



Cool weather and falling leaves mean it's time for the autumn edition of NewsBreak from the Chittenden County Metropolitan Planning Organization. For more details on these and other projects please consult our [Executive Director and monthly progress reports](#), or contact Bryan at 802-660-4071 x17, bdavis@ccmpo.org.

Meeting the Challenge :: Chittenden County Regional Cooperation Progress Report & Plan

As you are likely aware, legislation from the 2010 session directed the Chittenden County Metropolitan Planning Organization (CCMPO) and the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) to develop a merger plan and timeline. Additionally, the CCRPC and Greater Burlington Industrial Corporation (GBIC) were directed to explore organizational efficiencies. To that end, the CCMPO, CCRPC and GBIC are working collaboratively to explore a variety of organizational efficiencies which may be gained by our three organizations.

In an effort to more formally communicate our joint efforts and progress, we have developed the Chittenden County Regional Cooperation Progress Report & Plan to keep all interested parties up to date and to track our efforts and progress in addressing the Challenges for Change legislation. In particular, this document will address the CCRPC and CCMPO consolidation effort. We view the challenges presented as an opportunity for making improvement in our region and therefore have labeled this report, "[Meeting the Challenge](#)".

Michele Boomhower and Charlie Baker have been visiting with local officials throughout Chittenden County to solicit feedback on proposed merger alternatives. You can watch their presentations in your municipality on local community television channels:

CCTV Center for Media & Democracy [CCTV Ch 17](#)

Vermont Community Access Media, Inc. [VCAM](#)

Channel 15 Mount Mansfield Community Television [MMCTV Channel 15](#)

Channel 16 Lake Champlain Access Television [LCATV – Channel 16](#)

Online Survey Available for Metropolitan Transportation Plan

The CCMPO and CCRPC seek feedback on long-range regional development and transportation strategies to accommodate anticipated growth while maintaining a high quality of life. This survey presents choices about how and where Chittenden County might grow in the future, and allow respondents to weigh in with opinions and concerns. To have your say on these potential futures, please visit: <http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/377140/9523ee07b15f>

All participants are eligible for a raffle of gift certificates to local restaurants! For more information on the MTP process visit <http://www.ccmpo.org/MTP/>.

Wildlife and Transportation Pilot Project :: Seeking Pilot Communities

As part of our Wildlife and Transportation project, the CCMPO and CCRPC are seeking communities interested in being part of a pilot program to identify sensitive wildlife areas and crossings along state and municipal transportation corridors. MPO/RPC staff, in cooperation with members from local Conservation Commissions, Planning Commissions, and other volunteers, will compile existing wildlife and transportation data, collect additional data to accurately depict sensitive areas along transportation corridors, and analyze the data and work with the pilot communities to identify critical wildlife road crossings. If your community is interested in being considered for participation, please contact Bryan Davis (bdavis@ccmpo.org, 802-660-4071 x17) or Pam Brangan (pbrangan@ccrpcvt.org, 802-846-4490 x22) no later than December 1.

Local Transportation Facilities (LTF) Training November 16

Vermont Agency of Transportation staff will provide training to those interested in managing LTF projects on Tuesday, November 16, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the CCMPO office. The LTF program, managed by VTrans, is responsible for the development of Enhancement Projects, Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities, Safe Routes to School Projects, Park-and-Rides, Scenic Byways and "Local" Projects. The majority of the projects have a high degree of local focus and for the most part, development and construction is managed by local municipalities. This training will provide the information necessary to allow locals to manage their own projects at their own pace. More information will be available soon but in the meantime contact Peter Keating for updates at pkeating@ccmpo.org or 802-660-4071 x14.

Sign Retroreflectivity & Pavement Markings

New federal requirements make managing sign retroreflectivity mandatory for all public roads. (Visit http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/roadway_dept/night_visib/policy_guide/fhwasa08001/ for more info.) Vermont Local Roads is hosting two Sign Retroreflectivity & Pavement Markings Workshops (November 9 in St. Albans or November 10 in Fairlee). In addition, the Michigan Technology Transfer (T2) Center is offering an online webinar classes to address the new sign retroreflectivity standards. The two-hour course entitled: "Sign Retroreflectivity - the Rules, the Science, the Solution," will be offered **Thursday, November 4 from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.** The cost for a session is \$20 per web connection. Multiple people can watch from one web connection. You will need high-speed internet and a phone line (for audio) in order to receive the webinar broadcast. The webinar will cover:

- Overview of Retroreflectivity Regulations
- The Importance of Retroreflectivity
- Demonstration of Sign Retroreflectivity
- Summary of Sign Management Methods
- Additional Resources for Sign Retroreflectivity
- Managing Sign Retroreflectivity Using RoadSoft

