

FY2017 ANNUAL REPORT

Essex

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's dues were \$23,664 in FY17 and \$23,679 in FY18.

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

- CCRPC representative – Jeff Carr
- CCRPC alternate – Irene Wrenner
- Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) – Dennis Lutz
- Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) – Dana Hanley
- Clean Water Advisory Committee (CWAC) – Annie Costandi
- MS4 Subcommittee – Annie Costandi
- All-Hazards Mitigation Plan Update Committee – Gregory Duggan

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

ESSEX ACTIVITIES

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

- **Allen Martin Drive/VT Route 15 Intersection Scoping Study** – This scoping study evaluated the Allen Martin Drive/ VT Route 15 intersection, which serves as the primary access point to the Saxon Hill Industrial Park. Continued development in this industrial park led to concerns related to congestion and turning conflicts at this intersection. This project was started in FY2016, and was completed in April 2017. The final report includes selected transportation alternatives endorsed by the town (<http://www.ccrpcvt.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/AMD-Final-Scoping-Report-2017-04-21-MAIN.pdf>). The total FY16-FY17 budget for this project was \$35,504. In FY17, total consultant costs were approximately \$1,877.
- **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.
- **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 VT Route 15 from Exit 15, Susie Wilson bypass through VT 289) 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.
- **Path/Sidewalk Impact Fee Project** – This project involved an analysis of potential impact fee policies to support the development of bike/pedestrian facilities in Essex. The CCRPC worked with RSG and municipal staff to conduct research related to project prioritization, review the development of a comprehensive set of impact fee options and develop a final report that will help the town decide which fee structure may be the best option to support the continued development of bike/pedestrian facilities. Total consultant costs for this project were \$15,009.
- **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/>).
- **PAVER Road Survey** – This project involved the development of a series of datasets to support multi-year pavement planning for the town of Essex and village of Essex Junction. 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'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.
- **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 the town of Essex 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 erosion sites based on established criteria and in close consultation with the town.
- **Geographic Information Systems** – GIS staff provided municipal staff with Scenic Protection Overlay District maps.
- **Traffic Counts** – The CCRPC conducted two roadway AADT counts and nine turning movement counts in support of Essex’s transportation projects and studies (<http://vtrans.ms2soft.com/>).
- **Technical Assistance** – CCRPC staff provided technical assistance to the town, including:
 - assisted with inquiries related to the establishment of a unified planning commission;
 - offered guidance related to procedural changes to the development review boards.

Essex 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 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.

- **Alder Brook Culvert (BR2) on VT 117** – \$1.94 million for replacement of a failed buried structure on VT117 carrying Alder Brook. Construction scheduled for FY2021.
- **Pinecrest Drive Sidewalk** – \$357,770 project funded with a \$286,216 Transportation Alternatives grant in 2015 for sidewalk from VT2A to Suffolk Lane. Construction scheduled for FY2018.
- **Susie Wilson Road Corridor and Intersection Improvements** – \$8.5 million CIRC Alternatives Phase III project that includes improvements to VT15/Susie Wilson Rd and Susie Wilson/Kellogg Rd. Construction schedule to be determined.
- **Sydney Drive Detention Pond** – \$300,00 project to retrofit a detention pond in a wooded area adjacent to Sydney Drive. Funded with a 2016 TA award of \$234,954. Construction scheduled for FY2018.
- **Towers Road Sidewalk** – \$249,000 project for 1,000 feet of new sidewalk funded with a 2014 VTrans Bike/Ped Award for \$175,133. Construction scheduled for FY2018.
- **VT 117 Paving** – \$5.23 million for paving 1.2 miles east of 5 Corners to Jericho Town Line. Construction scheduled for FY2018 and FY2019.
- **VT 117/North Williston Road Hazard Mitigation Improvements** – \$400,000 CIRC Alternatives Phase III project to install a box culvert, safety enhancements and armoring. Construction

schedule to be determined.

- **VT 117/North Williston Road Intersection Improvements** – \$3.18 million CIRC Alt Phase III project. Construction schedule to be determined.
- **VT 15 Sidewalk Old Stage Road to Essex Way** – \$160,000 CIRC Alternatives Phase III project – funding schedule to be determined.
- **VT 15/Sand Hill Road Intersection Improvements** – \$1.34 million CIRC Alt Phase II Project for installation of a signal. Construction scheduled for 2020.
- **VT2A/VT289 Intersection** – \$1.62 million CIRC Alt Phase II project for geometric improvements. Phase I improvements have been completed and Phase II improvements to be constructed in FY2018.
- **VT15 Multiuse Path** – \$1.68 million for path from Lime Kiln Road to Susie Wilson Road as part of CIRC Alternatives Phase II implementation project. Construction schedule to begin in FY2019.
- **Signal Upgrades on VT2A and VT15**– \$3.38 million for signal upgrades and associated improvements at 18 intersections on VT2A in Williston and VT15 in Essex. Construction scheduled for FY2018.
- **VT15 Paving** - \$5.7 million to pave VT15 from the Essex Junction/Essex town line to Underhill. Paving to be done in FY19.

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). The CCRPC continues promoting the annual **Way to Go! Challenge** (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) 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.
- **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.

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