

## **FY2017 ANNUAL REPORT**

### **Essex Junction**

The Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) is a political subdivision of the State created by the municipalities of Chittenden County in 1966 for the development of policies, plans and programs that address regional issues and opportunities in Chittenden County. Its vision is to be a pre-eminent, integrated regional organization that plans for healthy, vibrant communities, economic development, and efficient transportation of people and goods while improving the region's livability. The CCRPC serves as the region's federally designated metropolitan planning organization (MPO) and is responsible to all citizens of the region to ensure the implementation of the best regional and transportation plan for Chittenden County. The CCRPC also provides technical and planning assistance to its member municipalities and the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans).

The CCRPC is governed by a 29-member board consisting of one representative from each of the County's 19 municipalities; transportation representatives from VTrans, Green Mountain Transit (GMT), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the Burlington International Airport (BIA), and a rail industry representative; and, at-large members representing the interests of agriculture; environmental/conservation; business; and housing/socio-economic. The legislative body of each Chittenden County municipality selects its own representative and alternate. The full CCRPC selects the at-large representatives.

The CCRPC appreciates the continued opportunity to work with its municipal members to plan appropriately for the region's future to protect and improve the special quality of life that is shared throughout Chittenden County. In FY17, the CCRPC invested about \$5.1 million in regional land use, transportation, emergency management, energy, natural resources, public engagement, public health, training, and technical assistance. The program leverages more than \$4.5 million in Federal and State investment with \$245,000 in municipal dues and another \$187,000 in local match for specific projects—**an 11:1 return on investment**. Essex Junction's dues were \$6,340 in FY17 and \$6,306 in FY18.

Essex Junction representatives to the CCRPC Board and other committees in FY17 were:

- CCRPC representative – Daniel Kerin
- CCRPC alternate – Andrew Brown
- Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) – Robin Pierce
- Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) – Robin Pierce
- Clean Water Advisory Committee (CWAC) – Chelsea Mandigo
- MS4 Subcommittee – Chelsea Mandigo
- All-Hazards Mitigation Plan Update Committee – Robin Pierce

Specific activities the CCRPC is engaged in with Essex Junction, as well as some of CCRPC's regional activities, are discussed in the following sections.

## ESSEX JUNCTION ACTIVITIES

In FY2017, the CCRPC provided assistance to Essex Junction on the following projects and initiatives:

- **ADA Sidewalk and Path Study** – CCRPC staff and interns conducted a comprehensive inventory of accessibility issues for sidewalks, pathways and intersection crossing facilities in Essex and Essex Junction. Staff attended a kick-off meeting with Toole Design Group to develop a scope of work to begin the assessment and accessibility analysis for specific areas in the town and village. The total FY17-FY18 budget for this project is \$20,000. In FY17, total consultant costs were approximately \$3,045.
- **PAVER Road Survey** – This project involved the development of a series of datasets to support multi-year pavement planning for the town and village of Essex Junction. The CCRPC interns conducted field inventories and facilitated the development of a comprehensive pavement database.
- **FEMA Pre-Disaster Mitigation** – CCRPC staff worked with municipal staff to prepare the required update to Essex Junction’s All-Hazards Mitigation Plan and submit it to the Vermont Dept. of Emergency Management and Homeland Security for review and for final approval by FEMA.
- **Emergency Management – LEOP:** Staff offered assistance with the annual local emergency operations plan (LEOP) to ensure the municipality is prepared in the event of a disaster.
- **Stormwater Planning** – Provided ongoing staff support to the **Chittenden County Stream Team** (<http://www.ccstreamteam.org/>) and **Chittenden County Regional Stormwater Education Program** (<http://www.smartwaterways.org>) to facilitate multi-municipal cooperation to comply with ANR stormwater permit requirements for public education and involvement. In April 2017, these two efforts were merged under a single identity, **Rethink Runoff** (<http://rethinkrunoff.org/>).
- **Real-Time Traffic Information** – The CCRPC is working with VTrans and a consultant to plan, design and implement an advanced traffic monitoring system (ATMS) for five corridors in the county (including US Route 2A from Exit 12 to the 5 corners intersection) to collect travel times and average vehicle speeds through anonymously tracking Bluetooth (BT) devices carried by motorists (cell phones) and vehicles. This project is funded through a \$981,760 Federal Highway Administration grant.
- **Geographic Information Systems** – GIS staff printed full-size zoning maps, developed a parking area dataset for the village center and created a GIS data layer depicting travel from homes to the various schools in the village.
- **VTrans Better Roads Program & Municipal Roads General Permit** – The CCRPC applied for Category A funds through VTrans’ Better Roads Program to conduct municipal road erosion inventories for Essex Junction in preparation of the state’s Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP). CCRPC interns and staff conducted the inventories in the summers of 2016 and early 2017 and proceeded to prioritize the sites based on established criteria and in close consultation with the village.
- **Traffic Counts** – The CCRPC conducted three roadway (AADT) counts and six turning movement counts (<http://vtrans.ms2soft.com/>).

