

**CHITTENDEN COUNTY**  
**REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**



— **2014** —  
**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN**



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110 West Canal Street, Suite 202  
Winooski, Vermont 05404-2109  
T: 802-846-4490  
F: 802-846-4494  
[www.ccrpcvt.org](http://www.ccrpcvt.org)  
[info@ccrpcvt.org](mailto:info@ccrpcvt.org)

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***This document, as well as all others by our agency, is available in alternative media formats.***

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Dan Albrecht, Senior Planner  
Pam Brangan, Senior Planner  
Jason Charest, Senior Transportation Planning  
Engineer  
Eleni Churchill, Senior Transportation Planning  
Engineer  
Forest Cohen, Business Manager  
Bryan Davis\*, Senior Transportation Planner

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Emma Long\*, Communications Manager  
Regina Mahony, Senior Planner  
Melanie Needle, Senior Planner  
Sai Sarepalli, Transportation Planning Engineer

*\*Principal authors*

## Public Participation Plan Advisory Committee

Indra Acharya  
Amy Bell  
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Infinite Culcleasure  
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# 1. INTRODUCTION

The mission of the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) is to act as the principal forum for planning, policy and community development in Chittenden County, Vermont. The CCRPC is an organization that combines the previously separate Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) and the Chittenden County Metropolitan Planning Organization (CCMPO). The CCRPC functions as the federally designated metropolitan planning organization (MPO) and serves the 19 municipalities in Chittenden County.

While we are proud of our strong partnerships with local residents, advocacy and interest groups, and state and federal agencies, we strive to improve our efforts to include others in our planning and policy work. To strengthen existing relationships—and forge new ones—we have embarked on this update to our 2008 Public Participation Plan. This update reflects the recommendations and input from the Public Participation Plan Advisory Committee, representing a wide array of area interests and groups.

A Public Participation Plan establishes a model for effective public involvement and contains written procedures for including the public in the CCRPC’s planning process. This document lays out the steps the CCRPC will take to involve residents in decisions affecting Chittenden County land use and transportation policies and investments.

The CCRPC uses a *Spectrum of Participation* (see Table 2) as the framework to determine and categorize the level of public participation appropriate for each project and activity it undertakes. Depending on the size and scope of the project, the level of public participation can range from “Inform” all the way to “Empower.” The *Spectrum of Participation* identifies the various methods that may be used to involve the public in CCRPC activities.

The Public Participation Plan supports the Social Community goal in the 2013 ECOS Plan: “Promote the skills, resources, and assurance needed for all community members to participate in the workforce and in their family, civic and cultural lives, within and among their neighborhoods, and in the larger community.” The ECOS Plan (<http://ecosproject.com/plan>) is the combined Regional Plan, Metropolitan Transportation Plan and Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Chittenden County. It is the culmination of almost two years of dedicated work from our municipalities, 60+ organizations and residents.

The Public Participation Plan also implements Strategy 8 of the ECOS Plan: “Ensure that the projects and actions in all ECOS strategies assess equity impacts, and that the design and development of programs are inclusive of all and engage underrepresented populations.”

With improvements in technology, an increasing and diverse populace, and ongoing federal requirements, we must explore new ways to engage our stakeholders, present our programs in understandable terms and visual aids, and most importantly listen to the concerns, opinions and ideas of our residents. This updated Public Participation Plan provides the framework to narrow disparities and accomplish those goals.

## 2. HOW TO GET INVOLVED

We periodically arrange public forums, public hearings, and special presentations to Municipal Selectboards, City Councils and interested civic groups – all of which are open to the public. Public hearings are notified via the *Burlington Free Press* or *Seven Days*, in addition to other local newspapers and through various online outlets (including our website and Front Porch Forum); other major meetings and forums are also always announced on our website. CCRPC Board meetings are recorded and air on Channel 17. These videos of CCRPC Board meetings can be viewed any time on the Channel 17 website ([www.cctv.org/watch-tv/chittenden-county](http://www.cctv.org/watch-tv/chittenden-county)). We also maintain a mailing list for programs and project updates. If you would like to be added to our database, please contact us using the information below.

**Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC)**

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**Phone:** 802-846-4490

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**Website:** [www.ccrpcvt.org](http://www.ccrpcvt.org)

**Email:** [info@ccrpcvt.org](mailto:info@ccrpcvt.org)

**Office hours:** 8:30am to 5:00pm, Monday through Friday

Our offices are accessible to people with disabilities and can be reached via the CCTA Riverside/Winooski bus line or the Essex Junction bus line. Both have stops in Winooski from which our offices are a short quarter-mile walk. For transit details and schedules, call 802-864-CCTA or visit [www.cctaride.org](http://www.cctaride.org).

Requests for free interpretive or translation services, assistive devices, or other reasonable accommodations, should be made to Emma Long, CCRPC Title VI Coordinator, at 802-846-4490 ext. 21 or [elong@ccrpcvt.org](mailto:elong@ccrpcvt.org), at least three business days prior to the meeting for which services are requested.

This document, as well as all others by our agency, is available in alternative media formats.

### 3. SUMMARY OF CCRPC PUBLIC PARTICIPATION POLICIES

The Public Participation Plan describes in detail the major activities of the CCRPC, and the accompanying public participation methods and processes. The following table includes an overview of the CCRPC's formal Public Participation Policies, including the comment period for each program. We recommend confirming all regular public meetings with CCRPC staff or via the website: [www.ccrpcvt.org](http://www.ccrpcvt.org).

**Table 1: Summary of CCRPC Public Participation Policies**

<b>Plan/Program Adoption</b>	<b>Public Meetings</b>	<b>Public Hearing Comment Period</b>
Public Participation Plan (PPP)	Public can comment at Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) and Board meetings, as well as via mail, email or phone.	45 Days as per Title 23 U.S.C. Section 134 and 23 CFR Part 450.316
Regional Plan and Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)	Two or more public meetings held for proposed plan or amendments. Public can comment at TAC, PAC and Board meetings, as well as via mail, email or phone.	30 Days as per 24 V.S.A. § 4348 and Title 23 U.S.C. Section 134 and 23 CFR Part 450.316
Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)	Public can comment at TAC, PAC and Board meetings, as well as via mail, email or phone.	30 Days
Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)	Public can comment at TAC and Board meetings, as well as via mail, email or phone.	30 Days
<b>Plan/Program Amendments</b>	<b>Public Meetings</b>	<b>Public Comment Period</b>
Public Participation Plan	Public hearing for major amendments.	45 Days
Regional Plan and Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)	Two or more public meetings held for proposed major amendments to Regional Plan. Public hearing for major MTP amendments. No meeting required for minor amendments.	30 Days
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)	See Appendix D for details.	30 Days for major amendments
Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)	Public hearing for major amendments. No meeting required for minor amendments.	30 Days

Open Meetings	Public Meetings
CCRPC Board	Regular meetings are held at 6:00pm at the CCRPC office on the third Wednesday of every month (except August and November).
Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC)	Meets on a semi-annual basis or as needed.
Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)	Regular meetings are held at 9:00am at the CCRPC office the first Tuesday of every month.
Planning Advisory Committee (PAC)	Regular meetings are held at 2:30pm at the CCRPC office the third Wednesday of every month.
Executive Committee	Regular meetings are held at 5:30pm at the CCRPC office the first Wednesday of every month.
Finance Committee	Meets on a quarterly basis or as needed.
Board Development Committee	Meets on a semi-annual basis or as needed.

## 4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PRINCIPLES & GOALS

Public participation is a dynamic activity that requires commitment at all levels of the organization. In crafting the Public Participation Plan, we are striving to meet these relevant principles in the ECOS Plan:

**ECOS Principle # 6: Cultivate collaboration.** Sustainable communities engage all facets of society in working together for the benefit of the whole. Local governments in these communities bring government representatives, community members and organization together and create a culture of collaboration that encourages innovation, sharing of resources, and jointly shared accountability for results.

**ECOS Principle # 7: Ensure equity.** Sustainable communities allocate resources and opportunities fairly so that all people who do the full range of jobs that a community needs can thrive in it. Local governments in these communities actively eliminate barriers to full participation in community life and work to correct past injustices.

**ECOS Principle # 8: Embrace diversity.** Sustainable communities feature a tapestry of peoples, cultures and economies underpinned by a richly functioning natural environment. Local governments in these communities celebrate and foster ethnic, cultural, economic and biological diversity and encourage multiple approaches to accomplish a goal.

To ensure that all constituents are provided with substantive opportunities to participate in CCRPC activities, the organization pledges to follow the federal mandates outlined in the Legal Regulations and Requirements Section, as well as the Principles, Goal and Objectives in the following section.

## 4a. PRINCIPLES

The CCRPC commits to the following principles and actions in all of its public participation activities:

- 1. Promote Respect**
  - All citizens and the views they promote are respected by the CCRPC.
- 2. Provide Opportunities for Participation**
  - Avenues for participation will be open, meaningful, and organized to allow people to participate comfortably. Needs for accessibility, scheduling, location, information material formats, and language will be addressed.
  - Meetings will be structured to allow informed, constructive exchanges.
  - The direction and effectiveness of the public participation effort will be continually reviewed to ensure active public participation.
  - Increase consultants and project steering committees knowledge and understanding about diverse populations and the importance of inclusion and representation.
  - Appoint members of underrepresented communities to project committees.
- 3. Be Responsive to Participants**
  - CCRPC meetings and events will facilitate discussion that corresponds to participants' level of interest and available time.
  - The CCRPC will fully consider the results of all public participation activities during decision-making and will document public responses.
- 4. Offer Substantive Work**
  - Public processes will provide purposeful participation, allowing useful feedback and guidance. Effective public participation is a two-way street—public input must come from informed opinions and ideas.
  - A clearly defined purpose and set of objectives are needed for initiating a public dialogue on plans, programs, and projects.
  - Participants will be encouraged to grapple with the many competing interests, issues, and needs in the region.
- 5. Provide a Predictable Planning Process**
  - The planning process will be understandable and known well in advance, in order to make the process coherent and comprehensible.
- 6. Outreach & Communication**
  - Effective outreach strategies must be tailored to fit the identified audience and the issue at hand. Notification procedures must effectively target the identified audience.
  - Engage people in conversations in their native language and use translation services when needed.
  - Outreach and education will be continuous and repetitive in order to increase public knowledge and participation.
  - Efforts to reach new constituencies will include outreach to people with disabilities, low-income, elders, youth, student, underrepresented, refugee, and accessibility-issue communities. These efforts must be tailored to ensure meaningful participation of these constituents.

- The CCRPC will be mindful of the evolution of communication tools and continue to evaluate new tools to expand outreach methods.
- Informational materials will be clear, concise, and address participants' questions.

## 4b. GOAL & OBJECTIVES

The **goal** of the CCRPC Public Participation Plan is to describe the policies for providing the public with thorough information on regional planning services and project development in a convenient and timely manner, and identify opportunities for the public to participate in regional planning and policy projects. The following **objectives** have been identified to reach that goal:

**Objective 1:** The CCRPC shall actively engage the public in regional planning according to the policies contained in this Public Participation Plan and following state and federal law.

**Objective 2:** The CCRPC shall keep the public informed of ongoing activities on a continuous basis.

**Objective 3:** The CCRPC shall encourage the participation of all area residents in the regional planning process.

**Objective 4:** The CCRPC shall strive to continuously improve public participation.

**Objective 5:** The CCRPC shall participate in public participation activities for individual transportation improvement projects from the planning phase through construction.

The Public Participation Plan supports the Social Community goal in the ECOS Plan: "Promote the skills, resources, and assurance needed for all community members to participate in the workforce and in their family, civic and cultural lives, within and among their neighborhoods, and in the larger community."

The Public Participation Plan also implements Strategy 8 of the ECOS Plan: "Ensure that the projects and actions in all ECOS strategies assess equity impacts, and that the design and development of programs are inclusive of all and engage underrepresented populations. Actions that will advance Strategy 8 include:

1. Track and analyze inequities in all sectors.
2. Target and prioritize positive programs and investments to low opportunity places.
3. Civic Engagement - Increase opportunities and remove barriers for civic engagement for all, including underrepresented populations.
  - a) Provide leadership development training for all civic leaders, including underrepresented communities, to increase knowledge about and encourage service on boards and commissions.
  - b) Increase boards' and commissions' knowledge and understanding about diverse population and importance of inclusion and representation.

- c) Support voter registration drives targeting all citizens, including underrepresented groups.
- d) Invest in the naturalization process: civics classes, connected with civic opportunities.
- e) Appoint members of underrepresented communities to committees, boards, and commissions.
- f) Key documents should be made accessible online and translated (or translation services available when necessary).

## 5. AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)

In order to reach the broadest number of interested parties, the CCRPC will often hold public participation meetings relating to plans, programs and projects.

