

## **FY2018 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), 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 representatives to the CCRPC Board and other committees in FY18 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
- Long Range Planning Energy Sub-Committee – Will Dodge and Irene Wrenner

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 FY2018, the CCRPC provided assistance to Essex on the following projects and initiatives:

- **ADA Sidewalk and Path Study** – CCRPC staff and interns worked to develop a comprehensive inventory of accessibility issues for sidewalks, pathways and intersection crossing facilities in Essex and Essex Junction. A draft report was completed in FY17 and follow up comments and revisions led to a draft final report in FY18. 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 Junction 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 needs 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.
- **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, reviewed the development of a comprehensive set of impact fee options, and completed a final memo to help the Town decide which fee structure may be the best option to support the continued development of bike/pedestrian facilities. Total contract amount: \$15,000.
- **VT15 Bike/Pedestrian Study, Ethan Allen Ave to West St Extension** – Following the completion of a scoping study in 2013 for bicycle and pedestrian improvements along VT Route 15 from Exit 15 to West Street Extension, the CCRPC worked with the Town of Essex, the Village of Essex Junction and Stantec to develop a study to more closely evaluate the section between Susie Wilson Road and West Street Extension. The scoping process involved the evaluation of existing bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, roadway and traffic conditions and the identification of a purpose and needs statement for the project. Alternative improvement strategies were then identified and evaluated leading to the selection of a preferred alternative and a final report ([https://www.ccrpcvt.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/EthanAllentoWestFinalScopingReport\\_20180731.pdf](https://www.ccrpcvt.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/EthanAllentoWestFinalScopingReport_20180731.pdf)). Total contract amount: \$38,000.
- **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 municipal All-Hazards 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 is prepared in the event of a disaster.

- **Stormwater Planning** – The CCRPC provided support to Essex through the management of the Rethink Runoff program (<http://rethinkrunoff.org/>) to facilitate multi-municipal cooperation to comply with ANR MS-4 stormwater permit requirements for public education and participation.
- **VTrans Better Roads Program:** During FY18, CCRPC staff finished the Road Erosion Inventories (REIs) using FY17 Better Roads Category A funds.
- **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 staff were held and a draft final report was developed.
- **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.
- **Traffic Counts** – The CCRPC conducted six roadway AADT counts in support of Essex’s transportation projects and studies (<http://vtrans.ms2soft.com/>).
- **Technical Assistance** – CCRPC staff provided a variety of technical assistance to the Town, including:
  - conducted an audit of the zoning regulations for impediments and barriers to affordable housing development;
  - completed a crash data analysis for Essex to identify roadways to be addressed through the Systemic Local Roads Safety (SLRS) Program;
  - 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.
  - coordinated the Vermont Department of Health’s Regional Prevention Partnership grant which supports substance use prevention activities at Essex Community Health Initiatives & Programs for Students (CHIPS).

### 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 on VT 117** – \$2.33 million for replacement of a failed buried structure on VT117 carrying Alder Brook. Construction scheduled to begin in 2021.
- **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 2019.
- **Stormwater Detention Pond Design and Construction at LDS Church** - \$478,265 federal and

\$598,683 state Municipal Highway and Stormwater Program award scheduled for construction in 2020.

- **Stormwater System Retrofit with Infiltration Systems and Stabilized Outfalls for Three Cul-de-sacs** - \$271,139 Transportation Alternatives award in 2018 to be constructed in 2020.
- **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** – \$300,000 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 2020.
- **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 2019.
- **VT 117 Paving** – \$5 million for paving 1.2 miles east of 5 Corners to Jericho Town Line. Construction scheduled for 2018 and 2019. A separate Jericho project continues this paving to US2.
- **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 scheduled for construction in 2022.
- **VT128/Alder Brook Culvert** - \$510,000 for replacing a culvert on VT128 in 2019.
- **VT 15/Sand Hill Road Intersection Improvements** – \$1.34 million CIRC Alt Phase II Project for installation of a signal. Construction scheduled to begin in 2021.
- **VT2A/VT289 Intersection** – \$1.62 million CIRC Alt Phase II project for geometric improvements. Phase I improvements have been completed and Phase II improvements will be completed in 2018.
- **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 scheduled to begin in 2021.
- **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 2018.
- **VT15 Paving** - \$7 million to pave VT15 from the Essex Junction/Essex town line to Underhill. Paving to begin 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, worked with state officials to revise the grant manual for the Ecosystem Restoration Program, assisted municipalities with Better Roads grants and stormwater master plans, and participated in water quality-focused advocacy and education programs such as the Chittenden County Stream Team (<http://rethinkrunoff.org/the-stream-team/>) and Lake Champlain International.
  - **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.

[\(http://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-work/emergency-management/regional-dispatch/\)](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.
- **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>)
- **Lake Champlain Byway** – Chittenden County includes eight Byway communities: Milton, Colchester, Winooski, Essex Junction, Burlington, South Burlington, Shelburne and Charlotte. The CCRPC supported the Lake Champlain Byway by encouraging the communities to adopt the 2017 Byway Corridor Management Plan and supporting improvements to Byway signage, cell phone audio stories, brochures and a new website ([www.lakechamplainbyway.com](http://www.lakechamplainbyway.com)).
- **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)).

- **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 goal.
- **Chittenden County Transportation Survey** – This 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 transportation technical assistance, 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/>).
- **Education & Training** – The CCRPC participated in and hosted the following trainings: Act 174 Training Assistance, 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.

- **Intelligent Transportation System (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 Advanced Transportation Management System (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, mobility and reliability of the 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 planning and implementation strategies to reduce congestion and improve traffic flow in the vicinity of I-89 Exit 14 interchange. The CCRPC has completed a traffic signal system assessment study for signals along Williston Road/Main Street between Staples Plaza and Midas Dr., and Dorset Street between Williston Road and Kennedy Drive. This study evaluated existing signal equipment and communications infrastructure condition along the study corridors, identified deficiencies and developed a strategic plan including cost estimates for recommended improvements and upgrades. Exit 14 Earmark funds will be used in the near future to implement some of the signal upgrade 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.