



**CCRPC Long Range Planning Committee**

**AGENDA**

WIFI Info: Network = CCRPC-Guest; Password = ccrpc\$guest

DATE: Thursday, August 17, 2017

TIME: **8:30am to 10:00am**

PLACE: CCRPC Office, 110 West Canal Street, Suite 202, Winooski, VT.

1. **Welcome** – 5 minutes
2. **Approval of July 13, 2017 Minutes\*** (Action) – 5 minutes
3. **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy\*** (Information) – 40 minutes  
A draft of the chapter is included for committee discussion. Are there areas where more data or analysis are needed? Are there strategies that are missing or inappropriate? Are there key issues that the chapter does not address? Are the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT analysis) appropriately characterized? Are any missing?
4. **Transportation Plan Update** (Information) – 30 minutes  
Staff will present and review the draft Financial Plan at the meeting. The Financial Plan estimates funds expected to be available to Chittenden County projects over the 20 year time horizon of the plan. The LRPC will also begin discussion of how the funds may be distributed between the different project types (roadway, bike & ped, transit, etc.). Staff will also present available model scenario results.
5. **Other Business as Needed** (Discussion) – 5 minutes
6. **Next Meeting**  
Thursday, **September 14, 2017** from 8:30am to 10:00am
7. **Adjourn**

\*=attached to agenda in the meeting packet

1 CHITTENDEN COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
2 LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE - MINUTES  
3

4 DATE: Thursday, July 13, 2017  
5 TIME: 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.  
6 PLACE: CCRPC Offices, 110 West Canal Street, Suite 202, Winooski, VT  
7

**Members Present**

Ken Belliveau, Williston – PAC Rep  
Heather Danis – ECOS Steering Committee Rep  
Andrea Morgante, Hinesburg - Board Rep  
Justin Rabidoux, South Burlington – TAC Rep  
Edmund Booth - ECOS Steering Committee Rep  
Lisa Falcone – Board Rep

**Staff**

Regina Mahony, Planning Program Manager  
Melanie Needle, Senior Planner  
Emily Nosse-Leirer, Planner

8  
9 **1. Welcome and Introductions**

10 Regina Mahony called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m.

11  
12 **2. Approve Minutes**

13 Justin Rabidoux made a motion, seconded by Edmund Booth, to approve the minutes of May 11, 2017, with  
14 the correction that Ken Belliveau was not in attendance. MOTION PASSED. Lisa Falcone abstained.

15  
16 **3. Energy Planning**

17 Regina Mahony explained that we've been working on the siting policy following the May Board discussion;  
18 and we've also received some feedback from the municipalities and the Department of Public Service.  
19 Melanie Needle added that we've reviewed the municipal constraints and kept the "100% no build" areas in  
20 the known constraint list; and updated the map accordingly. Ken Belliveau stated that Central Vermont RPC  
21 included the state shoreline protection area as a regional constraint. It may be something that we might want  
22 to consider as a regional constraint.

23  
24 Melanie Needle went through the draft memo for the CCRPC Board's July meeting, for feedback from the  
25 LRPC. Discussion/recommendations included:

- 26 • We are still clarifying whether we can delete the existing renewable generation from the generation
- 27 target. If we can, our target is relatively minimal.
- 28 • Provide context – municipal conversations, sources for the data, who is saying we have to do this,
- 29 broader context beyond our region.
- 30 • Recommendation to display the first table with 3 columns so you can see how the math translates
- 31 between now and 2050.
- 32 • From whom we've received municipal input isn't clear – summarize in one sentence.
- 33 • Using the Plan in a regulatory way could get tricky. In South Burlington, the landfill would be a good
- 34 place, but it also has a known constraint on it. There could be unintended negative consequences.
- 35 • The purpose of the plan is for two purposes: create a budget for the targets; and substantial deference.
- 36 However even with substantial deference, the plan is advisory not regulatory.
- 37 • Put the options, with pros and cons, in a table so that the options are easier to compare to each other.
- 38 • Make shall and should clearer so you can see the distinction.
- 39 • For national and state forest land, what can we do at the local level? You can be more restrictive, not
- 40 less than the state constraints.
- 41 • There was some discussion about what changes we expect to see as the municipalities do this work in
- 42 their plans at the local level; and how to address incompatibility.
- 43