To maximize participation, public meetings will be held at a variety of times and venues. For topic- or geographically-specific meetings, meetings will be held at locations convenient to the group targeted for involvement. Interpretive or translation services, assistive devices, reasonable accommodations of written documents, or other requested reasonable accommodations will be made available if requested at least three business days prior to the meeting for which services are requested.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, as amended, requires involving the community, particularly people with disabilities, in the development and improvement of public services and capital facilities. Meetings and hearings must be held in ADA-compliant buildings. Reasonable accommodations must be made to ensure equal access for people with disabilities to participate in meetings, planning, and programming activities:

- Where possible, meetings will be held in places that are convenient to other transportation modes besides the private automobile.
- Qualified readers or interpreters will be available if requested at least three business days prior to the event.
- All public meeting notices should state the following: “In accordance with provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, as amended, the CCRPC will ensure public meeting sites are accessible to all people. Requests for free interpretive or translation services, assistive devices, or other requested reasonable accommodations, should be made to Emma Long, CCRPC Title VI Coordinator, at 802-846-4490 ext. 21 or [elong@ccrpcvt.org](mailto:elong@ccrpcvt.org), at least 3 business days prior to the meeting for which services are requested.”
- Identify alternative meeting sites, such as churches, schools, and senior centers to reach traditionally underserved populations.

## 6. COORDINATION & COLLECTIVE IMPACT

The CCRPC encourages municipalities and state agencies to coordinate their outreach plans, when possible, with CCRPC workshops and meetings to consolidate public participation activities. Using principles known as *collective impact*, streamlining these efforts will enhance public participation, reduce redundant meetings, and lower associated costs.

*Collective impact* results from the commitment of a group of people representing different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific problem. This approach is collective, as diverse partners participate, having recognized that no one piece will bring success without the others.

Public comments submitted to the CCRPC are considered part of the public record. Summaries of comments received and the CCRPC's responses will be made available to the public and policymakers via the Web and in printed format when requested. Summaries of comments or minutes from public meetings are often included in the appendices of plans, policies, and studies.

## 7. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS: SPECTRUM OF PARTICIPATION

The regional planning process involves a number of activities, including the preparation of regional plans, corridor studies, scoping studies, and technical documents. Public interest will vary considerably based on the project and issues. This varied response suggests that the regional public participation process should recognize these differences and provide diverse opportunities for participation.

Each program, project and activity of the CCRPC may have a different level of public participation. Depending on the size and scope of the project, goals, time constraints, level of program and community readiness, and capacity and resources, the level of participation can range from *Inform* all the way to *Empower*. The *Spectrum of Participation* identifies the various levels at which the public is involved in any projects performed by the CCRPC. It depicts a range of actions, from CCRPC-led information sharing to community-led activities, and can be used for both simple and complex efforts.

**Table 2: Spectrum of Participation; Source: International Association of Public Participation; [www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org)**

Spectrum of Participation				
INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
The CCRPC will provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	The CCRPC will obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	The CCRPC will work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.  <i>At the INVOLVE level and above, staff will complete the CCRPC Equity Impact Worksheet.</i>	The CCRPC will partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	The CCRPC will place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPATION				
· Primarily one-way channel of communication	· Primarily one-way channel of communication	· Two-way channel of communication	· Two-way channel of communication	· Two-way channel of communication
· One interaction	· One to multiple interactions	· Multiple interactions	· Multiple interactions	· Multiple interactions
· Term-limited to event	· Short to medium-term	· Medium to long-term	· Medium to long-term	· Medium to long-term
· Addresses immediate need of county and community	· Shapes and informs county programs	· Advancement of solutions to complex problems	· Advancement of solutions to complex problems	· Advances solutions to complex problems
STRATEGIES OF PARTICIPATION				
Website & online calendar, database, informational brochures, posters and flyers, display ads, press releases, social media, email announcements, newsletters	Public hearings & legal ads, work groups, comment forms, surveys and questionnaires, visualization techniques, analysis reports, technical assistance studies	Advisory/steering committees, project meetings/workshops/open houses/forums, direct mailings, staff outreach, CCRPC Equity Impact Worksheet	Community or co-led committees, advisory boards, coalitions and partnerships, policy development and advocacy	Community-led planning efforts, community-hosted forums

As a project develops, the level of public participation may need to be adjusted to meet the changing needs and objectives. In order to best determine the appropriate level of public participation for a particular project at the beginning of the effort, the CCRPC will use the **CCRPC Public Participation Plan & Equity Impact Worksheet (Appendix C)** that asks the following questions:

- 1. What is the purpose of your engagement?*
- 2. Stakeholders: Who is potentially impacted by this project?*
- 3. What strategies and tools will you use to ensure you have information from and research about the relevant groups and communities?*
- 4. How will you effectively reach all of your audiences?*
- 5. What are the potential barriers and risks to doing this work?*
- 6. If there are decisions to be made, how does community participation fit into the overall decision-making process?*
- 7. How will you inform the community of benchmarks or progress throughout the process?*
- 8. How will you evaluate the success of your public participation plan, both in terms of processes and outcomes?*

If questions 1-3 in the CCRPC Equity Impact Worksheet determine there are groups that need additional engagement, further review will be done to assess equity impacts. It is important to remember that “stakeholders” include any person or group that is affected by a planning project, issue, or long-range plan, as well as any person or group who are not aware that they are affected.

In the following sections, participation strategies used by the CCRPC within each level of the *Spectrum of Participation* are described, followed by examples of specific activities. **Note that each level of the *Spectrum* builds on the previous levels (from left to right), including strategies of participation used to involve the public in CCRPC activities. Strategies are not repeated under each level, as it is implied that they are included in successive levels.**

## **7a. SPECTRUM OF PARTICIPATION LEVEL 1: *INFORM***

Under the **INFORM** level, the CCRPC will provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.

Characteristics of participation include:

- Primarily one-way channel of communication
- One interaction
- Term-limited to event
- Address immediate need of county and community

## **INFORM: Strategies of Participation**

The following is a description of the **Strategies of Participation** the CCRPC will use to **INFORM** the public:

### **Website & Online Calendar**

The CCRPC website ([www.ccrpcvt.org](http://www.ccrpcvt.org)) provides a wealth of information, including the organization's structure, process, and contact information; meeting agendas, minutes, and online calendar of events; information about past and current projects; an electronic document and data library; links to member municipalities and other organizations; draft reports and studies; traffic, bicycle/pedestrian and other count data; and more. The website is maintained and updated regularly by CCRPC staff. Since not everyone has access to the Internet or knows about the CCRPC website, other public participation methods must be used in conjunction with electronic news and updates.

### **Database**

In order to reach the broadest number of interested parties, the CCRPC will maintain an up-to-date database with contact information for residents, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation agency employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of people with disabilities, and other interested parties and segments of the community affected by the CCRPC's plans, programs and projects.

### **Informational Brochures, Posters and Flyers, Display Ads**

Materials with general information about the CCRPC or announcing upcoming meetings or other events are distributed to public places such as city halls and town offices, public libraries, community centers, and local businesses. These may also be part of a direct mail campaign to residents and businesses. Content typically includes the date, time, location and brief description of the purpose or project. The CCRPC occasionally publishes ads to promote meetings that are not regularly scheduled, such as corridor study workshops. These are published in selected newspapers in order to reach a larger audience than those who typically read legal notices.

### **Press Releases**

Press releases are sent to local media to inform the public about projects being undertaken or recently completed, funding opportunities and awards, and updates regarding CCRPC programs and services. Regular mention of the CCRPC in local media outlets reminds residents of our presence and projects that may impact them.

### **Social Media**

The CCRPC will take advantage of various social media resources to share information about the organization and its projects. CCRPC Board meetings and other special meetings or events are videotaped and broadcasted at varied times on a local public access channel (Channel 17 - CCTV Vermont). These videos are also made available online and can be viewed on demand at: [www.cctv.org/watch-tv/chittenden-county](http://www.cctv.org/watch-tv/chittenden-county).

**Email Announcements**

Meeting announcements and supporting information are emailed to interested persons in the CCRPC master database. Email is also used to disseminate project updates, progress or other reports, and to announce funding or other opportunities.

**Newsletters**

The CCRPC will use newsletters to inform the public of general and ongoing programs and projects, as well as targeted newsletters for specific communities or short-term projects.

**INFORM: CCRPC Activities**

The following are examples of **CCRPC Activities** within the **INFORM** category that use the Strategies listed previously. This information is also available via the CCRPC's website (<http://www.ccrpcvt.org>):

***CCRPC Monthly Newsletter***

The CCRPC's monthly newsletter provides ongoing regional updates, notices, event information, grant opportunities and more. Short-term, project-specific newsletters may also be used to share information and updates.

***Traffic Alert Program***

The Traffic Alert Program provides weekly emails during construction season to area media outlets and interested parties to alert the public of construction efforts.

***Information Services***

CCRPC staff provides specific services to municipalities, including:

- Traffic counts
- Infrastructure inventories (pavement, culvert, sign and/or sidewalk)
- Transportation safety information
- Bike and pedestrian counts

***GIS and Online Searchable Library***

The CCRPC provides ongoing information technology products and services to municipalities. The CCRPC website includes an archived and searchable library of completed plans and studies (<http://www.ccrpcvt.org/studies/>). GIS services include:

- GIS mapping/data
- Build-out analysis
- Data development
- Demographics
- Interactive Web mapping

## 7b. SPECTRUM OF PARTICIPATION LEVEL 2: **CONSULT**

Under the **CONSULT** level, the CCRPC will obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.

Characteristics of engagement include:

- Primarily one-way channel of communication
- One to multiple interactions
- Short to medium-term
- Shapes and informs county programs

### **CONSULT: Strategies of Participation**

The following is a description of the **Strategies of Participation** the CCRPC will use to **CONSULT** with the public, in addition to the strategies found in the previous levels of participation.

#### **Public Hearings & Legal Ads**

A public hearing is a formal process to solicit input and hold a vote on specific programs, policies or activities. In most cases items presented at a public hearing have already benefited from deeper engagement earlier in the process. Notification to municipalities for public hearings regarding CCRPC activities will include the full text of the document to be adopted or amended and a public hearing notice. The published legal notice (in *The Burlington Free Press* or *Seven Days*) will include the locations where documents are available for public review. At a minimum the locations include the CCRPC office and municipal offices of CCRPC member communities. These announcements meet the requirements of the Vermont Open Meeting Law, Title 1 V.S.A. § 310-314.

#### **Work Groups**

Work groups are assigned a specific task, with a time limit for reaching a conclusion or producing a draft document, subject to ratification by official decision-makers. The membership of these groups often includes local people or representatives from interest groups, appointed by elected officials or agency executives. This can allow us to engage people in their native language.

#### **Comment Forms**

Comment forms are often used to solicit public input on specific issues being presented at a workshop or other public meeting. Comment forms can be very general in nature, or can request very specific feedback.

#### **Surveys and Questionnaires**

In-person and telephone interviews, surveys, and Web-based questionnaires are sometimes used to gather information from the public about potential new programs and when updating existing programs and services.

### **Visualization Techniques**

Visual media of different formats is used to convey information about the planning process, project alternatives and alternative scenarios. These techniques include computer models, maps, photos, renderings, charts and graphs, and video.

### **Analysis Reports**

CCRPC staff can use existing or collect new data to perform detailed analysis of specific issues, policies or projects. The results are shared with member municipalities or other stakeholder groups to aid in their decision-making.

### **Technical Assistance Studies**

The CCRPC coordinates with municipalities on smaller scale transportation issues, bicycle/pedestrian plans, project development and coordination, updating previous studies and more.

## **CONSULT: CCRPC Activities**

The following are examples of **CCRPC Activities** within the **CONSULT** category that use the Strategies listed previously.

### ***Transportation Improvement Program***

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a prioritized, fiscally constrained, multi-year list of federally funded, multimodal transportation projects and operations in Chittenden County. Under federal law, the TIP must cover at least a four-year program of projects and be updated at least every two years. Projects must be prioritized at the regional level and have clearly identified funding sources. All Chittenden County transportation projects, programs, and operations receiving federal funds must be authorized through the TIP process. Details on TIP Amendments may be found in **Appendix D**.

### ***CCRPC Board Meetings***

For monthly Board meetings, Board members and alternates will be sent meeting notification, agendas, and appropriate documents at least one week prior to the actual meeting date, except in the case of special meetings. Board agendas and meeting minutes will be mailed to all town/city managers/administrators, legislators, and others as requested. Information should be available in advance of the meeting and should include: agendas, meeting background information, previous meeting minutes, public notices, public comment period information, and a contact person. Board agendas and meeting minutes are available on the CCRPC website in accordance with Vermont's Open Meeting Law.

### ***Fluvial Erosion Hazard Assessment***

The CCRPC commonly contracts with engineering firms to conduct analyses of fluvial erosion. Fluvial erosion is erosion caused by rivers and streams, and can range from gradual bank erosion to catastrophic changes in river channel location and dimension during flood events. The CCRPC shares this information with its municipal governments and often presents the results of such assessments at public meetings of the municipal government.