To read more about the course and for registration details, visit:

http://www.michiganltap.org/workshop/brochures/2010-RS_Sign_Retro_Webinar_Oct.pdf

National Transit Conference Comes to Chittenden County

The 19th National Conference on Rural Public and Intercity Bus Transportation was held in South Burlington from October 24-27, 2010. The conference included information on planning and design; policy, funding and finance; rural transportation in today's operating environment; technology; and special issues in rural transportation. Over thirty sessions, special events, and tours will expand these five topic areas. For more information visit the conference website at: <http://guest.cvent.com/EVENTS/Info/Summary.aspx?e=2e349b0e-cdde-472b-9b65-0df78882ff47>

The conference is sponsored by the Transportation Research Board, the Federal Transit Administration, and the Rural Transit Assistance Program. The American Public Transportation Association, the American Bus Association, the Community Transportation Association, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, the [Vermont Agency of Transportation](#), and the [University of Vermont Transportation Research Center](#) are cooperating organizations.

CCRPC, Partners Awarded Nearly \$1 Million

CCRPC and regional partners were recently awarded \$995,000 from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant program. The HUD program is designed to develop long-term strategies for growing communities in a way that improves quality of life, environmental sustainability, and economic growth. The goal of the CCRPC project is to identify and implement strategies that improve Chittenden County's long-term sustainability by addressing public and private costs in transportation, housing, energy and land use and social equity. To read more about the award visit <http://www.ccrpcvt.org/>. To read the HUD press release visit: http://portal.hud.gov/portal/page/portal/HUD/documents/Sustainable_communities_regional_planning_grant_finalists.pdf.

Northwest Regional Planning Commission Receives TIGER II Grant Award

The Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) was recently awarded \$125,000 in TIGER II funds towards a \$325,000 Downtown St. Albans Streetscape Improvements project. The TIGER II (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery) program is similar to 2009 TIGER authorization as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (the "Recovery Act") which awarded funds to construction or planning projects that benefit the Nation, a metropolitan area or a region. For TIGER II, the US DOT awarded nearly \$600 million in to 42 construction and 33 planning projects in 40 states. NRPC planning funds will be used for design engineering that will create a downtown where housing and services are accessible by bicycle and foot. Downtown St. Albans is a state-designated sustainable growth center and this project will foster redevelopment through a Complete Streets public space model. Read more about the St. Albans award here: <http://www.samesessenger.com/node/660>. Read about the TIGER II awards here: <http://www.dot.gov/affairs/2010/dot18810.html>

CCRPC Hosts Regional Energy Network Forum

The CCRPC recently held a Regional Energy Network Forum that focused on community initiatives to improve transportation choices and reduce transportation energy use. The event featured energy committee updates, a roundtable discussion and of course informal networking. For information about Regional Energy Network Forums see: http://www.ccrpcvt.org/index.asp?Type=B_BASIC&SEC={97F1CCCE-B481-4880-AB38-8D7A5BCA2838}. For more details contact Julie Potter at jpotter@ccrpcvt.org or (802) 846-4490 x30.

Colchester Avenue Study Underway

The CCMPO, with assistance from Resource Systems Group, Inc., continues the Colchester Avenue Corridor Study in the City of Burlington. The study will develop short-term and longer-term strategies to create a system-wide approach in the corridor that addresses all transportation issues and balances all modes including passenger and commercial vehicle, pedestrian, bicycle, and public transit. To learn more or to watch video of the May public meeting visit <http://colchesteravenue.org/>.

Colchester Avenue Complete Streets Project

As part of the Colchester Avenue Corridor Study, the City of Burlington has a trial Complete Streets project on Colchester Avenue. The Complete Streets concept is one that designs streets to enable safe access for all users. The pilot study has reduced the number of travel lanes to one in each direction with center turn lanes at intersections with a striped shoulder next to the curb. The City is hoping to reduce weaving traffic which has contributed to sideswipe crashes. For more information visit:

<http://www.dpw.ci.burlington.vt.us/transportation/Colchester%20Ave%20Demo/ColchesterAve.php>

View some “before and after” photos and videos on Flickr and YouTube:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/ccmpo/>

<http://www.youtube.com/ccmpo>

Info-mercial :: Road Diets

CCMPO staffer Jason Charest was a recent guest on the Wonderful World of Sustainable Transportation show on CCTV Channel 17 to talk about road diets and the Colchester Avenue project. Watch the show here: <http://www.cctv.org/watch-tv/programs/road-diets>

Interstate 89 Exit 12B Public Meeting Held September 9

The CCMPO and the City of South Burlington hosted a public meeting to present the **Interstate 89 Exit 12B Review Study**. This study is part of a long-term process to address increasing congestion at Interstate exits serving South Burlington, Burlington and Williston. The new Interstate 89 interchange is proposed at VT Route 116/Hinesburg Road in South Burlington. Access issues facing South Burlington include northwest Vermont commuter traffic; access to the Airport; access to the South Burlington City Center Development and other commercial developments. Additional information is available at <http://www.ccmpo.org/I89/Exit12B/>. You can watch video from the public meeting at <http://www.cctv.org/node/97427>.