44 **4. Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy**

45 Emily Nosse-Leirer provided an overview of the schedule going forward. We have not been able to put much  
46 effort into this section, since we've been focused on the energy element. We plan to update the existing

1 conditions, SWOT analysis and key issues; and then the strategies/actions for September. Then we will reach  
2 out to the municipalities in September. Andrea Morgante asked if we can add stormwater infrastructure to the  
3 CEDS list; and make it clear that green infrastructure is good and useful and not necessarily expensive  
4 infrastructure work. Andrea Morgante also asked about ticks, and the ramifications on recreation and the  
5 tourism economy. There was some discussion regarding keeping the CEDS list as a utility/facility list; while  
6 we can add actions to address other types of programmatic work. Add renewable energy generation facility  
7 projects as municipal facilities to the CEDS list.  
8

9 **5. Transportation Plan Update**

10 Regina gave an update of where we are with the MTP. Jason provided where we want to be with an update of  
11 the existing conditions at a regional level now in comparison to a no-build in the future. And the specific  
12 comparisons that we will do.  
13

14 Ken Belliveau asked about the VMT chart on page 2 of the current conditions. We should add more data to  
15 this and show the long-term trends (perhaps from 2000, then it would show the years leading up to the  
16 recession and after). Justin Rabidoux stated that the automated traffic count data shows similar patterns as  
17 well. Justin Rabidoux stated that Dave Roberts gave a good presentation a few years ago at the TAC about  
18 these trends.  
19

20 **6. Next Meeting**

21 August 17, 2017 from 8:30am to 10:00am.

22 **10. Adjourn**

23 The meeting adjourned at 10:05 a.m.

24  
25 Respectfully submitted, Regina Mahony

## 4.2 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) – DRAFT 8/11/2017

### SUMMARY BACKGROUND

Over the past several decades, Chittenden County has enjoyed a competitive advantage relative to the balance of the state. The findings of the 2012 Economic Base and Competitive Assessment reports, available as appendices and summarized here, show that the County's share of population, Gross Domestic Product, jobs and income, among other economic indicators, has increased.

Despite the advantages the region has enjoyed in many areas, however, there are some disquieting trends that need to be acknowledged. If recent trends continue, there will be additional loss of jobs in high-wage industries and slow growth in lower-wage industries. Job growth has been slow over the past decade and this is likely to continue into the future. However, the Chittenden County region has a highly desirable quality of life by many measures and there will continue to be growth pressures. Our challenge is how to manage and shape these larger external growth pressures to improve our job opportunities and incomes while also improving our quality of life.

### Understanding Economic Development

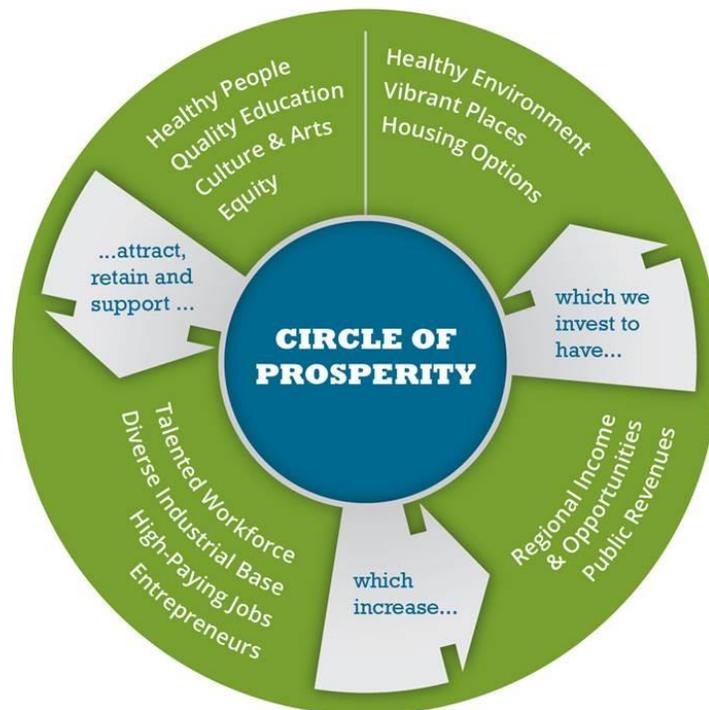
- Economic development is about building a community's capacity for shared and sustainable improvements in the economic well-being of residents.
- Economic development is about access to good jobs that can support an adequate standard of living for all residents of a region or community. Economic development is also about continuous and sustainable improvements in the internal functioning of the economy, where its structural underpinnings are made stronger without sacrificing long-term quality of life.
- Economic development provides the means and the continuous process to strengthen the foundation of our communities, and to make them more resilient and able to withstand shocks.

