

## **FY2018 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), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), 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 FY18, the CCRPC invested more than \$5.7 million in regional land use, transportation, emergency management, energy, natural resources, public engagement, training, and technical assistance. The program leverages more than \$5.3 million in Federal and State investment with \$245,000 in municipal dues and another \$132,000 in local match for specific projects—a **14:1 return on local investment**.

Essex Junction representatives to the CCRPC Board and other committees in FY18 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
- Long Range Planning Energy Sub-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 FY2018, the CCRPC provided assistance to Essex Junction on the following projects and initiatives:

- **ADA Sidewalk and Path Study** – CCRPC staff and interns developed a comprehensive inventory of accessibility issues for sidewalks, pathways and intersection crossing facilities in Essex and Essex Junction. Toole Design was hired to pull together the inventory data and create a prioritized investment plan focusing on the most important locations. A draft report was completed in late 2017 and a final approved document finished in summer 2018. Total contract amount: \$20,000.
- **VT 15 Sidewalk/Path Scoping Study, Athens Drive to VT 289** – In collaboration with the Town of Essex, the Village of Essex Jct. and Stantec, a scoping study was initiated to evaluate sidewalk/path improvements for VT Route 15 between Athens Drive and VT Route 289. The goal of this scoping project was to identify options for an important missing link between the Town and Village pedestrian and bicycle network. Existing roadway and traffic conditions were evaluated, a purpose and need statement was developed, alternative improvement strategies were identified, and a preferred alternative was selected. Following this process, a final report was then completed ([https://www.ccrpcvt.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/AthenstoVT289Final-Scoping-Report\\_20180731.pdf](https://www.ccrpcvt.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/AthenstoVT289Final-Scoping-Report_20180731.pdf)). Total contract amount: \$64,000.
- **Essex Junction Village Transportation Plan Update** – The purpose of this project is to codify the principals developed by the Design Five Corners Initiative into the current Essex Junction Municipal Plan. Design Five Corners was a Village wide, multi event community conversation which occurred during the winter of 2014-2015. The project, with CCRPC, Village and consultant staff, is now in the second phase: ensuring that the principals raised are captured in the Municipal Plan. In FY2018, background information was developed, and existing conditions were identified and analyzed in anticipation of public outreach efforts planned for the summer of 2018. The outreach focus is to solicit input on tradeoffs for design objectives such as pedestrian and bicycle access, green infrastructure, parking and other factors. Total contract amount: \$40,000.
- **FEMA Pre-Disaster Mitigation** – CCRPC staff worked in early 2018 with municipal staff to prepare a 2017 Progress Report on the implementation of the actions recommended in the Essex Junction municipal All-Hazard Mitigation Plan. Typically, these were roadway and stormwater projects to mitigate the impacts of future severe rainstorms.
- **Emergency Management – LEOP**: CCRPC staff offered assistance in the Spring of 2018 with the annual local emergency operations plan (LEOP) to ensure that Essex Junction is prepared in the event of a disaster.
- **Stormwater Education** – The CCRPC provided support to Essex Junction through the management of the Rethink Runoff program (<http://rethinkrunoff.org/>) to facilitate multi-municipal cooperation to comply with ANR Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS-4) stormwater permit requirements for public education and involvement.
- **Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP) Compliance and Water Quality Planning Assistance** – CCRPC staff continued to provide assistance to all member municipalities to address policy,

data, and reporting issues to meet the MRGP requirements. Specifically, the CCRPC hired Watershed Consulting Associates (consultant contract: \$5,000) to develop preliminary plans and cost estimates to address issues with the Juniper Ridge outfall. Plans and cost estimates from this work were used to apply for a FY 19 Category B Better Roads grant. Essex Junction was awarded \$11,500 from the Better Roads program to improve the outfall.

