

1 CHITTENDEN COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
2 LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE - MINUTES  
3

4 DATE: Thursday, February 9, 2017  
5 TIME: 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.  
6 PLACE: CCRPC Offices, 110 West Canal Street, Suite 202, Winooski, VT  
7

**Members Present**

Ken Belliveau, Williston – PAC Rep  
Alex Weinhagen, Hinesburg – PAC Rep  
Justin Rabidoux, So. Burlington – TAC Rep  
Edmund Booth – ECOS Steering Committee Rep  
Chris Shaw, South Burlington – Board Rep  
Andrea Morgante, Hinesburg – Board Rep  
Marc Landry, Colchester – Board Rep  
Heather Danis – ECOS Steering Committee Rep

**Staff**

Regina Mahony, Planning Program Manager  
Melanie Needle, Senior Planner  
Charlie Baker, Executive Director  
Eleni Churchill, Transportation Program Manager  
Christine Forde, Transportation Planner

8  
9  
10 **1. Welcome and Introductions**

11 Chris Shaw called the meeting to order at 8:40 a.m.  
12

13 **2. Approve Minutes**

14  
15 Marc Landry made a motion, seconded by Edmund Booth, to approve the minutes of January 12, 2017. No  
16 further discussion. MOTION PASSED. Marc Landry and Andrea Morgante abstained.  
17

18 **3. Transportation Schedule**

19 This agenda item was tabled.  
20

21 **4. Forecasts**

22 Melanie Needle provided an overview of the forecasts we have received from EPR: revised County wide  
23 forecast, age cohorts at the County level, municipal population forecasts, and employment forecasts (though  
24 we just received these yesterday and haven't had a chance to look at them). Melanie Needle explained the  
25 purpose of the forecasts as a planning tool, and how we will use them in the transportation and energy models.  
26 With previous forecasts the Board has agreed that they should describe the future as we expect it to be, not as  
27 we want it to be. Staff recommends the same approach this time around.  
28

29 Following a brief discussion on the difference between forecasts and projections, the LRPC had the following  
30 questions/comments:

- 31 - Alex Weinhagen stated that it is interesting to see the historic population forecasts and how off they  
32 were from reality. It would be interesting to see the same history for the employment forecast.  
33 Discussion ensued regarding the previous growth trends that were occurring before these forecasts  
34 were established. We haven't seen, and don't anticipate seeing, that same level of growth.  
35 - Ken Belliveau added that it is also important to consider the long-term trend of shrinking household  
36 size. Melanie Needle indicated that we are expecting to receive the household forecasts in the next  
37 few days, and this will take household size trends into account.  
38 - Charlie Baker asked about the rate of growth in the employment forecast v. the rate of growth in the  
39 population forecast. The employment rate of growth is twice that of the population rate. What is the  
40 logic behind this? The LRPC thought this may be tied to an increase in employees living outside the  
41 County, but would like to hear an explanation from EPR.  
42 - Alex Weinhagen asked how demographic changes influence the employment forecast. For example,  
43 the aging population will eventually stop working. Will we see this reflected in the number of jobs?

- 1 - Discussion ensued around the relatively fact employment growth in the past. The population has  
2 grown but they've just moved into jobs that open from retirement. There hasn't been a lot of new  
3 jobs.
- 4 - Andrea Morgante asked if the transportation model will take the age cohorts and demographic shifts  
5 into account? Justin Rabidoux added that the retired population does not have the same driving habits  
6 of the working population. The inputs to the model are only households and employment, but those  
7 inherently include some assumptions based on shrinking household size and land uses. Charlie Baker  
8 pointed out that the age cohort forecast doesn't show a decrease in the actual number of working age  
9 people; it is just the percentage of the total shifts more to the retirement age cohorts.
- 10 - Marc Landry added that it would be interesting to see the forecasts for areas that may be seeing  
11 population and housing growth, as the potential result of the high cost of housing in Chittenden  
12 County (i.e. Georgia, Fairfax, etc.).
- 13 - Additional questions on the employment forecast include:
- 14 o The forecast includes full time and part time employment? Does it not convert to full time  
15 equivalent?
  - 16 o It would be helpful to see the actual employment figures for 2000 and 2005 on the graph so  
17 we can see the previous trends.
  - 18 o Historic employment forecasts would be helpful to see (like we've done for the population  
19 forecasts).
- 20 - Justin Rabidoux stated that it would be really helpful to understand exactly how these forecasts are  
21 used to inform the TAZs in the transportation model. Melanie Needle and Eleni Churchill provided an  
22 overview of this process. Eleni Churchill stated that we can do a demonstration for the LRPC when  
23 we get to that step.
- 24 - Justin Rabidoux asked how we might accommodate for situations like GE Healthcare – they employ a  
25 large number of people and if you just looked at the building you would assume a large number of  
26 trips; however, there is a lot of telecommuting particularly on Thursdays and Fridays in the summer.  
27 Staff explained that the model is at a macro scale that can't accommodate these case by case situations  
28 and further it is important to remember that it is calibrated to one day a year. Usually a day in the Fall  
29 that includes school travel. However, we may be able to consider telecommuting in a future scenario  
30 that takes some of this into account.

