

**Public Meeting of the Vermont Interagency Environmental Justice (EJ) Committee  
(IAC)  
Hybrid Meeting Minutes  
February 24, 2026**

**Note to reader:** These draft minutes were compiled by staff from the Agency of Natural Resources. If you would like to see any changes to these draft minutes, please reach out to [anr.ejcoordinator@vermont.gov](mailto:anr.ejcoordinator@vermont.gov)

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**Meeting Information:**

**Date:** February 24, 2026

**Meeting Time:** 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM EST

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**Attendees:**

**Interagency Committee (IAC):** Bob Donohue, Karla Raimundi, Grace Vinson, Abbey Willard, Claire McIlvennie, Stephanie A. Smith, Amy Redman, Janey Hurley

**State of Vermont:** Jenny Ronis, Collin Smythe, Juliet Birch, Kim Barrett

**Public:** Avery Rosenbloom

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**10:00 AM**

**Welcome & Introductions**

- Consent to [Community Agreements](#)
  - Consent received, no comments.
- Approve January 27, 2026 [Meeting Minutes](#)
  - Minutes approved, no comments
- Approve February 24, 2026 Agenda
  - Agenda approved, no comments.

**10:10 AM**

**VT EJ Mapping Tool Re-Orientation**

- Kim B.: Today we will the legal requirements for the EJ Mapping Tool, elaborate on the Mapping Tool phases and tasks, highlight the ways the IAC can contribute to each phase and task. Working to de-silo the Community Engagement and the

GIS elements of the Mapping Tool development project. The EJ Mapping Tool is intended to depict EJFPs and measure environmental burdens at the smallest geographic level practicable.

- Kim B.: The Agency of Natural Resources will:
  - Create and maintain the Tool
  - Determine the elements contained in the Tool
  - Consult with the AC and the IAC
  - Act as final decision-makers in the development of the tool
- Kim B.: The Interagency Committee:
  - Advisory role; final decisions remain with ANR.
  - Provides input to guide what is incorporated into the EJ Mapping Tool
  - Consensus-driven input on consultation content
- Juliet B.: The GIS phases of the EJ Mapping Tool development are (some of these phases are in chronological order, some may happen simultaneously):
  - Developing a strong plan
  - Conducting research – uncovering pre-existing data in the state that can help inform the mapping tool
  - Identifying gaps – identifying places where we may not already have reliable data
  - Developing and integrating data – creating new data to fill data gaps
  - Developing the initial tool
  - Connecting with communities – working alongside the community engagement contractor
  - Training and capacity building – teaching the public how to use the tool and teaching SOV employees how to use the tool
  - Planning for the future
- Juliet B.: For each task under the GIS work, we will describe what the task entails and highlight how the IAC can contribute. These contributions are optional based on your capacity and interest, not required:
  - Task 0, Project management: Setting up a workplan and coordination structures including stakeholder meetings. IAC contribution: Participate in stakeholder meetings with the GIS contractor to inform their project planning
  - Task 1, Background research and data discovery: Finding pre-existing data in Vermont and explaining what gaps in data may exist. IAC contribution: Provide content (reports, examples of mapping projects, relevant data) for the GIS contractor to review
    - Kim B.: If covered agencies have reports or data related to communities and community partners that the agency is familiar

with, this will also be a key part of the ways the IAC members can contribute to this role