- **PAVER Road Survey** – CCRPC staff continued to work in collaboration with Essex and Essex Junction on the development of a series of datasets to support multi-year pavement planning initiatives. Following the FY17 field inventories and the development of a preliminary pavement database, a scope of work was completed, the pavement database was finalized, meetings with the Town/Village advisory committee were held and a draft final report was developed.
- **Traffic Counts** – The CCRPC conducted 12 roadway AADT counts in support of Essex Junction’s transportation projects and studies (<http://vtrans.ms2soft.com/>).
- **Municipal Plan Development Assistance** – CCRPC staff reviewed and provided comments on Essex Junction’s Village Comprehensive Plan in preparation for the Village’s drafting of a new plan.
- **Technical Assistance** – CCRPC staff provided a variety of technical assistance to the Village, including:
  - made updates to an Essex Junction parking map;
  - uploaded zoning and overlay data to the Vermont Open GeoData Portal;
  - worked as the Liaison for the U.S. Census Bureau’s Local Update of Census Addresses Operation (LUCA) in Essex Junction.

### 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 Transportation Alternatives award of \$142,456 to construct a gravel wetland for runoff from Creek Condominiums and portions of a Village Road. Construction scheduled for 2020.
- **Crescent Connector Road** – \$7.3 million for the construction of a new road between VT2A and VT 117. This is a CIRC Alternative Phase I project. Construction is scheduled to be completed in 2019.
- **Pearl Street Improvements** – \$3 million for improvements from Post Office Square to 5-Corners. This is a CIRC Alternative Phase II project. Construction will be completed in 2018.
- **Phosphorus Control Plan** – \$40,000 Municipal Highway and Stormwater Mitigation Program award. Study to be completed in 2018.
- **Purchase of Vacuum Flusher/Pipeline Truck** – \$283,000 2018 Transportation Alternative award. Purchase to be completed in 2019.

## REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

- **ECOS Plan and Annual Report** – The ECOS Plan is the combined Regional Plan, Metropolitan Transportation Plan, and Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Chittenden County and was readopted in 2018 with major updates to the energy, transportation and economic development sections:
  - 2018 ECOS Plan: <http://www.ecosproject.com/2018-ecos-plan/>
  - **Summary:** [http://www.ecosproject.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/2018-ECOS-Plan-Summary\\_20180807\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.ecosproject.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/2018-ECOS-Plan-Summary_20180807_FINAL.pdf)
  - The 2017 Annual Report highlights regional accomplishments, trends, and high priority actions: <http://www.ecosproject.com/annual-report/>
  - The ECOS Scorecard is our online data 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>
- **Legislative Forum** – The CCRPC hosted the 2017 Legislative Breakfast in December as a forum for a short and focused conversation with local legislators and municipal representatives on key issues and topics important to area municipalities for the 2018-2019 legislative session, including: housing, water quality, and municipal shared services.  
[\(http://www.ccrpcvt.org/about-us/commission/policies-positions/\)](http://www.ccrpcvt.org/about-us/commission/policies-positions/)
- **Building Homes Together** – The CCRPC, Champlain Housing Trust and Housing Vermont continue to lead a coordinated campaign to strengthen Chittenden County communities and our economy by building 3,500 homes by 2021 for people of all incomes, including 700 affordable homes. CCRPC staff developed a series of housing indicators with the first-year data for a press conference that was held in September 2017. CCRPC also began to host a meeting of municipal Housing Committees to facilitate peer learning.  
<http://www.ecosproject.com/building-homes-together>
- **Clean Water** – The CCRPC is committed to supporting water quality initiatives throughout our region to ensure that all residents have access to clean drinking water; to strengthen our region’s recreation and tourism industry; and to become more resilient to flood events. To assist our member municipalities and the state in working together to achieve these goals, the CCRPC has facilitated the Clean Water Advisory Committee and the MS-4 Sub-Committee (<https://www.ccrpcvt.org/about-us/committees/clean-water-advisory-committee/>), provided guidance for the Vermont Clean Water Fund, assisted municipalities with Better Roads grants and stormwater master plans, and participated in the development of updates to the Winooski Tactical Basin Plan which assesses water quality concerns and recommends priority strategies to address these concerns.
- **Chittenden County Brownfields Program** – The CCRPC manages this program to help properties that are vacant or underutilized because of potential petroleum or hazardous substance contamination become productive again. CCRPC obtained a \$400,000 EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant in FY16; and a \$300,000 EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant in FY18. Since the fall of 2016, using these two grants the program has provided \$307,132 to assess perceived or real contamination issues.
- **Public Health**– The CCRPC supports and serves the Chittenden County Opioid Alliance (CCOA,