31

### 32 **5. New Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Outline**

33 Regina Mahony provided an overview of the changes to the federal requirements for a Comprehensive  
34 Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) – they've gotten much less specific and flexible to allow regions to  
35 address relevant topics rather than a standard template. The information in the packet is the existing text re-  
36 organized into the new required elements: Summary Background (our key issues and summaries of the three  
37 analysis reports), SWOT Analysis (some analysis from the Competitive Assessment), Strategic  
38 Direction/Action Plan (our goals, strategies and actions), Evaluation Framework (our indicators) and  
39 Economic Resilience (we don't have existing text for this section). In the coming months Staff will work to  
40 update the information within this format.

41

42 The LRPC had the following questions/comments on the existing text:

- 43 - Alex Weinhagen suggested that we de-emphasize IBM (now GlobalFoundries) as they are no longer  
44 the driving force that they once were. The text itself is too dense, and should be made much more  
45 readable.
- 46 - Andrea Morgante stated that UVM and UVM-MC aren't mentioned at all.
- 47 - Charlie Baker added that the previous CEDS was largely developed from three analysis reports  
48 conducted by economists. They, as their industry suggests, were very focused on value added  
49 industries, and the sale of VT products outside of the state – these are traditionally important  
50 components of a healthy economic environment. While GlobalFoundries are not what they used to be  
51 in terms of employment numbers, they are still a major player in terms of patents/capita. They are still  
52 innovating. Staff will research these numbers.

- 1 - Ken Belliveau stated that GlobalFoundries is certainly an important player, but we should also explain  
2 the importance of smaller businesses and entrepreneurs.
- 3 - Chris Shaw asked if we should discuss the changing face of retail, a different industry than the service  
4 industry, as you can't buy the latter online.
- 5 - Marc Landry found an imbalance between once sentence on housing and paragraphs on agriculture.  
6 There was clear consensus on the role of housing that is affordable as an impediment to economic  
7 growth in the region. There was also a discussion regarding the role of the construction industry as an  
8 economic driver. Regarding the agricultural industry, Charlie Baker suggested that we may want to  
9 look at the industry as part of the larger food systems industry. We really didn't include this in the last  
10 plan in any real way. Charlie Baker stated that we'll likely have some tough conversations around  
11 encouraging high wage jobs over others, just as we did last time.
- 12 - Charlie Baker suggested that other CEDS that he has seen really focus on placemaking as an economic  
13 strategy – we want to establish a fertile place for a variety of businesses to grow. Ken Belliveau  
14 suggested that we look at local Town Plans since that is exactly how they are looking at economic  
15 development – through land use and transportation.
- 16 - Ken Belliveau suggested that we refrain from use of the word “skewed” as it comes up again and  
17 again in the SWOT and strategy sections. Further the language is not clear between high wage  
18 employers skewing the data, and wanting to encourage more high wage jobs.
- 19 - Alex Weinhagen stated that he is unsure of the need for more industrial land. GBIC has been saying  
20 this for a long time, but it would be good to look into this and see if that is still the case, and if so,  
21 why? Marc Landry suggested that we are also not particularly well suited with highway access.
- 22 - Marc Landry asked about the second bullet on page 5 which states that our climate may be the reason  
23 for our slow growth. He suggests that we should examine what the real impediments to our growth  
24 are, rather than identifying things that are out of our control. We are the second slowest growing State  
25 in the county, so other New England states with the same climate are growing. The Committee  
26 discussed that our lack of a big urban core may be more relevant to our slow growth.  
27

28 Regina Mahony added that one other requirement that has changed is the project list. Project lists are no  
29 longer a required element of the CEDS document. There was discussion around whether there were any other  
30 benefits to keeping and maintaining the list. Regina Mahony explained that the list currently contains a lot of  
31 things from library and town hall improvements, to parks and programs, and infrastructure/utility needs. The  
32 LRPC ultimately decided to retain a list of basic infrastructure needs such as stormwater, wastewater and  
33 water. It is important to understand these needs and issues at the regional level, and also important to  
34 understand the disconnect between the costs of these facilities for the greater good of economic development  
35 in the region and the inability of local municipalities to pay for it themselves. There was a suggestion that  
36 perhaps we could prioritize these projects much like we do with the transportation projects.  
37

### 38 **6. Indicators – Primary Research**

39 Regina Mahony handed out a list of indicators that we have in the current Plan that require primary research.  
40 We haven't been able to do this research so far, and Staff would like to know if there is still interest in keeping  
41 these in the Plan. Essentially, would these inform our planning in any way or change a course that we are on?  
42 Most of these are in the Social Community section. Melanie Needle added that UVM conducts a happiness  
43 survey and they are willing to include some of these questions and increase the surveying in Chittenden  
44 County so that we would get a useful sample size. The cost of that would be about \$10,000, and we don't  
45 currently have that. We could try to make room for it in the FY18 budget, but it wouldn't be eligible for PL  
46 funds, so it would be challenging. But if it were important to keep these in the Plan we could look into  
47 funding options. The Committee asked if some of the Happiness Survey questions could be a substitute for the  
48 data we are trying to collect. It would be state wide data but maybe that would be better than nothing. Staff  
49 will share the Happiness Survey questions at the next meeting.  
50

### 51 **7. Potential Planning Area Updates**

52 This agenda item was tabled.  
53

- 1 **8. Next Meetings**
- 2     March 9, 2017 from 8:30am to 10:00am
  
- 3 **10. Adjourn**
- 4     The meeting adjourned at 10:05 a.m.
- 5
- 6     Respectfully submitted, Regina Mahony