### ***Speed Studies***

Municipalities occasionally wish to re-evaluate locations on their local roads where the posted

speed limit may be questionable. Vermont State law (Title 23 V.S.A. Section 1007) authorizes local governing bodies to establish effective and enforceable speed limits on town highways at not more than 50 MPH or less than 25 MPH on the basis of a traffic engineering study. Such an investigation helps to establish that any posted speed limit is safe, justified, and reasonable, based on the prevailing conditions of the particular roadway.

## 7c. SPECTRUM OF PARTICIPATION LEVEL 3: **INVOLVE**

Under the **INVOLVE** level, the CCRPC will work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered. **At the INVOLVE level and all levels above (COLLABORATE and EMPOWER), staff will complete the CCRPC Public Participation Plan & Equity Impact Worksheet (Appendix C).**

Characteristics of participation include:

- Two-way channel of communication
- Multiple interactions
- Medium to long-term
- Advancement of solutions to complex problems

### **INVOLVE: Strategies of Participation**

The following is a description of the **Strategies of Participation** the CCRPC will use to **INVOLVE** the public, in addition to the strategies found in the previous levels of engagement.

#### **Advisory/Steering Committees**

For some plans and projects, an advisory committee of stakeholders is assembled to assist in defining the project purpose and need, represent the interests of various constituent groups, and provide input, feedback and guidance on project documents and process. Short-term project or plan-specific advisory committee members are eligible for the CCRPC's **Volunteer Stipend Policy** (Appendix F), which provides participants who are not already being compensated through their place of employment with a per-meeting stipend amount to account for their time and effort toward serving on the committee.

#### **Project Meetings/Workshops/Open Houses/Forums**

Public meetings and other similar events are arranged to disseminate information, provide a setting for discussion, and gather feedback from the public. Depending on the type of projects, they are often hosted a number of times to develop planning documents and shape alternatives. These meetings may be held in different formats, including poster sessions, open houses/interaction periods, hands-on activities, formal presentations, question and answer format, brainstorming sessions, small break-out groups, and charrettes. Some projects such as scoping studies typically follow a prescribed public participation process that includes at least two public meetings: a local concerns meeting and an alternatives presentation meeting. However, the specific outreach plan is tailored to the needs of each project.

**Direct Mailings**

Direct mailings are used to announce upcoming meetings or activities or to provide information to a specific group of people, such as those who may potentially be impacted by a project or those with a specific interest in a project. Materials should be provided in the appropriate languages based on the particular neighborhood or community.

**Staff Outreach**

CCRPC staff or consultants can do direct outreach to residents, including vulnerable populations, and translation services should be available.

**CCRPC Public Participation Plan & Equity Impact Worksheet**

The Equity Impact Worksheet is both a process and a tool to identify, evaluate, and communicate the potential impact - both positive and negative - of a policy or program on equity.

**INVOLVE: CCRPC Activities**

The following are examples of **CCRPC Activities** within the **INVOLVE** category that use the Strategies above.

***Unified Planning Work Program***

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) defines the regionally agreed-upon transportation planning priorities and the roles and responsibilities of various participants in the transportation planning process for Chittenden County. The work elements are to be completed by the end of the organization's fiscal year (June 30). The UPWP provides an overview of the CCRPC's process and describes how all of the municipalities, agencies, partners, stakeholders and other interests involved in the activities of the CCRPC work together in a comprehensive, continuing, and cooperative process to meet the critical transportation needs of Chittenden County.

***Planning Advisory Committee***

The Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) oversees the CCRPC's regional planning activities and policy development. The PAC includes representatives from municipalities, transit, state, public/interest groups and others. They are responsible for reviewing municipal plans, recommending Act 250 and Section 248 policy and projects of regional significance, making regional planning policy recommendations for Board consideration and/or action, providing guidance to MTP, UPWP, and TIP development, and other transportation and regional planning processes.

***Transportation Advisory Committee***

The Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) oversees the CCRPC's transportation activities and policy development which are funded primarily through the Federal Highway Administration Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) program. The TAC is comprised of municipal public works and planning staff, as well as representatives of stakeholder and interest groups (e.g., transit, rail, environment, bicycle/pedestrian, etc.). The TAC reviews and amends the MTP, TIP and UPWP, makes recommendations on grant program awards, discusses transportation policies at all levels, provides feedback on technical issues, and more.

### ***Scoping Studies***

Project “scoping” is the phase in the Project Development process that moves a recognized problem from an idea through the development of alternatives and environmental screening.

## **7d. SPECTRUM OF PARTICIPATION LEVEL 4: *COLLABORATE***

Under the **COLLABORATE** level, the CCRPC will partner with the public in each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.

Characteristics of participation include:

- Two-way channel of communication
- Multiple interactions
- Medium to long-term
- Advancement of solutions to complex problems

### **COLLABORATE: Strategies of Participation**

The following is a description of the **Strategies of Participation** the CCRPC will use to **COLLABORATE** with the public, in addition to the strategies found in the previous levels of engagement.

#### **Community or co-led committees**

For some projects a local community may provide project leadership, or partner with the CCRPC to co-lead a specific effort. This approach may attract strong public participation due to the local level leadership rather than a project led solely by the CCRPC or other organization/agency. This “insider” approach can result in greater buy-in from the public because people feel more directly connected to the project.

#### **Advisory boards, coalitions and partnerships**

Collaborative projects require regular, consistent participation and input from the public, key stakeholders, partners and others. Advisory boards, coalitions and partnerships comprised of these varied interests provide the necessary guidance and feedback to CCRPC staff, consultants and others performing the day-to-day activities to bring a project to successful completion. These groups can be appointed by the CCRPC Board or created by a project’s core team.

#### **Policy development and advocacy**

Through collaboration with member municipalities and the public, the CCRPC can update existing or create new policies that guide future projects and development within communities. Since these are important decisions with long-term implications, it is vital that the public be informed and participate in the process. The CCRPC can also advocate for necessary policy changes at all governance levels based on the involvement and support of the public throughout the policy development process.

## **COLLABORATE: CCRPC Activities**

The following are examples of **CCRPC Activities** within the **COLLABORATE** category that use the Strategies above:

### ***Metropolitan Transportation Plan***

Federal law and regulations require that metropolitan areas such as Chittenden County develop and periodically revise and update a long-range transportation plan, known as the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP).

### ***Regional Plan***

Vermont state statute requires that each region in the state adopt a Regional Plan to encourage the appropriate development of land that will protect the County's resources, and promote the general welfare of the public.

### ***Public Participation Plan***

Under federal law, the CCRPC must actively involve all affected parties in a continuing, cooperative, and collaborative process that provides meaningful opportunities to influence transportation decisions. Federal statute requires a separate, written plan that details the process for collecting public input on CCRPC documents. The Public Participation Plan (PPP) describes the CCRPC's policies and guidelines for providing opportunities for the public to be involved in projects and planning activities.

### ***Corridor Studies***

These studies review and analyze current and future corridor conditions related to transportation; develop corridor vision and goals; as well as develop and evaluate strategies to address congestion, safety and other issues within the corridor and area of influence.

### ***Land Use Studies***

By examining current land use zoning regulations, we can help member municipalities and other partners plan for possible transportation impacts of future growth associated with improvements. Engaging the public in scenario planning workshops is one way to help determine the desired development patterns and associated transportation system. We can also work with municipalities to explore current trends in land use planning, such as form based codes.

## **7e. SPECTRUM OF PARTICIPATION LEVEL 5: *EMPOWER***

Under the **EMPOWER** level, the CCRPC will place final decision-making in the hands of the public.

Characteristics of participation include:

- Two-way channel of communication
- Multiple interactions
- Medium to long-term

- Advances solutions to complex problems

There are generally few projects that fall under the Empower section due to the CCRPC's process of work program development and the types of projects undertaken by the organization. Member municipalities, through their local elected officials, are empowered in that they have the final approval and acceptance of transportation planning activities completed on their behalf. Similarly, the CCRPC bylaws are determined and approved by the governing bodies of member municipalities.

The CCRPC is a catalyst and facilitator for interest groups and municipalities to be empowered through our planning processes and specific projects. For example, a specific interest group (e.g., walk/bike) may form an ad hoc committee to advocate for improvements as part of a CCRPC corridor study. Municipalities are empowered at the conclusion of a local scoping study to pursue construction or implementation funding.

## 8. EVALUATING THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

This Public Participation Plan describes the roles and responsibilities of the CCRPC in meeting federal and state requirements, and in honoring our commitment to involving the public and other interested parties in transportation and regional planning in Chittenden County. The Plan also describes the techniques used by the CCRPC to reach and engage the public in its projects and activities. In order to determine the effectiveness of those techniques, a means to evaluate each of them is necessary.

Table 3 identifies evaluation criteria, performance goals, and methods to reach the goals for each public engagement technique. There are several ways to determine whether or not those goals have been achieved. Short surveys of event participants, CCRPC contacts, and other members of the public can assess which outreach techniques are effective or ineffective, and why. Analyzing the time spent by CCRPC staff on each technique and their subsequent success rate can help guide decisions on how to improve outreach methods, or which methods are ineffective and should be discontinued. On an annual basis, CCRPC staff and/or a communications consultant will use the following evaluation table to track the effectiveness of each public engagement technique. A summary report of the results will highlight successful public engagement efforts, note areas that could be improved, and offer recommendations that would benefit the public and the organization alike. The Public Participation Plan Advisory Committee will get together once a year for a review to assess the effectiveness of the PPP and the evaluation methods below.

**Table 3: Evaluation Criteria and Performance Goals for Public Participation Techniques**

Technique	Public Participation Strategy	Performance Measure	Evaluation Criteria	Methods to Meet Goals	Spectrum Level
Organizational Techniques	CCRPC Contact Information Database	Keep database current	Number of returned items	Make immediate corrections when items are returned	Inform
	CCRPC website	Annual increase in unique website visitors	Number of hits (monthly Google Analytics report)	Use other public participation tools to increase awareness of the website as an effective resource	Inform
	CCRPC newsletter	Minimum of 15% opening rate	Number of persons reached	Update recipient list based on undeliverable email (and/or postal addresses)	Inform
	Calendar of events	Keep calendar current	Calendar reflects all currently known events	Post on website in a timely manner	Inform
	Legal advertisements	Advertise all required public hearings 30 days in advance	All required public hearings are advertised 30 days in advance	Ensure system is in place to advertise public hearings with enough lead time	Consult

	Title VI reporting: translation and interpretive services	Satisfy all requests	How many requests are made, and how many requests are filled?	Advance notice of meetings; opportunity for translation services is prominent and clear on all notifications	Inform
Technique	Public Participation Strategy	Performance Goals	Evaluation Criteria	Methods to Meet Goals	Spectrum Level
Project-Specific Techniques	Informational flyers, posters, brochures	Materials readily available and distributed on request	Calls, emails/letters; number of persons reached	Materials will be available at CCRPC public events, town offices, and on request	Inform
	Email announcements/ Internet message board	Minimum of 15% of meeting attendees/ survey respondents indicated they saw the announcement, and/or 15% opening rate	Calls, emails/letters; number of persons contacted	Update recipient list based on undeliverable email and postal addresses; fine-tune recipient list to accurately target affected areas; provide surveys to track usage of tools; monitor email opening rate	Inform
	TV/News conferences	Seek coverage from media outlets that reach the target audience	Number of news stories generated	Provide information in a 'ready to print' or broadcast format; pursue print publication in a prominent location; modify material based on public feedback	Inform
	Paid advertisements (print, radio)		Number of calls, letters and email responses; number of news stories generated		Inform
	Press releases		Number of calls, letters and email responses; number of news stories generated		Inform
	Featured stories (earned)		Number of news stories generated		Inform
	Social media	Create profile(s) on existing and new social media platforms as appropriate to target audience(s); maintain and post content regularly	Calls, letters, messages, number of fans/followers	Provide information, announcements, access to surveys, and meeting information; maintain and monitor account	Inform

	Direct phone calls	Intended parties are reached via phone	Response, feedback	Keep contact database updated with accurate information	Inform
	Comment forms, surveys, questionnaires, response sheets	60% of meeting attendees filled out form OR 2% visitors to website submitted form OR 20% of mail recipients return form	Number of calls, letters and email responses; number of persons contacted	Encourage response by explaining the importance of receiving feedback to improve the planning process; provide incentives to fill out surveys (raffle to win gift certificate to restaurant in project area, etc.)	Consult
	Ad hoc groups / work groups	Meetings are held at the request of the affected groups; hold work groups in native languages	Number of calls, letters, etc.; met the expectations of the group; how many languages were accommodated?	CCRPC or consulting staff will be available in a timely manner to hold small group meetings regarding any CCRPC activity/issue. Meetings should be formatted to provide information requested by the group.	Consult
	Public forums, meetings, hearings, project meetings, workshops, open houses	Attendance reflects the public interest in a project (includes representatives or groups from affected neighborhoods, organizations, businesses, etc.); progress is able to be made using input from affected parties	Attendance, calls, emails/letters, etc.	Schedule at convenient times and locations; hold multiple workshops to allow for options; use multiple online and offline tools to increase awareness	Involve

	Direct mailings	Reaches a minimum of 85% of households that are affected by a project	Calls, emails/letters; number of persons contacted	Update recipient list based on undeliverable email and US addresses; fine-tune recipient list to accurately target affected areas; provide surveys to track usage of tools; monitor email opening rate	Involve
	Advisory/steering committee	80% member participation across length of project	% of member participation	Schedule at convenient times and locations; ensure timely distribution of materials; keep members engaged and informed	Involve

## 9. LEGAL REGULATIONS & REQUIREMENTS

Development of this Public Participation Plan is guided by federal and state regulations current as of the date of adoption of the Public Participation Plan. This section describes the applicable legal requirements. For specific language, see **Appendix B**.