- Task 2, Gap-filling and data development: Contracting will create new data that helps us fill gaps of data that we don't have across Vermont. IAC contribution: Provide feedback on how the data produced by the GIS contractor compares to data you currently have
- Task 5, Community engagement and participation: GIS contractor must engage in community engagement activities coordinated by the community engagement contractor. IAC Contribution: collaborate with the contractors at public meetings, listening sessions, and other community touchpoints
  - Tasks 3 and 4 are skipped because they are technical and do not really include an IAC role
- Task 6, Testing, reporting, and final delivery: Doing user testing to make sure the tool is user friendly for SOV employees AND members of the public. Trainings to be provided. IAC Contributions: participating in the user testing, getting covered agency members are involved in user testing
- Abbey W.: How are we thinking that we might use this tool in our work? What would staff use the tool for?
  - Kim B.: Beyond what is required in the EJ Law, what the tool could be used for to inform covered agency work will be informed by you as IAC members. What decisions might you turn to the Mapping Tool to inform? Providing use cases to the contractor will be really helpful
  - Juliet B.: Noting that the Cumulative Environmental Burden Rule will play a huge role in telling us what the Mapping Tool is for and how to use it for decision-making
  - Karla R.: Permitting and regulatory staff are a clear example of folks who will be using the Mapping Tool. Enforcement and compliance staff may benefit from this tool as well. Policy planners could benefit as well.
- Bob D.: The legislature would benefit from the Mapping Tool as well. This tool could help inform targeted legislation that is in spirit of the EJ Law. Noting concerns around the ways this data from the tool could be used.
  - Karla R.: Agreed
- Grace V.: Is the contractor going to be responsible for narrowing the scope of the environmental burdens definition? Or are we responsible for that input? Can you talk about timeline of the Mapping Tool vs. the Cumulative Environmental Burden Rule?
  - Juliet B.: Definitions under the Law can be altered by the AC and IAC through recommendations to the General Assembly. The contractor can

provide recommendations around what can be feasibly represented in the Mapping Tool.

- Karla R.: The Mapping Tool is due in January of 2027 and the Cumulative Environmental Burden Rule in July of 2027. The timeline here provides us with really limited time to use the Mapping Tool to inform the Rule. Same issue applies to the Community Engagement Plans, which are also due in July 2027.
- Grace V.: That timeline is really tight – “totally bonkers”
- Karla R.: Yes, but that is why we have tried to do the heavy lifting early on so that decision-making is more streamlined.

**10:55 AM**

### **Mapping Tool Working Session**

- Juliet B.: Please review the slides from this presentation in the chat. They describe the places where the IAC can contribute to the Mapping Tool development, both GIS and Community Engagement. Take 15 minutes to review these opportunities to contribute independently and then we'll come back and discuss. Return at 11:10.
- Kim B.: Welcome back. Let's do a quick round of circle process where everyone responds to the following question: Would it be helpful to have a working group or task group to support conversations and coordination around the Mapping Tool? If you have further thoughts pertaining to your ability to contribute to the Mapping Tool development, please email those thoughts to Juliet and Kim
  - Abbey W.: If we did have a working group or task group, would the contractors lead that process? Would this allow direct contact with the contractors?
    - Kim B.: Yes, it is written into both RFPs that the contractors must coordinate with the AC and the IAC. This would be an opportunity to coordinate more fluidly and outside of public meeting
    - Karla R.: This project will require a lot of alignment and collaboration across the many groups that are involved. The extent to which coordination comes from the contractor will be discussed in the project management planning meetings we have with the contract, AC, IAC, etc.
- Stephanie S.: Regarding capacity concerns, if there is a working group focused on Mapping Tool development, would it be possible for my agency to be represented by someone else from DPS on my team.

- Karla R.: Yes, and this is a model we are already using for the Community Engagement Subgroup. AAFM, VDH, and PSD all have participants on the subgroup who are not part of the IAC. This is a way that we can build efficiencies and leverage capacity.
- Claire M.: Not sure if a task group or working group is needed at this point. The GIS/data tasks seem like they could be distinct tasks for IAC members while the more involved tasks like community engagement could be managed by a more ad hoc task group. In terms of capacity, it would be helpful to have timelines for the tasks completed in the Mapping Tool development to help estimate capacity to support with different phases.
  - Karla R.: Timeline is being developed as we are negotiating with the potential contractors. There are a lot of different groups that need to be aligned in order to make those timelines come to fruition. In terms of the task group, it would create a much smoother process if we have the flexibility of meeting and conferring without the concern of inadvertently creating a public meeting/meeting quorum
  - Bob D.: Is there merit for all of the agencies that have data they think should be included in the Mapping Tool to send their data to VCGIS, have VCGIS evaluate the data, and then VCGIS can package it for the contractor so the contractor can just get started once they are onboarded.