Better Backroads Grant Available

The 2011 Better Backroads grant application is available at: <http://www.nvtrcd.org/Better-Backroads.html>. Funding is available for projects on town or private roads that will improve water quality and realize savings in maintenance costs. Applications must be returned to the Northern Vermont Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Council by October 29th.

In other Better Backroads news, Alan May is the new Better Backroads Technician and is available for site visits/technical assistance. He can be reached at 802-828-4595 and backroadstech@yahoo.com.

VTrans Launches Web-Based Road and Bridge Information Tool

The Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) recently launched [VTransparency](#), a new on-line tool that allows users to access information about bridges, culverts and roadways. Using their own computers Vermonters can now access bridge inspection reports, pavement condition reports, and find out where in the process a future project in their neighborhood now stands. To access the site visit <http://www.aot.state.vt.us>, and [click here](#) to read the full press release.

Way to Go! Commuter Challenge Recognized by FHWA

The Way to Go! program in 2010 received one of ten awards granted nationwide as part of the Federal Highway Administration's Exemplary Human Environment Initiatives (EHEI). The EHEI recognizes outstanding examples of transportation projects that either create or improve conditions for human activities while protecting the natural environment. Way to Go! is an incentive-based event that encourages the use of cheaper, healthier, more earth-friendly transportation alternatives to driving alone. Way to Go! was recognized for its innovative marketing and outreach campaign to promote transportation alternatives. Read the full press release here: <http://www.ccmpto.org/newsroom/releases/20100902.php4>

FHWA Sponsors Walk Friendly Communities Program

The Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration, in conjunction with the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center (PBIC), launched Walk Friendly Communities (WFC), a new initiative to encourage communities across the country to support pedestrian safety. Communities that apply for a WFC designation will have access to suggestions and resources on how to improve pedestrian safety. For more information, visit <http://www.walkfriendly.org> and read the full press release here: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/pressroom/fhwa1052.htm>.

FHWA Releases Livability Guidebook

Will be available here <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/livability/>

The purpose of the guidebook is to illustrate how livability principles have been incorporated into transportation planning, programming, and project design, using examples from State, regional, and local sponsors. Fifteen case studies are organized by project types and vary across modes, types of planning, facilities, and location.

Fuel Economy and Idle Reduction Workshop Held at UVM

In early September the UVM Transportation Research Center offered a hands-on training in proven energy-reduction strategies by encouraging more fuel-efficient driving and less idling. Simply changing driving habits—such as avoiding “jackrabbit” starts and stops, keeping tires properly inflated, and removing excess weight from a vehicle—can greatly decrease the amount of fuel used. When more drivers follow eco-driving practices, roads are safer and less stressful.

Speakers included Rich Cregar (Wake Tech Community College), Greg Topjian (Energyxtreme), Don Ostler (Green Mountain Coffee Roasters), Tom Moye (VT Agency of Natural Resources), and Wayne Michaud (Idle-Free VT). For more information about hosting driving workshops in your community, contact Tom McGrath at tmcgrath@uvm.edu or call 802-656-9864.

Rain Garden Workshop Offered :: November 18

Rain gardens absorb runoff from roofs and driveways, diverting stormwater from storm drains and sewer systems, slowing the rate of runoff and filtering water before it enters our streams and Lake Champlain. Rain gardens can be beautiful AND help improve water quality! The workshop is based on the Winooski Natural Resource Conservation District’s Rain Garden Manual which can be found at: http://www.vacd.org/~winooski/winooski_raingarden.shtml. Presented by Karen Bates, Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation, with Laura Killian, Lake Champlain Sea Grant Program, and Amy Sheldon, CCST Coordinator.

Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission
110 West Canal Street, Winooski
Thursday November, 18th, 2010
7:00-8:30 p.m.

Watch the CCMPO – at your desk!

Want to see our Board members in action? CCMPO Board meetings are [available online](#) as streaming video, and handy clickable agendas allow you to jump to the topic that interests you most. CCMPO Board, TAC, and other meeting [agendas and minutes](#) continue to be on our website.

Until next time...

Be sure to share this news update with others and [contact Bryan](#) with what you'd like to see in the next issue.

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