### We need economic development:

- To constantly renew and strengthen the "living economy."
- To address on-going infrastructure needs of key dollar-importing regional businesses.
- To supply the financial resources in order to create and sustain healthy communities.

## The Circle of Prosperity

When a state has and maintains a talented workforce it attracts a diverse industrial base of dollar importing businesses that create high wage jobs. From the economic drivers dollars flow into the private sector to provide taxes, public revenues, capital, resources, and employment opportunities. These private sector actions fund the public sector's operations through taxes and governmental fees of which both the public and private sectors invest in creating and maintaining a clean environment, good schools, access to higher education and housing, and enhances the state's quality of life, thereby creating healthy communities. The "Circle of Prosperity" illustrates this interrelationship. First articulated in Vermont back in 1997 by the Vermont Business Roundtable, the "Circle of Prosperity" emphasizes the fact that economic development and healthy communities are a system, involving the collective and sometimes coordinated actions of many individuals, businesses, and institutions.<sup>1</sup>



## Key Issues/Trends/Insights

This section is a combination of updated information originally included in Chapter 2 and 3 of the 2013 ECOS Plan and information from the CEDS chapter of the 2013 ECOS Plan.

## SWOT ANALYSIS

This section summarizes the Region's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). The issues below were originally identified in the ECOS Analysis Report titled *Final Draft Chittenden County, VT Competitive Assessment*. That report is an appendix to this plan and contains more detail on each issue. Supporting data on each issue and related actions are included later in this chapter.

<sup>1</sup> Economic and Policy Resources 2004 Chittenden County Economic Plan. The Role of the Vermont Business Roundtable in the Evaluation, Coordination and Support of Economic Development Policy in Vermont, Report of the Economic Development Task Force, 1997. pp.1-2.

<p><b><u>Strengths: A region’s relative competitive advantages (e.g. industry supply chains and clusters, extensive port, rail and broadband assets, specialized workforce skills, higher education levels, collaboration among stakeholders), often internal in nature.</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Attractive to a young and educated population</u></li> <li>• <u>Diversified employment base</u></li> <li>• <u>Vermont Technical Council</u></li> <li>• <u>High labor quality</u></li> <li>• <u>High concentration of higher education institutions and well-educated residents</u></li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Weaknesses: A region’s relative competitive disadvantages (e.g. a risk-averse or change-resistance regional culture), often internal in nature.</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Slower growing household income</u></li> <li>• <u>Labor/Housing Mismatch</u></li> <li>• <u>Business expansion constrained by low unemployment, high labor participation, labor shortages in some skilled professions and occupations</u></li> <li>• <u>Uncertainty about health insurance</u></li> <li>• <u>Uneven quality of public schools</u></li> <li>• <u>Lack of career fairs and career planning</u></li> <li>• <u>Lack of affordable child care</u></li> <li>• <u>Limited developable site inventory</u></li> <li>• <u>Limited information available on commercial real estate</u></li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Opportunities: Chances or occasions for regional improvement or progress (e.g. expansion of a biosciences research lab in the region), often external in nature.</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Stronger involvement of University of Vermont in economic development</u></li> <li>• <u>Need to nurture entrepreneurial development</u></li> <li>• <u>Need to create Employer – employee – training linkages –</u></li> <li>• <u>Greater coordination between development efforts and environmental protection efforts</u></li> <li>• <u>Needed Telecommunications service expansion</u></li> <li>• <u>Inadequate GBIC website information</u></li> <li>• <u>Need stronger Economic development services</u></li> <li>• <u>Ensuring adequate transportation infrastructure, including parking in downtown Burlington</u></li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Threats: Chances or occasions for negative impacts on the region or regional decline (e.g. several companies in the region considering moving to lower-cost areas of the state), often external in nature.</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Cost and effort of local and state construction permitting</u></li> <li>• <u>Challenges from the Lake Champlain Total Maximum Daily Load</u></li> <li>• <u>Aging population and contracting workforce</u></li> </ul>

**Possible Minimum Wage Increases** – While some businesses and industry groups view increasing the minimum wage to \$15/hour as a threat to businesses, other organizations see it as a way to increase spending power, stimulating the economy. [\[HOW TO CATEGORIZE?\]](#)

## Economic Base Analysis

This sub-section provides an analysis of the current economic base of Chittenden County and the trends that have been shaping the County's economy up to this point in time. It considers those aspects of a regional economy most typically included in the preparation of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) or similar economic development strategic plans.