### 9a. FEDERAL

#### ***MAP-21 General Requirements***

On July 6, 2012, President Obama signed into law P.L. 112-141, the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21). MAP-21 is the first long-term highway authorization enacted since 2005, and it funds surface transportation programs for federal fiscal years (FY) 2013 and 2014. MAP-21 created a streamlined and performance-based surface transportation program and builds on many of the highway, transit, bike, and pedestrian programs and policies established in previous federal transportation planning programs, and public involvement remains a hallmark. The metropolitan planning process under MAP-21 requires that transportation planning be a “continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive” process as established by the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1962.

As with previous federal transportation bills, MAP-21 encourages the CCRPC to broaden public participation to include stakeholders who may not have been involved previously. Consultation should occur with planning officials responsible for other types of planning activities affected by transportation, including planned growth, economic development, environmental protection, airport operations, and freight movement. In addition, the CCRPC should promote consistency between transportation improvements and state and local planned growth and economic development patterns.

MAP-21 continues the public participation mandates outlined in the previous federal transportation bill (SAFETEA-LU) which state that the metropolitan transportation planning process contain the following public participation elements<sup>1</sup>:

1. Include a proactive public involvement process that provides complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and supports early and continuing involvement of the public in developing plans and Transportation Improvement Programs (TIP) and meets the requirements and criteria specified as follows:
  - Require a minimum public comment period of 45 calendar days before the public involvement process is initially adopted or revised. Notice of the comment period will be advertised in a newspaper of general circulation and various other publications prior to the commencement of the 45-day comment period. Notice will also be mailed to the entire CCRPC master database prior to the start of the 45-day comment period;
  - Provide a public comment period of not less than 30 calendar days prior to adoption of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), the Transportation Improvement Program, the Unified Planning Work Program, Transit Development Plans, any formal amendments or updates, and other appropriate transportation plans and projects;
  - Provide timely information about transportation issues and processes to citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation agency employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation,

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<sup>1</sup> Public Law 105-178 Section 450.316.

- representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of people with disabilities, and other interested parties and segments of the community affected by transportation plans, programs and projects;
- Provide reasonable public access to technical and policy information used in the development of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, the Transportation Improvement Program, other appropriate transportation plans and projects, and open public meetings where matters related to the federal-aid highway and transit programs are being considered;
  - Require adequate public notice of public involvement activities and allow time for public review and comment at key decision points, including, but not limited to, approval of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, the Transportation Improvement Program, and other appropriate transportation plans and projects. If the final MTP or TIP differs significantly from the one which was made available for public comment by the CCRPC and raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts, an additional opportunity for public comment on the revised MTP or TIP shall be made available;
  - Demonstrate explicit consideration and response to public input received during the planning and program development processes. When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft MTP or TIP (including the financial plan) as a result of the public involvement process or the interagency consultation process required under the US EPA's conformity regulations, a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made part of the final MTP and TIP;
  - Seek out and consider the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, including but not limited to the transportation disadvantaged, minorities, elders, persons with disabilities, and low-income households;
  - Use visualization techniques to describe the MTP and the TIP;
  - Make public information available in accessible formats, including Braille, large print, electronic;
  - Public involvement processes shall be periodically reviewed by the CCRPC in terms of their effectiveness in assuring that the process provides full and open access to all;
  - These procedures will be reviewed by the FHWA and the FTA during certification reviews to ensure that full and open access is provided to CCRPC decision-making processes; and
  - Metropolitan public involvement processes shall be coordinated with statewide public involvement processes wherever possible to enhance public consideration of the issues, plans, and programs and reduce redundancies and costs.
2. Be consistent with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Title VI assurance executed by each state under 23 U.S.C. 324 and 29 U.S.C. 794, which ensure that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, national origin, or physical disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program receiving federal assistance from the United States Department of Transportation;
  3. Identify actions necessary to comply with the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990<sup>2</sup> and US DOT regulations "Transportation for Individuals With Disabilities"<sup>3</sup>;

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<sup>2</sup> Public Law 101-336, 104 Stat. 327, as amended.

<sup>3</sup> 49 CFR parts 27, 37, 38.

4. Provide for the involvement of traffic, ridesharing, parking, transportation safety and enforcement agencies; commuter rail operators; airport and port authorities; toll authorities; appropriate private transportation providers, and where appropriate, city officials; and
5. Provide for the involvement of local, state, and federal environment resource and permit agencies as appropriate. These agencies include those responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation and historic preservation. The discussion of potential environmental mitigation shall be developed by the CCRPC in consultation with land management, wildlife, and regulatory agencies at the federal, state, and tribal levels.

### ***Americans with Disabilities Act***

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as amended (2008), requires involving the community, particularly those with disabilities, in the development and improvement of public services and capital facilities. Meetings and hearings must be held in ADA-compliant buildings. Reasonable accommodations such as qualified readers or interpreters, provision of or modifications to audio/visual aids or documents, or other visual, hearing, or mobility assistance must be made to assist those with disabilities to participate in meetings, planning, and programming activities.

### ***Title VI***

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 states that “No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefit of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.” Subsequent federal legislation has led to further protections under Title VI based upon age, gender, and disability, whether mental or physical. The CCRPC strives to ensure nondiscriminatory access to all programs, services, and activities by all interested transportation stakeholders and to ensure that no person is excluded from participating in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to either intentional or unintentional discrimination under any program, service, or activity receiving federal assistance or funding. The CCRPC has a designated staff member to coordinate Title VI procedures.

### ***Environmental Justice***

Presidential Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Underrepresented and Low-Income Populations, was signed into law in 1994 and reinforced the non-discrimination requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The Environmental Protection Agency defines Environmental Justice as the “fair treatment of people of all races, cultures and income with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, programs and policies.” Fair treatment means that no racial, ethnic or socioeconomic group should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from the operation of industrial, municipal, and commercial enterprises and from the execution of federal, state, local, and tribal programs and policies. Together these two laws promote fair treatment of all people during all of the CCRPC’s planning projects.

## **9b. CERTIFICATION OF THE PLANNING PROCESS**

The federal government requires that MPOs certify every four years or when a new TIP is adopted that they are in conformance with federal rules and regulations. Further, environmental justice principles

require that MPOs make efforts to engage low-income and underrepresented populations in the certification review. Since a new TIP is generally adopted every year, the CCRPC undergoes an annual self-certification process. As part of the self-certification, the CCRPC will review the public engagement process and consider the following items:

- What was the success of specific strategies in attracting the public and associated comments?
- What level of public input was received for various planning products?
- Was public input considered by decision-makers?
- Should any new strategies or adjustments be considered in the following year?
- Are any changes or amendments necessary to the Public Participation Plan document?

## **9c. STATE**

The Vermont Public Records Law is rooted in the Vermont Constitution, Article 6, Chapter 1. The details of the law are available at Title 1 V.S.A. § 316-320. The law provides for inspection of public records in a timely way, a process for denying a records request, and a process for appealing that denial. The CCRPC Board and staff are committed to both the spirit and letter of this law.

For all public meetings, every sign-in sheet must include the following disclaimer: “If personal information is requested and volunteered by the user, state law and the federal Privacy Act of 1974 may protect it. However, this information is a public record once you provide it, and may be subject to public inspection and copying if not protected by federal or state law.”

The Vermont Open Meeting Law, Title 1 V.S.A. § 310-314, defines open meetings, public notice requirements, right of the public to speak, executive sessions, meeting minutes, and enforcement provisions. Again, the CCRPC Board and staff are committed to both the spirit and letter of this law.

When you visit our website, we commit to not renting or selling your information to third parties. We also promise not to spam your email address. We will disclose personally identifiable information in compliance with a court order. The CCRPC does not use website cookies or share user information with other parties. For performance tracking, however, the CCRPC reserves the right to make available summarized user statistics obtained from our host provider weblogs. The CCRPC will make every reasonable effort to protect user identities and sensitive information. The CCRPC cannot be held liable for compromised records from parties illegally obtaining access to records.

Applicable Vermont statutes related to public accommodations and discrimination can be found in Title 9 V.S.A., Chapter 139, §4502.

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## APPENDIX A: TERMS & ACRONYMS

<b>AADT</b> Annual Average Daily Traffic	<b>PL Funds</b> Planning Funds
<b>AASHTO</b> American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials	<b>P&amp;R</b> Park and Ride facility
<b>ADA</b> Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990	<b>ROW</b> Right Of Way
<b>CAAA</b> Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990	<b>SAFETEA-LU</b> Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users
<b>CCRPC</b> Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission	<b>SSTA</b> Special Services Transportation Agency
<b>CCTA</b> Chittenden County Transportation Authority	<b>STIP</b> Statewide Transportation Improvement Program
<b>FAA</b> Federal Aviation Administration	<b>STP</b> Surface Transportation Program
<b>FHWA</b> Federal Highway Administration	<b>TA</b> Technical Assistance
<b>FRA</b> Federal Railroad Administration	<b>TAC</b> Transportation Advisory Committee
<b>FTA</b> Federal Transit Administration	<b>TDD</b> Telecommunications Display Device
<b>FY</b> Fiscal Year	<b>TDM</b> Transportation Demand Management
<b>HTF</b> Highway Trust Fund	<b>TEA 21</b> Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century
<b>ISTEA</b> Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991	<b>TIP</b> Transportation Improvement Program
<b>ITS</b> Intelligent Transportation Systems	<b>TMA</b> Transportation Management Association
<b>LOS</b> Level of Service	<b>TSM</b> Transportation Systems Management
<b>LRTP</b> Long Range Transportation Plan	<b>UPWP</b> Unified Planning Work Program
<b>MAP-21</b> Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act	<b>USDOT</b> United States Department of Transportation
<b>MPO</b> Metropolitan Planning Organization	<b>USEPA</b> United States Environmental Protection Agency
<b>MTP</b> Metropolitan Transportation Plan	<b>VMT</b> Vehicles Miles of Travel
<b>NEPA</b> National Environmental Policy Act	<b>VTrans (or VAOT)</b> Vermont Agency of Transportation
<b>NHS</b> National Highway System	
<b>NHPP</b> National Highway Performance Program	
<b>PAC</b> Planning Advisory Committee	
<b>PE</b> Preliminary Engineering	

## GLOSSARY

**“3C” Process** A federally mandated, continuing, comprehensive transportation planning process carried out cooperatively by states and local communities.

**Access Management** A process that provides or manages roadside access while preserving the transportation functions of the adjoining roadway. Examples include: limiting entrance and exit of traffic on highways; use of medians and turn lanes; placement and timing of signals; and implementation of supportive local ordinances.

**Accessibility** The facilities and services that make it possible to get to any destination, measured by the availability of physical connections (roads, sidewalks, etc.), travel options, ease of movement, and proximity of destinations.

**Accessible** Term used to describe a site, building, facility, equipment, controls, other spaces or elements, or portion thereof that complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

**American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO)** Publishes standards for transportation infrastructure for use throughout the U.S.

**Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)** Federal legislation prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability.

**Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT)** Data used to represent the amount of traffic occurring on roads. AADT is collected annually for various segments of roadway by the MPO, the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans), some municipalities, as well as consultants.

**Arterial** A major street or highway. It is a general term which includes expressways, major and minor arterial streets and interstate, state or county highways having regional continuity. It is a road intended to move a relatively large volume of traffic at medium to high speeds.

**Centerline** The middle of a right-of-way, not considering direction or number of lanes.

**Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC)** The County's comprehensive planning organization. Established under state law. Serves as the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

**Chittenden County Transportation Authority (CCTA)** The region's public transportation provider.

**Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 (CAAA)** Federal legislation that sets allowable levels, known as NAAQS, for various pollutants. Where these standards are not attained, officials must take specified actions within a mandatory time frame or face sanctions such as loss of federal highway funds.

**Collector** An urban street which provides access within neighborhoods, commercial and industrial districts, and which channels traffic from local streets to minor and major arterials. Collectors are typically low volume and low speed streets; however, they sometimes serve local bus traffic. A road carrying traffic between local streets and arterials where mobility and access are equally important.

**Commuter Rail** Generally applies to multi-car, high-speed rail transport utilizing exclusive, frequently at-grade, rights-of-way with service between urban areas or between outlying suburbs and the urban core. Usually involves greater distances and fewer stops than those normally found with light and heavy rail transit within urban areas.