**11:20 AM**

#### **Public Comment**

- No comments.

**11:25 AM**

#### **Civil Rights and Environmental Justice Complaint Working Session/AC Baseline Spending Report Request Response**

- Karla R.: During our last meeting, we discussed the workplan to create a Environmental Justice complaint intake system. We need to decide if the timeline/workplan is to the IAC's collective satisfaction and if it should be shared with the Advisory Council during the upcoming reporting deadline (March 13)? IAC members can provide their thoughts in writing after the meeting, perhaps.
- Kim B.: AC member Mariana Sears made a request that each covered agency provide a simple ten minute presentation summarizing their Baseline Spending Report highlight the most relevant information from their report. This is to help support understanding of the contents of these reports to help with

implementation of the EJ Law. A presentation, in this case, does not have to be a PowerPoint or lots of slides. Highlighting the importance of simplicity and plain language. Thoughts on this request?

- Abbey W.: Believes it is really important for us to fulfill this request
  - Kim B.: Are folks in favor? Please raise your hand
    - All present are in favor.
- Kim B.: Does providing these presentations on March 11 during our next joint meeting feel feasible?
  - Abbey W.: Feels like it is important to do a streamlined overview of challenges and limitations at the top of the presentations because these are shared across all reports.
  - Amy R.: Could also be helpful to streamline an explanation of how agencies took the guidance to create a spreadsheet/inventory so it does have to be done multiple times. Won't take long for VDH to discuss the process and what their planning to do for reporting in the future.
  - Jenny R.: It could be helpful to just do an introduction that summarizes the cover letter – the LURB's content could all be captured under that.
  - Grace V.: Does not anticipate ACCD's presentation to take too long. Happy to talk about the challenges ACCD faced.
  - Bob D.: AOE won't take too long, willing to explain why AOE's report is a little different from others.
- Kim B.: Recap: Let's do a high-level summary of the cover letter highlighting the limitations and challenges to introduce the presentations, then each agency will provide a summary of their Baseline Spending Reports covering specifically:
  - Process
  - Data
  - Learning lessons
  - Next Steps for each Agency
- Kim B.: Important to have a Q&A section that the Advisory Council can lead.
- Karla R.: Who wants to do the introductory presentation on the cover letter, limitations, and challenges?
  - Jenny R.: Would be happy to help
  - Amy R.: Would be glad to jump in on this.
- Kim B.: Moving conversation to focus on the upcoming Civil Rights and Environmental Justice Complaint Reports
  - Jenny R.: LURB has nothing to report on. Would it be helpful to do one joint report for all agencies?
  - Karla R.: ANR will have information to share. It would also be important to share the workplan and timeline for the centralized EJ Complaint intake system if we decide we want to share it.

- Juliet B.: From a logistics perspective, it would be hard to put together a single document representing all covered agencies with the limited time we have
- Claire M.: Agree with Juliet. PSD's leadership needs time to review materials before they are submitted. The current reporting deadline does not allow enough time for collaboration AND leadership review.
- Amy R.: What is the relationship between the workplan/timeline and this submission? Can the workplan not be part of the submission?
  - Juliet B.: The submission itself is the report we are required to do. The workplan and timeline are in addition to the reports. IAC has the option to include the workplan and timeline in the submission
  - Amy R.: Does VDH need to report if there is nothing to report?
  - Juliet B.: Yes. And the workplan/timeline shows there is a good faith effort to response to AC's recommendations
- Karla R.: Perhaps each agency can create their reports and then ANR can develop a cover letter/explanation for the workplan and timeline to submit on behalf of all agencies. If more time is needed to consider the timeline, the workplan can be submitted without the associated timeline.
- Stephanie S.: Would be willing to share the language DPS has developed for their report which acknowledges this workplan as part of the response to AC recommendations.
- Stephanie S.: To clarify, the timeline we are discussing is not statutory and therefore can be subject to change by our discretion?
  - Karla R.: Correct.

**12:00 PM**

**Close Out**