In reviewing the findings presented in the Economic Base Analysis report (<http://ecosproject.com/analysis>), it is apparent that Chittenden County enjoys a competitive advantage relative to the balance of the state. Further, the County is an essential part of the Vermont economy as evidenced by:

- Chittenden County contains 26 percent of the State's population
- Median household income is \$67,997 versus \$56,990 for the State
- The County poverty rate is 12.3 percent for individuals, compared to 10.2 percent statewide
- Between 2010 and 2015, the State's population grew .01%, while Chittenden County's population grew 3%.
- Home to 27 percent of the State's private businesses. Between 2010-2016, the number of private businesses increased by 3.7% in Vermont, and by 13.8% in Chittenden County.
- Accounted for 45 percent of total manufacturers' shipments in 2007 [Looking for updated data]
- Thirty percent of the State's retail sales occurred in the County (2012)
- GDP per capita in 2015 was \$53,759 in the Burlington-South Burlington MSA vs. \$43,495 for the State
- Provides 28.6 percent of sales tax revenue in Vermont in 2015 (a drop from 32% in 2012)
- Provides 36 percent of state income tax revenues in 2015 (an increase from 35% in 2012)

Over the past several decades the County's share of population, GDP, jobs and income, among other factors, has increased. While this is certainly good news for the economic development community in the Burlington region, the analysis also points out some areas of concern, described below:

- Chittenden County is a mix of urban, suburban and rural areas, with a rural character that is important to many residents. Similarly, the economy includes the largest for-profit employer in the state (the major IBM complex); the largest retail area in Vermont with five communities ranking in the top six in the state based on preliminary 2011 retail sales tax reports (Williston – #1; Colchester – #2, South Burlington – #3; Burlington – #4; and Essex - #6 (source: Vermont Department of Taxes); and significant agricultural, recreational and open space areas. This mix of uses results in a character cherished by its residents and appealing to prospective residents. The challenge is to plan and manage future growth, including economic development, so that it sustains and enhances this community character.

- After declining from 2000-2010, employment in the private sector increased by 9.5% between 2010 and 2016. Public sector employment grew by 6.2% during the same time period.
- The annual rate of population growth in both Chittenden County as well as the State has slowed over the past several years. While regional population growth is still stronger than statewide growth, this may suggest that the advantage the region has enjoyed from its population gains is shrinking.
- Chittenden County has the highest percentage of New Americans in the state, and the percentage is growing—1/3 of all new county residents in the last decade were born outside of the US. This group makes up 6.1% of the county's spending power and is strongly represented in key sectors like manufacturing and health care.
- Services-providing industries have become a larger portion of the economy since 2010. In 2010, private goods-producing industries were 19.7% of the economy, and private services-providing industries were 65.9% of the economy. In 2015, the industries made up 15.2% and 69.3% of the economy respectively.
- The growth in the MSA's gross domestic product over the past five years has come entirely from the services sectors. The MSA's GDP increased 5.4% from 2010-2015; the GDP of private goods producing industries dropped 18.6% while the GDP of private services-providing industries increased by 10.9%.
- The number of Chittenden County jobs in high-wage industries has declined by more than 5,000 since the year 2000; much of this has been from cutbacks at IBM (now Global Foundries). Employment in mid-wage and low-wage industries has increased slightly. The loss of jobs in high wage industries is not unique to this region—it is part of a larger trend that has been seen nationwide.
- The construction industry has recovered since the recession, and the numbers of newly permitted projects, both housing and commercial/industrial, have reached pre-recession levels
- Growth in total nominal wages has risen off its sharp decline in 2009, and average wages were 11.4% higher in 2016 than they were in 2010.
- Growth in traded-sector industries (those industries that sell their products and services outside the region and bring new money back in, thus supporting the local, or non-traded, industries) has been limited primarily to the retail sector. The information technology and analytical instruments cluster remains the most important element of traded sector employment but, following the loss of more than 4,000 jobs over the past decade, the long-term security of these jobs may be in question.
- After decreasing from 2008-2010, the number of private businesses in Chittenden has increased by 820 establishments from 2010-2016.