**Conformity** The requirement that the state or metropolitan transportation plan, programs, and projects are consistent with the purpose of the State Implementation Plan (SIP) if the region's air quality violates national standards. The CAAA does not permit federal approvals of funding of any project that does not meet this test.

**Congestion** Interference of vehicles with one another as they travel, reducing speed and increasing travel time. Measured by a ratio of amount of traffic compared to the amount of traffic for which the road is designed. (See V/C ratio.)

**Consultation** One party conferring with another identified party and, prior to taking action(s), considering that party's views.

**Cooperation** Actions taken are subject to the concurrence of identified parties.

**Coordination** Comparisons of transportation-planning materials on one agency with those of other agencies and subsequent adjustment of these materials to reduce omissions, duplications, and conflict.

**Corridor** A travelway (often a major road or rail line) and its immediate environs.

**Discretionary Funds** Funds whose distribution is not automatic and not by formula but dependent on the decision of some agency or party.

**Environmental Justice** The fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, programs and policies.

**Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)** The USDOT agency responsible for aviation related programs.

**Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)** The USDOT agency responsible for roadway related programs.

**Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)** The USDOT agency responsible for railroad programs.

**Federal Transit Administration (FTA)** The USDOT agency responsible for public transportation programs.

**Fiscal Year (FY)** The fiscal year for the state and the CCRPC is July 1-June 30, while the TIP and STIP follow the federal fiscal year of October 1-September 30.

**Flexible Funds** Federal transportation funding that may be used for highway and/or transit.

**Formula Grants** Funds distributed according to some legislated or regulated scheme.

**FTA Section 5307** Grant program for public transit capital and operating assistance in urban areas with populations greater than 50,000.

**FTA Section 5309** Grant for public transit capital programs such as buses and bus facilities.

**FTA Section 5310** Grant program to states for assisting private non-profit public transit groups in meeting the transportation needs of the aging and persons with disabilities.

**FTA Section 5317 New Freedom Program** Grant program to encourage public transit services and facility improvements to address the transportation needs of persons with disabilities that go beyond those required by the ADA.

**Functional Classification** The classification of urban roadways by function or purpose. Roadways at the top of the hierarchy serve intercity and other long-distance movement of traffic; roadways at the bottom provide access to land.

**Highway Trust Fund (HTF)** A financing mechanism established under federal law to account for tax receipts (primarily from motor fuel taxes) collected by the federal government and dedicated to surface transportation projects.

**Intermodal** Planning that reflects a focus on connectivity between modes and emphasizes choices, coordination, and cooperation.

**Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA)** Federal legislation that introduced a comprehensive approach to transportation problems by emphasizing innovation, intermodalism, and flexibility.

**Key Station Plan** A document designating critical transit facilities needed to expand accessibility for individuals with disabilities and to meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.

**Land Use** The purpose for which land or the structures on the land are being utilized (e.g., commercial, residential, or retail). Also used as a description of activities found throughout an urban area.

**Level of Service (LOS)** A measure given to roads and intersections that relates to the frustration experienced by drivers due to congestion. It is expressed from Level of Service “A” (least congested area) to Level of Service “F” (most congested area).

**Link** An element of a transportation network that represents a segment which terminates in a node at the other end. A link may have a number of attributes, including distances, number of lanes, capacity, and direction, and is often assigned a travel time function to the volume of traffic using the link.

**Local Street** Street designed to provide access to and from homes and businesses.

**Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)** A long-range planning document required by federal law that identifies facilities and programs that should function as an integrated metropolitan transportation system and includes a financial plan that demonstrates how the long-range plan can be implemented. Federal requirement for MPOs and Agencies of Transportation to undertake every five years and looks out 20-25 years.

**Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)** Federally established organization responsible for a cooperative, continuous, and comprehensive framework to make transportation investment decisions within their designated area.

**Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)** A fiscally-constrained blueprint to guide Chittenden County's transportation development and investment for the next 25 years. Per federal law, the MTP is updated every five years to ensure the Plan remains current and effective at achieving regional transportation goals.

**Mobility** The door-to-door experience of traveling or shipping goods throughout our communities and across the region, measured in terms of travel time, comfort, convenience, safety, and cost.

**Mode** A particular means of transportation (e.g., rail, auto, bike, walk).

**Mode Choice** A process by which an individual selects a transportation mode for use on a trip chain, given the trip's purpose, origin, and destination; characteristics of the individual; and characteristics of travel by the realistically available modes.

**Mode Split** The percentage, or share, of trips captured by the various transportation modes.

**Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21)** This federal transportation funding act was passed by Congress and approved by President Obama in 2012 as the successor to the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) act and funds surface transportation programs for fiscal years (FY) 2013 and 2014.

**Multimodal** Planning that reflects consideration of more than one mode to serve transportation needs in a given area and is included in the meaning of intermodal.

**National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)** Federal law requiring federal agencies to integrate environmental values into their decision making processes by considering the environmental impacts of their proposed actions and reasonable alternatives to those actions.

**National Highway Performance Program (NHPP)** Federal program that provides funding for improvements to rural and urban roads that are part of the NHS, including interstate highways and designated connections to major intermodal terminals.

**Network** A mathematical representation of an area's transportation or communication facilities, comprised of links and nodes.

**Node** A point where two links join a network, usually representing a decision point for route choice but sometimes indicating only a change in some important link attribute.

**Paratransit** A demand-response transportation system catering to special needs populations such as the aging and people with disabilities.

**Park and Ride Facility (P&R)** A facility that serves as a staging location for travelers to transfer between the auto mode and transit or between the single occupant vehicle (SOV) and other higher occupancy vehicle (HOV or carpools) modes

**Peak** The maximum trip rate or the duration over which some threshold trip rate is maintained. Also known as "rush hour."

**Person Trip** The movement of a person from an origin to a destination. A carpool carrying three people from origin-to-destination make one vehicle trip, its occupants together have made three person trips.

**Planning Advisory Committee**

The Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) oversees the CCRPC's regional planning activities and policy development. The PAC includes representatives from municipalities, transit, state, public/interest groups and others.

**Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) Process**

Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) represents a collaborative and integrated approach to transportation decision-making that 1) considers environmental, community, and economic goals early in the transportation planning process, and 2) uses the information, analysis, and products developed during planning to inform the environmental review process.

**Planning Funds (PL)** Funds from the Federal Highway Administration used for planning projects.

**Preliminary Engineering (PE)** Project development phase in which project scope and design is determined.

**Right Of Way (ROW)** Denotes land, or an interest in land, established for transportation purposes.

**Roundabout** Non-signalized circular intersection with specific design and traffic control features to ensure low travel speeds and efficient traffic movement.

**Route Choice** The process of simulating the sequence of roadways an individual will choose for a trip, given the trip's origin, destination, and mode.

**Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU)** This federal transportation funding act was passed by Congress in August 2005 as the successor to the Transportation Efficiency Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21).

**Scoping** A phase in the project development process that identifies issues with the transportation system and develops conceptual solutions.

**Shared Use Path** A path separated from vehicle traffic by barrier or open space usually on its own right-of-way.

**Special Services Transportation Agency (SSTA)** Chittenden County-based non-profit paratransit provider.

**Stakeholder** A stakeholder is any person or group that is affected by a planning project, issue, or long-range plan, as well as any person or group who are not aware that they are affected. Stakeholders often include non-governmental organizations such as environmental, health, citizen, neighborhood and civic organizations; traditionally underserved such as the low-income,

racial and ethnic minorities and people with disabilities; residents of affected areas; transportation service providers; and government agencies.

**Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)** The State's four-year list of fiscally constrained transportation projects planned for implementation statewide.

**Surface Transportation Program (STP)** Federal program providing flexible funding for projects on any Federal-aid highway, including the NHS, bridge projects on any public road, transit capital projects, and bus facilities.

**Technical Assistance (TA)** The CCRPC technical assistance program provides technical support relating to transportation issues for member municipalities and agencies. Services typically provided through this program include: Traffic Counts, Speed Limit Recommendations, Traffic Signal Optimization, Traffic Control Warrant Analysis, Roadway Surface Management Studies, Small Area Transportation Studies, and Safety Studies.

**Telecommunications Display Device (TDD)** Apparatus that converts telephoned information to visual form on a computer screen. Useful to hearing or speech-impaired individuals.

**Traffic Calming** A combination of measures to reduce the negative effects of vehicle use or to alter driver behaviors.

**Transit** Generally refers to urban passenger transportation service, (private or public) along established routes with fixed or variable schedules at published fares.

**Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)** A committee of the CCRPC that makes recommendations on transportation plans and programs to the CCRPC Board of Directors for action.

**Transportation Capital Program** The annual program/budget devised by the State of Vermont Agency of Transportation to determine and prioritize transportation capital investments statewide and submitted to the legislature for approval. The needs and cost estimates are updated annually in the program. This process is coordinated with the CCRPC through the TIP development process.

**Transportation Demand Management (TDM)** The general term for strategies that result in more efficient use of transportation resources.

**Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA 21)** Replaced ISTEA and guides federal expenditures for surface transportation since 1998.

**Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)** The four-year list of fiscally constrained transportation projects planned for implementation in the region. The TIP is integrated in the annual VTrans Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP).

**Transportation Management Association (TMA)** A voluntary association of public organizations, private agencies, and businesses joined to develop cooperative transportation programs in a given area.

**Transportation Systems Management (TSM)** Relatively low-cost improvements to improve transportation efficiency such as ITS applications or roundabouts.

**Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)** The CCRPC's annual work plan that identifies the local and regional transportation planning priorities and activities for each fiscal year.

**United States Department of Transportation (USDOT)** The federal regulatory agency whose mission is to ensure a fast, safe, efficient, accessible and convenient transportation system that meets our vital national interests and enhances the quality of life of the American people, today and into the future.

**United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)** The federal regulatory agency responsible for administering and enforcing environmental laws, including the Clean Air Act.

**United We Ride** Federal initiative created by Executive Order #13330 intended to break down the barriers among Federal programs as they relate to transportation to ensure that transportation services are seamless, comprehensive and accessible. Specifically, UWR is tasked with seeking ways to simplify access to transportation services for persons with disabilities, persons with lower incomes, and older adults.

**Vehicles Miles of Travel (VMT)** Represents one vehicle traveling a distance of one mile. Often used as a measure of car and road usage in a region.

**Vehicle Trip** An origin-to-destination journey by a single vehicle. A bus carrying 40 people from an origin to a destination makes one vehicle trip, while its occupants make a total of 40 person trips.

**Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans or VAOT)** A cabinet-level agency that sets state policies and plans for all modes of transportation and oversees public transit service, general aviation program, rail and water transport and state/local highway programs (T1 VSA Chapter 55).

## APPENDIX B: FEDERAL REGULATIONS ON MPO PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

The laws governing the federal transportation planning process are found in Title 23 of the United States Code, Sections 134 and 135 (23 USC 134 and 135). The regulations derived from those laws which further define the planning requirements are contained in Title 23, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 450 (23 CFR 450). Both the statute and regulations include references to the role of land use considerations and related issues when transportation stakeholders, elected officials, and the public make decisions regarding the maintenance, operations, and expansion of transportation systems.

Policies and requirements for Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) and their planning processes can be found in Title 49 of the United States Code, Section 5303 - Metropolitan transportation planning.

### **23 CFR Part 450.316 Interested Parties, Participation, and Consultation**

(a) The MPO shall develop and use a documented participation plan that defines a process for providing citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of people with disabilities, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process.

(1) The participation plan shall be developed by the MPO in consultation with all interested parties and shall, at a minimum, describe explicit procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes for:

- (i) Providing adequate public notice of public participation activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including but not limited to a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP;
- (ii) Providing timely notice and reasonable access to information about transportation issues and processes;
- (iii) Employing visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs;
- (iv) Making public information (technical information and meeting notices) available in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the World Wide Web;
- (v) Holding any public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times;
- (vi) Demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input received during the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP;
- (vii) Seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and underrepresented households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services;
- (viii) Providing an additional opportunity for public comment, if the final metropolitan transportation plan or TIP differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment by the MPO and raises new

material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public participation efforts;

(ix) Coordinating with the statewide transportation planning public participation and consultation processes under subpart B of this part; and

(x) Periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the participation plan to ensure a full and open participation process.

(2) When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft metropolitan transportation plan and TIP (including the financial plans) as a result of the participation process in this section or the interagency consultation process required under the EPA transportation conformity regulations (40 CFR part 93), a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made as part of the final metropolitan transportation plan and TIP.

(3) A minimum public comment period of 45 calendar days shall be provided before the initial or revised participation plan is adopted by the MPO. Copies of the approved participation plan shall be provided to the FHWA and the FTA for informational purposes and shall be posted on the World Wide Web, to the maximum extent practicable.