## Essex Junction Projects in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The TIP (<http://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-work/our-plans/transportation-improvement-program/>) is a prioritized, multi-year list of transportation projects in Chittenden County. To receive federal transportation funds, each transportation project, program or operation must be authorized through the TIP. Essex Junction projects included in the TIP are listed below. These projects are also identified in the FY2018 Vermont Agency of Transportation Capital Program for design or construction.

- **Creek Condominiums Stormwater Project** – \$220,000 project funded with a 2016 TA award of \$142,456 to construct a gravel wetland for runoff from Creek Condominiums and portions of a Village Road. Construction scheduled for FY2020.
- **Crescent Connector Road** – \$7.3 million for the construction of a new road between VT2A and VT 117 (CIRC Alternative Phase I project). Construction is scheduled to be completed in FY2019.
- **Paving VT 15 and VT 117** – \$3.28 million for paving Class 1 Town Highway Routes on the National Highway System in Essex Junction. Paving to be completed in 2017.
- **Paving VT 2A** – \$1.87 million to pave non-NHS Class 1 Town Highways in Essex Junction. Paving to be completed in 2017.
- **Pearl Street Improvements** – \$3 million for improvements from Post Office Square to 5-Corners (CIRC Alternative Phase II project). Construction will be completed in 2018.

## REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

- **Legislative Forum** – Hosted the 2016 Legislative Breakfast in December as a forum for a short, focused conversation with local legislators and municipal representatives on key issues and high interest topics important to area municipalities for the 2017-2018 legislative session, including: housing, water quality, and municipal shared services. (<http://www.ccrpcvt.org/about-us/commission/policies-positions/>)
- **ECOS Plan and Annual Report** – Updates to the energy, transportation and economic development sections of the 2018 ECOS Plan update got started. The [2016 Annual Report](#) is a summary that highlights regional accomplishments, trends, and high priority actions. The ECOS Plan is the combined Regional Plan, Metropolitan Transportation Plan, and Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Chittenden County. The ECOS Scorecard is our online platform that hosts the ECOS Partners' shared measurement system that monitors how Chittenden County is doing with regard to achieving our shared ECOS goals. (<https://app.resultsscorecard.com/Scorecard/Embed/8502>)
- **Population, Housing, & Employment Forecasts** – To prepare for the 2018 update of the ECOS Plan, the CCRPC updated the county's population, housing, and employment projections. These projections to 2050 will serve as inputs to the Energy Plan and to the Travel Demand Model, which will be used in updating the Metropolitan Transportation Plan. (<http://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-work/our-plans/ecos-regional-plan/>)
- **Regional Dispatch Implementation Study** – The CCRPC is supporting Burlington, Colchester, Essex, Milton, Shelburne, South Burlington, Williston and Winooski, in developing a plan for a

consolidated regional dispatch environment for law enforcement, fire and rescue resources.  
<http://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-work/emergency-management/regional-dispatch/>

- **Emergency Management** – CCRPC, with Local Emergency Planning Committee 1 (LEPC 1 <http://www.ccrpcvt.org/about-us/committees/local-emergency-planning-committee/>), served as a key conduit between the City and the State in sharing damage assessment information after disasters, helped with emergency preparedness for hazardous materials incidents, hosted workshops on a wide array of emergency preparedness topics, and facilitated Incident Command System training.
- **All-Hazards Mitigation Plan** – CCRPC staff, in consultation with municipal staff, prepared the 2017 Chittenden County Multi-Jurisdictional All-Hazards Mitigation Plan which was formally approved by FEMA in March 2017. CCRPC staff also prepared individual Hazard Mitigation Plans for each municipality as mentioned above. The Hazard Mitigation Plan Committee, with CCRPC staff support, developed comprehensive countywide mitigation strategies.  
(<http://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-work/emergency-management/hazard-mitigation-plan/>)
- **Transportation Demand Management** – The CCRPC, along with regional and state partners, continued hosting **Go! Chittenden County**, a one-stop-shop for information and advice about our region’s transportation resources ([www.gochittendencounty.org](http://www.gochittendencounty.org)). The CCRPC continues promoting the annual **Way to Go! Challenge** ([www.waytogovt.org](http://www.waytogovt.org)) to encourage sustainable transportation (non-single occupant vehicle travel) and demonstrate the environmental and financial benefits. The CCRPC also launched the **Travel Smarter** ([www.TravelSmarterVT.org](http://www.TravelSmarterVT.org)) platform and campaign, a trip planner that provides a side-by-side comparison of the time, costs, distance, and calories associated with driving, biking, walking, and taking the bus, which is now a statewide program of VTrans.
- **Regional Active Transportation Plan** – The CCRPC approved the Regional Pedestrian-Bicycle Plan to identify and make recommendations for a comprehensive, connected, accessible and safe regional network for walking and biking. (<http://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-work/our-plans/regional-bikeped-plan/>)
- **Functional Classification Updates** – The CCRPC conducted a comprehensive review of the Chittenden County functional classification system to ensure that all roadways in the county are properly classified according to Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) guidelines. Feedback was solicited from each Chittenden County municipality and updates were made based on the input received. On March 22, the CCRPC Board took action to request that the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) petition FHWA to reclassify 64 roadways in Chittenden County. All functional classification changes were approved by FHWA in September. The roadway classification changes have been added to an interactive online map. (<http://map.ccrpcvt.org/functionalclass/>).
- **Regional Energy Plan Project** – The CCRPC is developing a focused Regional Energy Plan to advance the State’s Comprehensive Energy Plan’s climate and energy goals while also being consistent with municipal and regional land use plans. The CCRPC also developed Municipal Energy Data Guides for each municipality to support local planning and to assist municipalities with understanding their role in meeting their State’s energy goals.  
(<http://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-work/our-plans/regional-energy-plan/>)
- **Diversity & Equity** – The CCRPC continues to use the **2014 Public Participation Plan (PPP)** to

