHA FELTUS
KIM FRIED
JOSEPH GARCIA
RODNEY LAMOTTE
LEIGH LAROCQUE
ALLYN MAY
DON MORRILL
DAVID REDMOND
JOHN REISS
JOHN REYNOLDS
ARTHUR SANBORN
DAVE SANVILLE
LEWIS SHATTUCK
ALBERT SPONHEIMER
VICTORIA TURNBAUGH

Essex County

JAMES BATES
SHERRY BELKNAP
RICHARD BRYER
REGINALD BUNNELL
JOEL COPE
KIRWIN FLANDERS
DAVID GRAY
STANLEY GRITTNER
STEVE HAWLEY
DOUG HEINMULLER
FREDRICK HODGDON
MARK JOYCE
DAVID LUNNIE

JOSEPH ROBBASON
PETER RODIN
LAWRENCE TIGHE
BRENDAN WHITTAKER

Orleans County

TODD ALIX
SHERMAN ALLEN
CHARLES BARROWS
FLOYD BROWN
FOREST BUCKLAND
BRIDGET COLLIER
ROBERT CROTEAU
WILLIAM DAVIES
RICHARD DEGRE
WINSTON DOWLAND
MICHAEL DUNN
CHARLES KEZAR
REAL LANOUE
MICHAEL MARCOTTE
STEPHEN MARSH
MICHAEL METCALF
MICHAEL PAPPALARDO
STEPHEN PITKIN
BEULA-JEAN SHATTUCK
CINDY SHOVER
HARRY SHOVER
ROBERT STARR
DALE SWEENEY
JOHN WARD
ALDEN WARNER

Legislators

SEN. JULIUS CANNIS
SEN. JAMES GREENWOOD
SEN. VINCENT ILLUZI
SEN. BERNIER MAYO
REP. DAVID BOLDUC
REP. DONALD BOSTIC
REP. DAVID BROWN
REP. DAVID CLARK
REP. HOWARD CRAWFORD
REP. JOHN HALL
REP. COLA HUDSON
REP. WILLIAM JOHNSON
REP. DUNCAN KILMARTIN

REP. LEIGH LAROCQUE
REP. STEVEN LARRABEE
REP. HARVEY OTTERMAN
REP. JANICE PEASLEE
REP. JOHN ROGERS
REP. LOREN SHAW
REP. NANCY SHELTRE
REP. ROBERT STARR, JR.

NVDA Staff

ANNALEI BABSON
PLANNER

JUDY BUTSON
BUSINESS MANAGER

ASHLEY CANNING
INTERN

DAVID GRUENIG
PLANNER

STEVE PATTERSON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

BRIAN HANSON
IMPLEMENTATION SPECIALIST

WENDA HANSON
OFFICE MANAGER

TRACY MCINTRYRE
GIS SPECIALIST

ALISON MEADERS
PLANNER

DOUGLAS MORTON
TRANSPORTATION PLANNER

MARY PAULL
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR

MERIKE PETRICH
PLANNING MANAGER

DAVID SNEDEKER
PLANNER