(b) In developing metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs, the MPO should consult with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities within the MPA that are affected by transportation (including State and local planned growth, economic development, environmental protection, airport operations, or freight movements) or coordinate its planning process (to the maximum extent practicable) with such planning activities. In addition, metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs shall be developed with due consideration of other related planning activities within the metropolitan area, and the process shall provide for the design and delivery of transportation services within the area that are provided by:

(1) Recipients of assistance under title 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53;

(2) Governmental agencies and non-profit organizations (including representatives of the agencies and organizations) that receive Federal assistance from a source other than the U.S. Department of Transportation to provide non-emergency transportation services; and

(3) Recipients of assistance under 23 U.S.C. 204.

(c) When the MPA includes Indian Tribal lands, the MPO shall appropriately involve the Indian Tribal government(s) in the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP.

(d) When the MPA includes Federal public lands, the MPO shall appropriately involve the Federal land management agencies in the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP.

(e) MPOs shall, to the extent practicable, develop a documented process(es) that outlines roles, responsibilities, and key decision points for consulting with other governments and agencies, as defined in paragraphs (b), (c), and (d) of this section, which may be included in the agreement(s) developed under §450.314.

## **TITLE 49 PART 613 Planning Assistance and Standards**

### **Subpart A—Metropolitan Transportation Planning and Programming**

#### **613.100 Metropolitan transportation planning and programming.**

The regulations in 23 CFR 450, subpart C, shall be followed in complying with the requirements of this subpart. The definitions in 23 CFR 450, subpart A, shall apply. [72 FR 7285, Feb. 14, 2007]

**Subpart B—Statewide Transportation Planning and Programming**

613.200 Statewide transportation planning and programming.

The regulations in 23 CFR 450, subpart B, shall be followed in complying with the requirements of this subpart. The definitions in 23 CFR 450, subpart A, shall apply. [72 FR 7285, Feb. 14, 2007]

**Subpart C—Coordination of Federal and Federally Assisted Programs and Projects**

613.300 Coordination of Federal and federally assisted programs and projects.

The coordination of Federal and federally assisted programs and projects implementing OMB revised Circular No. A-95, which are set forth in 23 CFR Part 420, subpart C, are incorporated into this subpart. [41 FR 33443, Aug. 9, 1976]

**23 USC 134 Metropolitan Planning**

**(c) General Requirements.—**

(3) Process of development.— The process for developing the plans and TIPs shall provide for consideration of all modes of transportation and shall be continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive to the degree appropriate, based on the complexity of the transportation problems to be addressed.

**(i) Development of Transportation Plan.—**

**(5) Consultation.—**

(A) In general.— In each metropolitan area, the metropolitan planning organization shall consult, as appropriate, with State and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation concerning the development of a long-range transportation plan.

(B) Issues.— The consultation shall involve, as appropriate—

- (i) comparison of transportation plans with State conservation plans or maps, if available; or
- (ii) comparison of transportation plans to inventories of natural or historic resources, if available.

**(6) Participation by interested parties.—**

(A) In general.— Each metropolitan planning organization shall provide citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the transportation plan.

(B) Contents of participation plan.— A participation plan—

- (i) shall be developed in consultation with all interested parties; and
- (ii) shall provide that all interested parties have reasonable opportunities to comment on the contents of the transportation plan.

(C) Methods.— In carrying out subparagraph (A), the metropolitan planning organization shall, to the maximum extent practicable—

- (i) hold any public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times;
- (ii) employ visualization techniques to describe plans; and

(iii) make public information available in electronically accessible format and means, such as the World Wide Web, as appropriate to afford reasonable opportunity for consideration of public information under subparagraph (A).

(7) Publication.— A transportation plan involving Federal participation shall be published or otherwise made readily available by the metropolitan planning organization for public review, including (to the maximum extent practicable) in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the World Wide Web, approved by the metropolitan planning organization and submitted for information purposes to the Governor at such times and in such manner as the Secretary shall establish.

(j) Metropolitan TIP.—

(1) Development.—

(B) Opportunity for comment.— In developing the TIP, the metropolitan planning organization, in cooperation with the State and any affected public transportation operator, shall provide an opportunity for participation by interested parties in the development of the program, in accordance with subsection (i)(5).

(4) Notice and comment.— Before approving a TIP, a metropolitan planning organization, in cooperation with the State and any affected public transportation operator, shall provide an opportunity for participation by interested parties in the development of the program, in accordance with subsection (i)(5)

**42 USC 2000d - Prohibition against exclusion from participation in, denial of benefits of, and discrimination under federally assisted programs on ground of race, color, or national origin.**

No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

# APPENDIX C: CCRPC PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN & EQUITY IMPACT WORKSHEET

## CHITTENDEN COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

### Public Participation Plan & Equity Impact Worksheet

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#### WHEN TO USE THIS WORKSHEET

Use the worksheet if you will be working on an effort that falls under *Involve, Collaborate or Empower* (see the *Spectrum of Participation*, pages 10-20). Use it early for alignment with equity goals and desired outcomes. Use the results of this worksheet to inform the planning project's scope of work around public participation. Develop your public participation and equity impact plan by entering your answers in the blank worksheet at the end.

#### HOW TO USE THIS WORKSHEET

This worksheet will assist you in considering your process, purpose, primary audience, potential barriers, impacts and strategies to inform and involve your intended audience before you begin a project. You can also use this as a reference during all stages of your engagement process. Below are some key questions with prompts to guide and direct you. Also reference the *Spectrum of Participation* to determine the level and methods of participation that best suit the project.

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#### 1. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF YOUR ENGAGEMENT?

*CONSIDERATION POINTS: What do you hope to achieve? What is your main purpose for involving community members? Where does your engagement fit on the Spectrum of Participation?*

#### 2. STAKEHOLDERS: WHO IS POTENTIALLY IMPACTED BY THIS PROJECT?

*CONSIDERATION POINTS: Who are the interested parties? Who are the potentially impacted communities? Who are the adjacent property owners? Are there resident or neighborhood organizations? Are stakeholders groups defined (neighborhoods, topic area, ethnic or racial, language, gender, tribal, etc.)?*

GROUPS TO CONSIDER: municipal government, residents, business owners, underrepresented populations (minority, new American, aging, low-income communities), schools, youth, persons with disabilities.

#### 3. WHAT STRATEGIES AND TOOLS WILL YOU USE TO ENSURE YOU HAVE INFORMATION FROM AND RESEARCH ABOUT THE RELEVANT GROUPS AND COMMUNITIES?

*CONSIDERATION POINTS: Have you gathered adequate background information about the affected populations you intend to reach (i.e., language spoken, customs, historical or*

*geographic data, relevant data reports)? What other resources will you need in order to better know and understand your audiences?*

Identify the demographics of the area, particularly by race/ethnicity, income level and limited English proficiency (attach maps or other data as necessary).

## RESOURCES

The following resources can help you determine who may be impacted:

- ECOS Map Viewer: <http://map.ccrpcvt.org/ChittendenCountyVT/>
- American Community Survey: <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>
- Community Commons: <http://www.communitycommons.org/maps-data/>
- Regional, municipal, or department specific data
- Data on clients or consumers of services
- Data on community partners or contractors who provide services (they may also be a source of data)
- Other relevant research or literature

## 4. HOW WILL YOU EFFECTIVELY REACH ALL OF YOUR AUDIENCES?

*CONSIDERATION POINTS: What steps will you take to ensure impacted communities are included in all stages of the project? Do you or others involved in the project have appropriate partnerships or contacts in place to initiate and support the adequate level of participation throughout all stages of the project? How will you utilize internal staff, consultant expertise, or contracted partners to provide technical assistance or consultation to ensure inclusive stakeholder involvement? Would the utilization of the Stipend & Reimbursement Procedure lead to greater participation in the project? How do you plan to address language and literacy needs including translation, interpretation and reading levels? What alternative and non-traditional approaches will you utilize? Does your intended audience have their own engagement practices that should be considered? Consult the Spectrum of Participation (pages 10-20) documents to help determine an appropriate range of participation methods.*

## 5. WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BARRIERS AND RISKS TO DOING THIS WORK?

*CONSIDERATION POINTS: Are there trust or communication issues among members of the public or a community that may prevent full participation (i.e., social, political, tribal, gender-specific)? How will you address the diverse cultural differences among affected communities? Is there adequate justification for proceeding with your project concept (i.e. time, cost, level of interest)? Is there community and public support for the planning project? What are some unintended consequences of the project if not completed effectively? Are there strategies in place to address unintended consequences?*

When recommendations are first developed, if underrepresented communities will be impacted, examine how to mitigate negative impacts and enhance positive impacts. Use the table in the worksheet at the end for this purpose. Here is the guidance for that table:

Identify the impacts of the proposal from an equity perspective. The goal is to develop a list of

likely impacts and actions to ensure that negative impacts are mitigated and positive impacts are enhanced.

Have the project steering/advisory committee complete the rest of the worksheet. If the steering advisory committee does not include representatives from the underrepresented communities, they should be added to the group for this task.

Complete Column 1 of the **Equity Impact Worksheet** using the responses from step 3. Columns 2 and 3 are a detailed discussion of the positive and negative impacts of the proposal on the identified population groups by race/ethnicity, income and limited English speakers. In Column 4, describe any recommendations or actions which arise from your discussions about impact. These might include:

- Ways in which the program/policy could be modified to enhance positive impacts, to reduce negative impacts for identified population groups;
- Ways in which benefits of modifying program/policy to remove differential impacts outweigh the costs or disadvantages of doing so;
- Ways in which existing partnerships could be strengthened to benefit the most affected.

The goal of the Equity Impact Worksheet is to propose set of recommendations for modifying the proposal. When modifications are not possible, the option of not proceeding with the proposal needs to be addressed.

Occasionally, it is possible to find a single, clear solution which will provide the optimum impact. However, in most cases a series of options will be defined and presented. Recommendations should be prioritized as appropriate.

It may prove impossible to consider all potential impacts and identified actions. In this stage, participants are encouraged to prioritize or rank the actions based on the likelihood to impact equity. For each of the actions the following should be considered:

- the costs of the action;
- is the impact on equity high or low;
- what needs to happen to increase the feasibility of the action;
- what other resources are needed;
- who will implement the action;
- the timing of the actions

## **6. IF THERE ARE DECISIONS TO BE MADE, HOW DOES COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION FIT INTO THE OVERALL DECISION-MAKING PROCESS?**

*CONSIDERATION POINTS: Are there processes in place to involve affected communities in decisions at different levels and phases, as shown on the Spectrum of Participation? Will there be diverse representation from affected communities in the decision-making process? Is there a standard point of contact for community members? What decisions will need to be made after the community participation process, and how will the community be involved then? How will the affected community be informed of final decisions? Describe the points in the process when community participation will be sought including the methods to be used.*

## **7. HOW WILL YOU INFORM THE COMMUNITY OF BENCHMARKS OR PROGRESS THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS?**

**CONSIDERATION POINTS:** *Will there be opportunities for formal project/program updates and feedback (i.e. meetings, website updates, phone calls, e-mail, and/or mail)? Is there a budget for printing and circulating an outcomes report? How will you recognize the contributions of community members? How will the community be informed about the potential impacts of final decisions? What steps will be taken to maintain developed relationships and opportunities for future collaboration or participation?*

## **8. HOW WILL YOU EVALUATE THE SUCCESS OF YOUR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN, BOTH IN TERMS OF PROCESSES AND OUTCOMES?**

**CONSIDERATION POINTS:** *Based upon the participation tools selected in response to question 4; what evaluation metrics (see page 21, Evaluating the Public Participation Plan) will be reported during and at the conclusion of the project?*

### **LOGISTICS & PLANNING TIPS**

*The logistics of community participation are critical for turnout and community interest. Paying close attention to a number of logistical issues throughout the entire public participation process will enhance involvement and improve the overall effort. Some items to consider:*

**ACCESSIBILITY:** *Is the location wheelchair accessible and code approved for persons with disabilities?*

**VENUE:** *Making meetings geographically close to communities or stakeholders is critical to a good turnout. Choosing a site that is community centered may be more familiar and comfortable for attendees. Is the venue accessible, and does it accommodate multiple transportation and parking options?*

**HOST:** *Clarify the role for all those involved, including public officials, project lead, public participation project manager, consulting staff, community members, etc. prior to each public involvement tool.*

**STAFFING:** *Will you use consulting staff, CCRPC staff and/or partner staff to help with set-up, welcoming, and meeting facilitation?*

**BUDGET:** *Is your budget adequate to provide resources for translation services, interpretation services, advertising, communication, promotion, rental space, refreshments/food, transportation, child care, and other applicable stipend/reimbursement options?*

**TIME:** *Can you accommodate community members to hold meetings at times that are most convenient for them, including nights and weekends?*

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

*If you have questions or need assistance, please contact Emma Long, Communications Manager at the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission at (802) 846-4490 x21 or [elong@ccrpcvt.org](mailto:elong@ccrpcvt.org).*

## CHITTENDEN COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

### *Public Participation Plan & Equity Impact Worksheet*

*Project Name:*

*Project Type:*

*Project Lead:*

*Project Timeline:*

*UPWP Task Number:*

**1. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF YOUR ENGAGEMENT?**

**2. STAKEHOLDERS: WHO IS POTENTIALLY IMPACTED BY THIS PROJECT?**

**3. WHAT STRATEGIES AND TOOLS WILL YOU USE TO ENSURE YOU HAVE INFORMATION FROM AND RESEARCH ABOUT THE RELEVANT GROUPS AND COMMUNITIES?**

**4. HOW WILL YOU EFFECTIVELY REACH ALL OF YOUR AUDIENCES?**

**5. WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BARRIERS AND RISKS TO DOING THIS WORK?**

**6. IF THERE ARE DECISIONS TO BE MADE, HOW DOES COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FIT INTO THE OVERALL DECISION-MAKING PROCESS? (What stages? What methods?)**

**7. HOW WILL YOU INFORM THE COMMUNITY OF BENCHMARKS OR PROGRESS THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS?**

**8. HOW WILL YOU EVALUATE THE SUCCESS OF YOUR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN, BOTH IN TERMS OF PROCESSES AND OUTCOMES?**

If you are working in an area with underrepresented community and you have draft recommendations, use the following (see instructions as part of step 5).