<http://www.ecosproject.com/chittenden-county-opioid-alliance>) together with numerous other regional stakeholders. The CCOA is made up of many dedicated stakeholders who come from different sectors of the community and have partnered together: local non-profit agencies, state and local government; UVM Medical Center; Health Department; business leaders and community members in Chittenden County. CCRPC also served as the lead agency for the Regional Prevention Partnership (<http://www.healthvermont.gov/alcohol-drug-abuse/programs-services/prevention-programs>). Accomplishments included expansion of drug take back locations, promoting drug take-back days, fake ID enforcement, and community education about substance use prevention.

- **Regional Dispatch Implementation** – The CCRPC continues to work in partnership with Chittenden County municipalities to implement a plan for a consolidated regional dispatch environment for law enforcement, fire and rescue agencies. CCRPC staff facilitated discussions with municipal legislative bodies, participated in hearings with the Vermont Legislature’s Government Operations Committees and provided support to the Joint Survey Committee. Following strong support from voters in Burlington, Colchester, Milton, South Burlington, Williston and Winooski on Town Meeting Day 2018, the Chittenden County Public Safety Authority (CCPSA) was approved as a new union municipal district tasked with delivering regional emergency dispatch services to improve public safety operations. (<http://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-work/emergency-management/regional-dispatch/>)
- **Emergency Management** – In collaboration with the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC 1, <http://www.ccrpcvt.org/about-us/committees/local-emergency-planning-committee/>), the CCRPC hosted and participated in a variety of emergency management-related workshops and exercises to enhance resilience to disasters in our region. CCRPC also served as a key coordinator between municipalities and the state to collect damage assessment information after significant storm events, helped with emergency preparedness for hazardous materials incidents, worked with municipalities to complete Local Emergency Operations Plans, and facilitated Incident Command System training.
- **Regional Energy Planning** – The CCRPC adopted a Regional Energy Plan to support the State’s Comprehensive Energy Plan consistent with municipal and regional land use plans and policies. The CCRPC conducted significant outreach and incorporated feedback into the Plan from the following: municipal Energy Committee/Planning Commissions; municipal legislative bodies; members of the public; State agencies, including the Vermont Department of Public Service; and CCRPC’s Long Range Planning Committee, Energy Sub-committee, Executive Committee and the Board of Directors. The final plan was adopted on June 20, 2018 as part of the ECOS Plan (<http://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-work/our-plans/regional-energy-plan/>) and was granted an Affirmative Determination of Energy Compliance by the Department of Public Service on August 9, 2018. This means that the ECOS Plan’s policies will be given “substantial deference” during Public Utilities Commission proceedings. CCRPC has increased participation in PUC proceedings to ensure that local and regional policies are recognized.
- **Education & Training** – The CCRPC participated in and hosted the following trainings: Emergency Management Director/Public Information Officer Workshops, Act 250: Next 50 Years Conference, Economics of Housing Workshop, Regional Housing Convening. The CCRPC also continued to host the 12-month webinar series from the Association of Pedestrian and

Bicycling Professionals for municipalities and regional partners.