guide our focus on diversity and equity in all projects. We hosted a Public Participation/Title VI workshop in July 2016 for municipal and consultant staff to help everyone understand our role and responsibilities for public involvement. (<http://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-work/our-plans/public-participation-plan/>)

- **Regional Technical Assistance** – Includes transportation technical assistance, GIS mapping, model municipal plans, bylaw and ordinance revisions, Act 250 application reviews, grant administration, build-out analyses, orthoimagery acquisition, and improving the VT Online Bridge and Culvert Inventory Tool (<http://www.vtculverts.org/>).
- **Education & Training** – The CCRPC participated in and hosted the following trainings: Town Plans, Economic Development, Energy Building Codes, two on Energy Planning, and a DRB Summit. We continued hosting meetings and online webinars open to municipalities and regional partners covering topics such as: Advancing the Intersection of Health, Equity, and Transportation; Guide to Running a Bike Share; VOBCIT/VTCulverts; and the entire 12-webinar series from the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycling Professionals.
- **Lake Champlain Byway** – Four bicyclist “rest stops” (consisting of a large picnic table with a roof accompanied by an information kiosk) constructed along the Byway, two in the Islands and one each in Colchester (at Airport Park) and Shelburne (at Shelburne Vineyard). Developed the Lake Champlain Byway online resource sites map - <http://map.ccrpcvt.org/lcbyway/>. Relaunched the Byway’s website, [www.lakechamplainbyway.com](http://www.lakechamplainbyway.com) and launched a cell phone audio tour available for listening by phone and on the web at [www.lcbyway.oncell.com](http://www.lcbyway.oncell.com)
- **Neighbor Rides** – Since Spring 2013, CCRPC has been investing in Neighbor Rides to integrate volunteer drivers into human services transportation to increase access to transportation for seniors and persons with disabilities by offering a lower-cost mode of transport. (<http://www.unitedwaynwvt.org/Neighbor-Rides>)
- **Opioid Alliance** – The CCRPC was asked to serve as the backbone for the Chittenden County Opioid Alliance and hired a Program Director and Data Manager. The Opioid Alliance is a unique commitment from state, local government, and non-profit leaders to put forth a comprehensive mutually reinforcing approach to reducing opioid abuse and the ancillary burdens they bring to our community. (<http://www.ecosproject.com/chittenden-county-opioid-alliance>)
- **Building Homes Together** – The CCRPC, Champlain Housing Trust, and Housing Vermont continue to lead a coordinated campaign to strengthen Chittenden County communities by building 3,500 homes by 2021 for people of all incomes, including 700 affordable homes. (<http://www.ecosproject.com/building-homes-together>)
- **Clean Water** – The CCRPC has assisted in development of the Lamoille Tactical Basin Plan, and has begun assisting on the Winooski Tactical Basin Plan; and have participated in numerous committees and conversations to help address new permitting requirements and funding regarding the Vermont Lake Champlain TMDL Plan and implementation grants and programs.

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For further information about the CCRPC please visit <http://www.ccrpcvt.org/> or contact CCRPC Executive Director, Charlie Baker, [cbaker@ccrpcvt.org](mailto:cbaker@ccrpcvt.org), 802-846-4490 ext \*23.