**EQUITY IMPACT REVIEW WORKSHEET**

<b>(1)</b> Population(s) affected disproportionately (populations from Step 2 list)	<b>(2)</b> Describe potential positive impact (beneficial)	<b>(3)</b> Describe potential negative impact (adverse)	<b>(4)</b> Actions to enhance positive or mitigate negative/other comments

Based on your review of actions in step 4, please list your recommendations for the policy/program and why you chose them. Please describe the next steps for implementation.

## APPENDIX D: TIP AMENDMENT POLICY

### Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment Policy Updated September 2, 2011

#### I. TIP Amendment Schedule

Amendment Type	Definition/Process
<b>Project cost \$600,000 or less</b>	
<b>Major Amendment</b> Public Hearing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Addition of a new project unless it is a new earmark, grant, or project not subject to CCRPC's fiscal constraint limit.</li> <li>2. Moving the construction phase of a project that is "ready to go" from the current year to an out year.</li> <li>3. Cost increase resulting from a significant change in project scope.*</li> </ol>
<b>Minor Amendment</b> Consent Agenda item for TAC and Board. Amendment must be available on CCRPC's website 15 days before the board meeting.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Change in project cost of more than 25 percent.</li> <li>2. Addition of a new earmark, grant or project not subject to CCRPC's fiscal constraint limit.</li> <li>3. Adding funds to an illustrative project, or other project on the TIP without funding, if VTrans agrees to advance the project and if funds are available within CCRPC's fiscal constraint limit. Funding limits will be based on the cost estimates listed in the TIP.</li> </ol>
<b>Administrative</b> Amendment approved by CCRPC MPO/Assistant Director or Executive Director with subsequent Board notification and posting on CCRPC's website.	<p>Anything not detailed under Major or Minor including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Change in project cost of 25 percent or less.</li> <li>2. Designating use of regional line items.</li> <li>3. Change in funding between phases with no change in overall project cost.</li> <li>4. Moving a project from an out year, or the previous year, to the current year if funds are available within CCRPC's fiscal constraint limit.</li> <li>5. Adjustments to TIP projects to match grant or earmark award amounts.</li> <li>6. Removing funds from projects that do not need the funds.</li> <li>7. Typographical changes to the TIP or changes to clarify project details.</li> </ol>
<b>Project cost over \$600,000</b>	
<b>Major Amendment</b> Public Hearing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Change in project cost of more than 25 percent, unless not subject to CCRPC's fiscal constraint limit.</li> <li>2. Addition of a new project unless it is a new earmark, grant, or project not subject to CCRPC's fiscal constraint limit.</li> <li>3. Moving the construction phase of a project that is "ready to go" from the current year to an out year.</li> <li>4. Cost increase resulting from a significant change in project scope.*</li> </ol>

<p><b>Minor Amendment</b> Consent Agenda item for TAC and Board. Amendment must be available on CCRPC's website 15 days before the board meeting.</p>	<p>Any condition not detailed under Major or Administrative, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Change in project cost greater than 10 percent but not to exceed 25 percent, up to a maximum change of \$1,500,000.</li> <li>2. Addition of a new earmark, grant or project not subject to CCRPC's fiscal constraint limit.</li> <li>3. Adding funds to an illustrative project, or other project on the TIP without funding, if VTrans agrees to advance the project and if funds are available within CCRPC's fiscal constraint limit. Funding limits will be based on the cost estimates listed in the TIP.</li> <li>4. Moving a project from an out year to the current year if funds are available within CCRPC's fiscal constraint limit without taking them from another project that is ready to use them.</li> <li>5. Designating use of Regional line items.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Administrative</b> Amendment approved by CCRPC MPO/Assistant Director or Executive Director with subsequent Board notification and posting on CCRPC's website.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Change in project cost of 10 percent or less, up to a maximum change of \$300,000.</li> <li>2. Change in funding between phases with no change in overall project cost.</li> <li>3. Adjustments to TIP projects to match grant or earmark award amounts.</li> <li>4. Moving funds from the previous year to the current year if funds are available within CCRPC's fiscal constraint limit.</li> <li>5. Removing funds from projects that do not need the funds.</li> <li>6. Typographical changes to the TIP or changes to clarify project details</li> </ol>
<p><b>Expedited TIP Amendment</b></p>	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. From time to time conditions may arise when a funding opportunity becomes available to CCRPC that would be lost by following the time requirements to process TIP amendments, or an emergency arises requiring immediate expenditure of funds.</li> <li>2. If such condition arises the CCRPC MPO/Assistant Director or Executive Director may approve TIP amendments in consultation with the Executive Committee.</li> <li>3. In such cases the full Board and TAC will be notified of the amendment a minimum of 24 hours before the amendment is approved in order to provide comment to the MPO/Assistant Director or Executive Director.</li> <li>4. Expedited TIP amendments may not take funds from ready to go projects. An informational item will be included on the agenda of the next TAC and Board meetings.</li> </ol>

\* The significance of a requested project scope change will be determined by the staff and Executive Director, in consultation with the affected municipality and/or agency

Notes:

The MPO/Assistant Director or Executive Director may designate an Administrative Amendment as a Minor or Major Amendment, or a Minor Amendment as a Major Amendment if additional review is desired.

For the purpose of the TIP, “project” is defined as a combination of all related individual TIP line items that, when grouped together under the CCRPC project number, make up an independent and stand-alone project.

Cost increases shall be evaluated cumulatively over the entire federal fiscal year.

## **II. Project Advancement Guidelines**

Project advancement will adhere to the following guidelines:

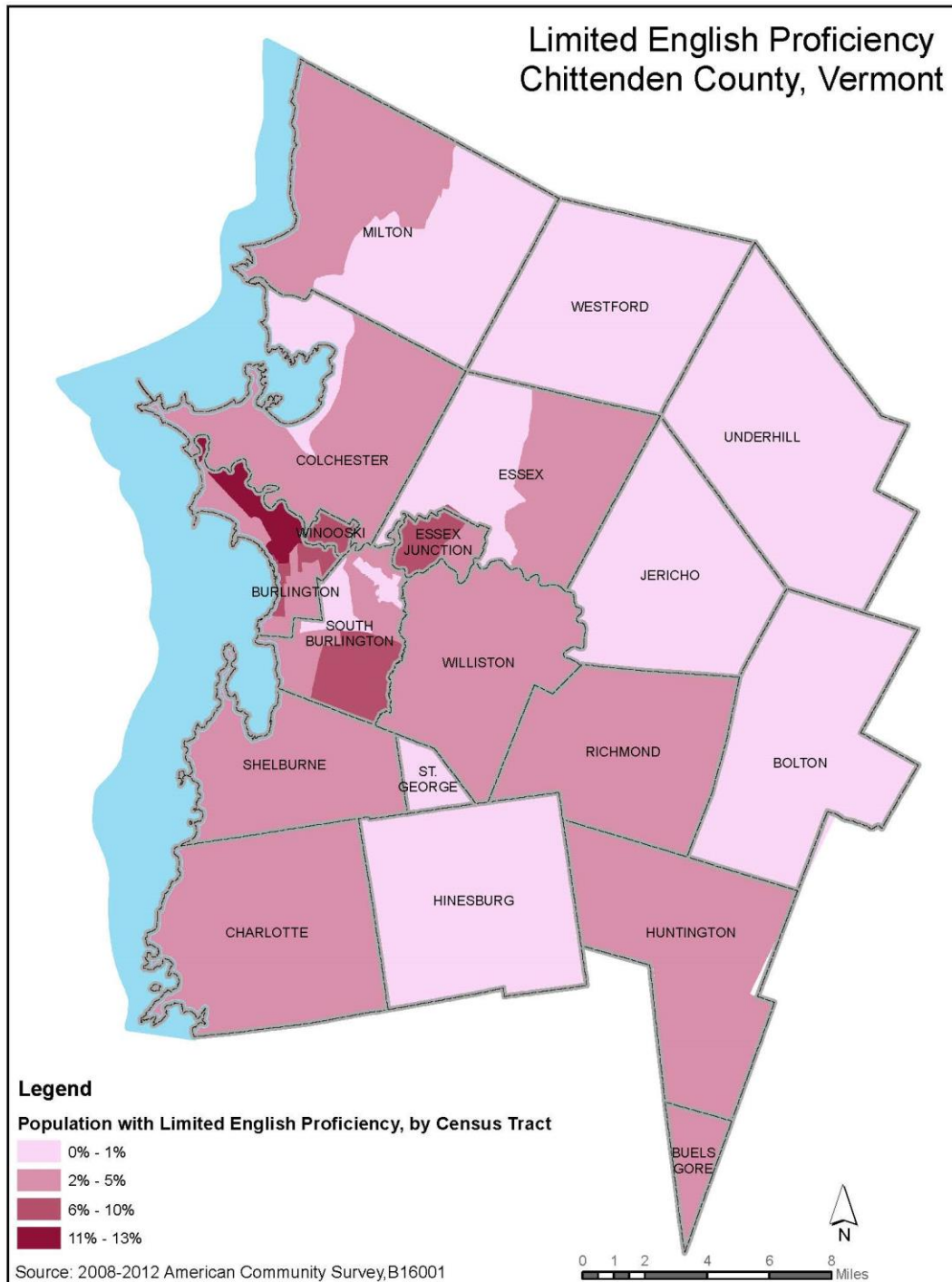
1. If a specific project cannot meet its intended time schedule, the first option will be for another project in the same category to be substituted within the limits of fiscal constraint;
2. If a specific project cannot meet its intended time schedule, another project regardless of category, will be considered as a substitute (within the limits of fiscal constraint) provided it has been identified in the VTrans’ Capital Program and Project Development Plan; and
3. If there are no CCRPC projects ready for implementation, the TIP will be amended accordingly.

The CCRPC’s TIP fiscal constraint level may be adjusted during the fiscal year due to revisions to VTrans federal and state funding projections, CCRPC revisions to TIP project/program schedules and budgets, and/or other events. In the event of a mutually-agreed upward adjustment in the TIP fiscal constraint level for a particular fiscal year, the above project advancement guidelines will apply.