- **Lake Champlain Byway** – Chittenden County includes eight of the Byway's 22 communities: Milton, Colchester, Winooski, Essex Junction, Burlington, South Burlington, Shelburne and Charlotte. CCRPC staff maintained the Byway website, [www.lakechamplainbyway.com](http://www.lakechamplainbyway.com) and finalized the Byway's Corridor Management Plan available at: <https://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-work/economic-development/lake-champlain-byway/>.
- **Transportation Demand Management** – The CCRPC and VTrans transitioned the popular annual **Way to Go! Challenge** ([www.waytogovt.org](http://www.waytogovt.org)) to a school-focused K-12 program to encourage sustainable transportation (non-single occupant vehicle travel) and demonstrate the environmental and financial benefits. With the recent expansion of CATMA's (Chittenden Area Transportation Management Association) TDM services throughout the region, 2017 was the final year of promotion for **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's **Travel Smarter** campaign and trip planner provides a side-by-side comparison of the time, costs, distance, and calories associated with driving, biking, walking, and taking the bus. This transitioned into VTrans' TDM program ([www.TravelSmarterVT.org](http://www.TravelSmarterVT.org)).
- **Neighbor Rides** – Since Spring 2013, the CCRPC has been investing in Neighbor Rides to improve the integration of 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>)
- **Regional Active Transportation Plan** – The CCRPC began steps to implement the Regional Pedestrian-Bicycle Plan recommendations for a comprehensive, connected, accessible and safe regional network for walking and biking. CCRPC staff led the development and launch of the regional **Greenride Bikeshare** system ([www.greenridebikeshare.com](http://www.greenridebikeshare.com)), provided walk/bike recommendations on local and state paving plans, assisted municipalities with bike/ped grant applications, developed model bike parking ordinances for municipalities, promoted TDM strategies, and conducted walk/bike counts on paths, bike lanes and roadways. (<http://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-work/our-plans/regional-bikeped-plan/>)
- **Regional Transportation Model** – The regional transportation model was updated to better reflect current and future transportation demands due to forecasted demographic and employment changes in the county. The model is a tool used by the CCRPC to compare various land use and transportation scenarios and their effects on our transportation system at a regional level. Most recently, it was utilized in the 2018 update of our Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) to assist in identifying and prioritizing transportation investments that will be most effective in meeting the MTP goals.
- **Chittenden County Transportation Survey** – The 2018 survey largely replicates the 2000, 2006 and 2012 versions to note any historical attitudinal shifts. The chief purpose of the survey is to objectively measure public opinion in Chittenden County regarding the performance of the region's transportation system and to identify strategies to address existing and future deficiencies. Relative to performance, questions measure public opinion on how well the transportation system serves the public's travel needs, affects livability, promotes economic development and opportunity, and affects the environment. The most recent survey was

conducted this past April and May and the survey report is currently being drafted. Results will be released in October 2018.

- **Diversity & Equity** – The CCRPC continues to use the **2014 Public Participation Plan (PPP)** to guide our focus on diversity and equity in all projects. An update is planned in FY19 to ensure everyone understands our role and responsibilities for public participation. (<http://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-work/our-plans/public-participation-plan/>)
- **Regional Technical Assistance** – This includes but is not limited to, technical assistance for various transportation issues, GIS mapping, model municipal plans, bylaw and ordinance revisions, Act 250/Section 248 application reviews, grant administration, build-out analyses, orthoimagery acquisition, and improving the VT Online Bridge and Culvert Inventory Tool (<http://www.vtculverts.org/>).
- **Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)** – The CCRPC has been planning, designing and implementing advanced technologies on congested corridors in the county to improve safety, facilitate traffic flows and reduce delays. (<https://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-work/our-plans/intelligent-transportation-systems/>):
  - **Advanced Traffic Monitoring System (ATMS) using Bluetooth Technology** – The CCRPC, in close coordination with VTrans and FHWA, planned, designed and implemented an Advanced Traffic Monitoring System for five (5) congested corridors in Chittenden County to gather real-time travel data using Bluetooth technology. The system will ultimately integrate with the VTrans ATMS and Traveler Information System (TIS) for 511 through the State Transportation Operations Center (TOC). The CCRPC has already implemented a pilot corridor (Williston Road/US 2) using six (6) Bluetooth sensors for real-time travel data collection, testing and validation purposes. This fall, 24 Bluetooth sensors will be installed along the remaining four (4) corridors. The entire system will be tested and validated and the real-time travel data collected will assist VTrans and municipalities to improve the efficiency, safety, and reliability of the regional transportation system.
  - **Exit 14 Area Traffic Signal Assessment Study** – The CCRPC has been coordinating with VTrans and the municipalities of South Burlington and Burlington to identify strategies to reduce congestion and improve traffic flows in the vicinity of the I-89 Exit 14 interchange. The CCRPC has completed a system assessment study for traffic signals along Williston Road/Main Street between Staples Plaza and Midas Drive, and Dorset Street between Williston Road and Kennedy Drive and developed a strategic plan for signal and communications infrastructure improvements and upgrades. Exit 14 Earmark funds will be used in the near future to implement the highest priority recommendations in South Burlington.

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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.