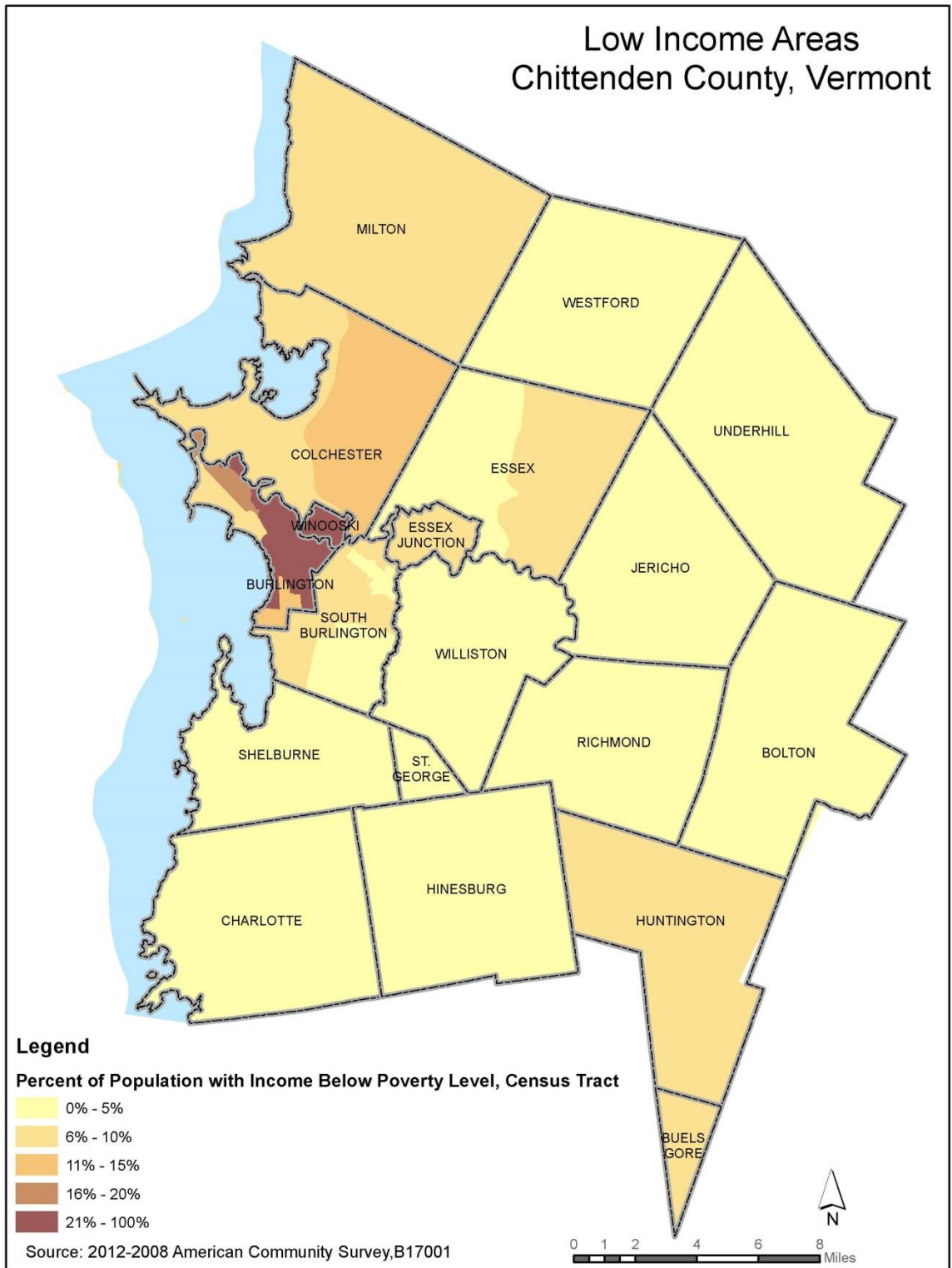
## APPENDIX E: EQUITY MAPS

The following three maps can also be viewed using the interactive ECOS Map Viewer:

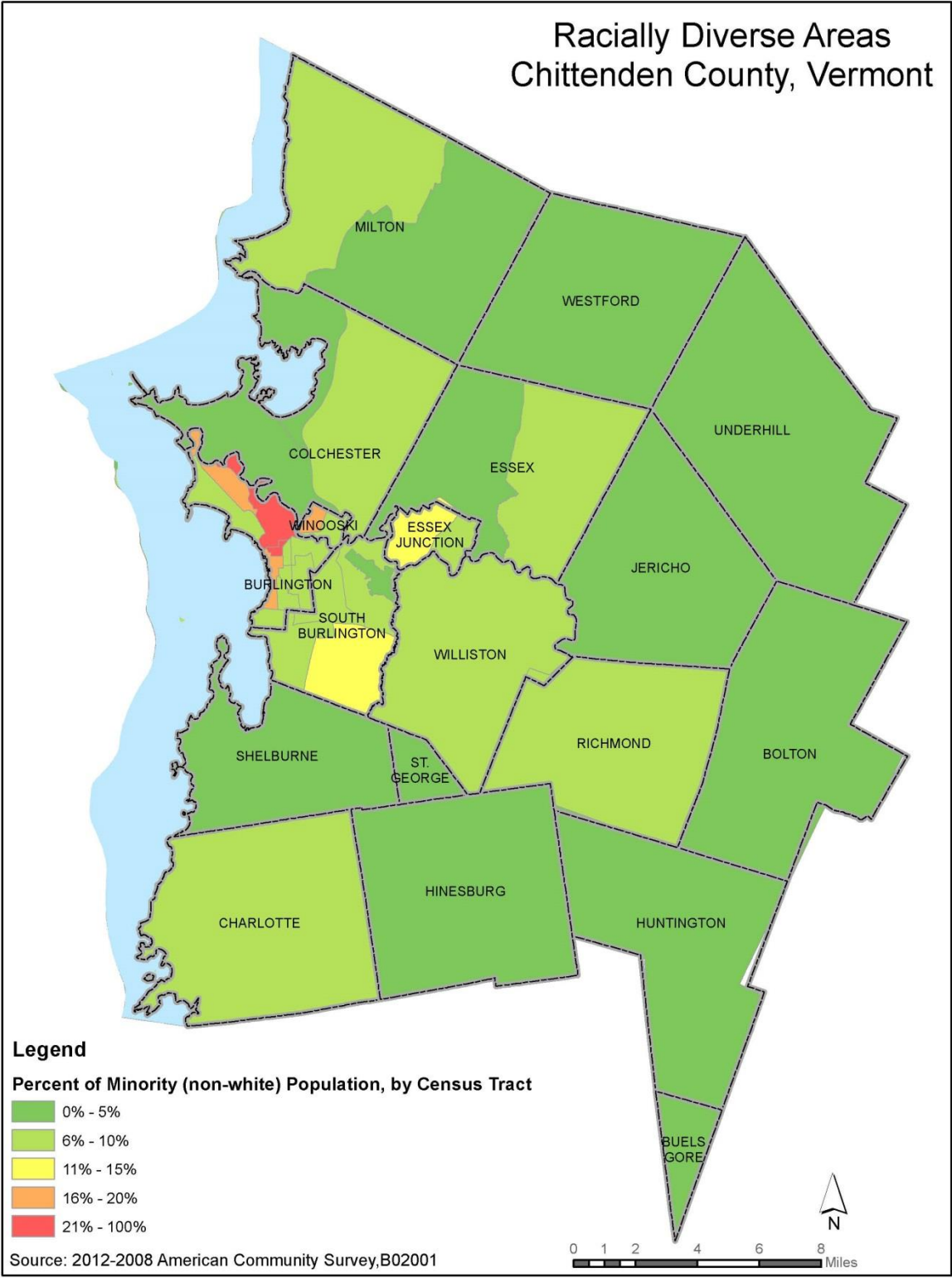
<http://map.ccrpcvt.org/ChittendenCountyVT/>.



## Low Income Areas Chittenden County, Vermont



Racially Diverse Areas  
Chittenden County, Vermont



## APPENDIX F: INTERIM VOLUNTEER STIPEND POLICY & ADVISORY COMMITTEE ENROLLMENT FORM

### CHITTENDEN COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

#### Interim Volunteer Stipend Policy

This policy is intended to assist in removing barriers to allow for meaningful and diverse community involvement in planning and policy work within Chittenden County. Its foundation is rooted in Federal Title VI requirements and the ECOS Plan's Social Community goal: "Promote the skills, resources, and assurance needed for all community members to participate in the workforce and in their family, civic and cultural lives, within and among their neighborhoods, and in the larger community." This policy also seeks to advance Strategy 8 of the ECOS Plan: "Ensure that the projects and actions in all ECOS Strategies assess equity impacts, and that the design and development of programs are inclusive of all and engage underrepresented populations."

Advisory Committee Members participating in a Corridor Study or Region-Wide Plan process, who are not being otherwise compensated for their attendance at such meetings or events, may request a stipend to off-set the cost of participating in each meeting or event. This stipend is intended to address barriers to participating such as missing work, child care, and transportation costs.

To be eligible for stipends, a volunteer must opt-in on the **Advisory Committee Enrollment Form** (see below). Eligible volunteers will receive a \$50 stipend per committee meeting or event when their attendance is verified on the meeting sign-in sheet. Stipends will be paid to volunteers within 30 days of the meeting or event.

All volunteers seeking reimbursement must be provided with, and acknowledge, that they have received and reviewed the *Interim Volunteer Stipend Policy*. To receive reimbursement volunteers must complete, sign, and submit a Form W-9 to the CCRPC before receiving a stipend. Volunteers receiving stipends must complete a current Form W-9 each calendar year.

Volunteers receiving stipends are not employees of the CCRPC. Volunteers receiving stipends acknowledge that stipends may be considered income for tax purposes. Volunteers receiving \$600 or more in stipends in a calendar year will be issued a Form 1099-MISC for that calendar year.

Approved by the Executive Committee 6/18/14

**CHITTENDEN COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**Advisory Committee Enrollment Form**

Please fill out the following form to complete your enrollment in a Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission Advisory Committee.

**First and Last Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Organization Represented (if applicable):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip Code:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Preferred Phone #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Preferred Contact Method (circle one or two):**    **Phone**                      **Email**                      **Mail**

**Are you compensated for your participation on this Advisory Committee through your place of employment or the organization you are representing? (Yes or No):** \_\_\_\_\_

*If **no**, please indicate if you would like to receive a stipend below.*

**It would be a challenge for me to actively participate in this Advisory Committee without receiving a \$50 per meeting stipend. (Yes or No):** \_\_\_\_\_

*Volunteers are not employees of the CCRPC. Meeting attendance will be verified by each meeting's sign-in sheet. Those requesting a stipend must submit a Form W-9 to the CCRPC before the stipend will be paid. Those receiving a stipend must acknowledge receipt and review of the Interim Volunteer Reimbursement Policy. Note that stipends may be considered income for tax purposes, and those receiving \$600 or more in a calendar year will be issued a Form 1099-MISC at year end.*

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By my signature below, I certify that all information provided as part of this Enrollment Form is true, accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge. I acknowledge receipt and review of the Interim Volunteer Reimbursement Policy. I give my consent to the CCRPC to use the information on this Enrollment Form for the purpose of contacting me regarding matters related to the Advisory Committee and determining my stipend eligibility.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by the Executive Committee 6/18/14

## APPENDIX G: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

This section includes the timeline for updating the Public Participation Plan and identifies opportunities for public comment. Comments from the public and the CCRPC Board are also listed along with CCRPC responses *in italics* to each comment.

### Project Timeline

Date	Action
July 31, 2013	First PPP Advisory Committee meeting
October 2, 2013	Second PPP Advisory Committee meeting
December 2, 2013	Third PPP Advisory Committee meeting
January 23, 2014	Fourth PPP Advisory Committee meeting
February 27, 2014	Fifth PPP Advisory Committee meeting
May 15, 2014	Sixth PPP Advisory Committee meeting
June 30, 2014	Seventh PPP Advisory Committee meeting
October 9, 2014	Eighth PPP Advisory Committee meeting
July 16, 2014	CCRPC Board warns public hearing for October 15; Public comment period opens
October 15, 2014	PPP Public Hearing and adoption of the PPP

### Comments from the public and the CCRPC Board

**From:** Christopher.Jolly@dot.gov [mailto:Christopher.Jolly@dot.gov]

**Sent:** Wednesday, October 15, 2014 3:20 PM

**To:** bdavis@ccmpo.org

**Cc:** Emma Long; Michele Boomhower; Amy.Bell@state.vt.us

**Subject:** FW: CCRPC Public Engagement Plan

Bryan- Finally spent some time with this and offer the following. Apologize for the late comments.

Page 1. Table of Contents- Should "Public Engagement Process..." be labeled as # 7 and down the line with 8. 9. 9a. 9b. and 9c. up to the "References" ?

*Response: The Table of Contents was updated to reflect consistent numbering.*

Page 4 Table 1. Suggest "Plan" be added so the first column is identified as "Plan/Program Adoption" and "Plan/Program Amendments". Everything in the column is either a Plan or Program.

*Response: The language was updated as suggested.*

Same Table 1. Suggest "PAC" be added to Appendix A. The federal regs. referenced in the first two rows should read Title 23 U.S.C. Section 134 and 23 CFR Part 450.316. This would be consistent with Appendix B. The TIP is referenced to Appendix E which I believe should be Appendix D. Same comment on Page 14 pertaining to the TIP.

*Response: PAC was added to Appendix A. The regulations were updated as suggested. The TIP was changed to Appendix D in both places.*

Page 18 last paragraph- suggest you consider replacing “projects” with “transportation planning activities”.

*Response: The language was updated as suggested.*

Page 8 -Table 3 - Do the “Collaborate and Empower” Spectrum levels need to be included ?

*Response: We will continue to include them as part of the Spectrum.*

Appendix B-Page 37- “Title 23 Part 450.316” should be revised to 23 CFR Part 450.316. Page 39 – “23 USC 134 Metropolitan Planning” see the following link which reflects MAP-21 changes to 23 USC

*Response: The language was updated as suggested.*

134. <http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/23/134> Please revise as needed. Also note that once our new federal transportation regulations are adopted we may need to update the PEP to reflect changes to 23 CFR Part 450.

*Response: The existing text was deleted and replaced with relevant text from MAP-21.*

As I mentioned on the phone overall very good and comprehensive plan. I had our Civil Rights expert (Tina Lee) look it over and she thought the same. I trust the comments above will be addressed so no problem with the Board taking a positive action this evening.

Let me know if you have any questions or want to discuss. thanks

Chris Jolly  
Planning & Programming Engineer  
802.828.4572  
[christopher.jolly@dot.gov](mailto:christopher.jolly@dot.gov)