**Household Financial Security** [Data in this section drawn from [Housing Analysis Report](#)]

- In 2015, 25% of Chittenden County residents were living at less than 200% of the federal poverty level and many receive state and federal assistance to meet basic needs.
- Lower income Vermonters report higher rates of depression and chronic conditions, such as obesity, asthma, heart disease, stroke and diabetes.

- The County’s ability to grow its economy in the future will be closely tied to its ability to provide available labor. A broad-based strategy of skills upgrading, new methods of recruiting and alternative working arrangements will be necessary.
- More focus is needed on education and workforce development to train employees for the opportunities in the technologies needed for manufacturing, professional services and health care. See more under the “Education” topic.
- Household financial security influences a family’s ability to access enough food to fully meet basic needs at all times. Lack of financial resources can cause food insecurity.
  - 15,401 Chittenden County residents participate in 3SquaresVT (formerly known as Food Stamps).
  - 6.6% increase in 3SquaresVT participation since 2010.
  - 1 in 7 children in Chittenden County are food insecure.
  - 26% of grade school and high school students are eligible for free or reduced-price meals (Hunger Free VT – [www.hungerfreevt.org](http://www.hungerfreevt.org)). **[Working with Hunger Free VT to get updated data]**

**Working Lands & Land Based Industries** [Data for this section drawn from [Natural Systems Analysis Report](#); [Farm to Plate Annual Reporting](#); [Informing Land Use Planning and Forestland Conservation Through Subdivision and Parcelization Trend Information](#) – Vermont Natural Resources Council, September 2010; [The Action Plan of the VT Working Landscape Partnership](#).]

- Working lands and resource extraction industries are critical components of a self-reliant and diverse economy, making a region less vulnerable to market crises. Local food and fuel production is preferred since the transportation to import these products consumes tremendous amounts of energy and generates pollution. In addition, when food is imported from far-away places, nutrient value is reduced during the transport time.
- Working lands and resource extraction industries are economically viable within the constraints of our natural landscape. Sustainably managed farmland and forest land means less developed land, fewer impervious surfaces, and thus a greater presence of the natural ecosystem’s features and functions. Conversely, high quality food and productive forests are dependent upon clean water and clean, nutrient-rich soils. It is imperative that we maintain high quality water and soils for healthy and viable food and forest product industries.
- A major challenge to forest and farm businesses is the value of the land in these industries versus the value of the land for development. Often when these industries are no longer economically viable, the land is sold and developed, resulting in forest fragmentation and increased parceling of land. The number of parcels has gone up, while their size has gone down, diminishing their economic viability and the ecological services they provide. This situation has far-reaching potential consequences for the future of Vermont’s local economies, including tourism.
- Markets for forest products are necessary to ensure that landowners can afford to hold and manage their forest land.
- In recent decades, farm enterprises in the County have been employing new forms of business ownership, engaging in non-farm employment, limiting the size of farm operations to control the growth of farm production expenses, producing different types of farm products, producing more farm-related products, and engaging in more direct sales to consumers.

Despite the advantages the region has enjoyed in many areas, there are some disquieting trends that need to be acknowledged. Jobs in goods-producing sectors are dropping in economic output in comparison to service-providing sectors in the region. The rate of population growth has declined and that is likely to continue into the future, and the workforce continues to age. Though unemployment is currently very low, this may mean that businesses cannot grow due to a lack of skilled workers. These and other problems are exceedingly difficult to address on a local level, but this does not mean that one should throw up one's arms in despair. Local efforts, coupled with strong pressure on state and federal elected officials, could work to mitigate some of these disadvantages.

While reversing these trends is unlikely, awareness of them can facilitate local planning. It is unlikely that these issues can be successfully addressed locally since many of the policies affecting these changes emanate at the federal level. The larger issue here is a long-term structural change impacting Vermont. Local planning is necessary, but not nearly sufficient, given the magnitude of ongoing changes.

### **Competitive Assessment**

This sub-section provides an assessment of the competitiveness of Chittenden County, Vermont as an economic development product. In the economic development marketplace, the product being sold is usually a place, and the characteristics of that place determine its competitiveness. In this instance, the place being assessed is Chittenden County, Vermont and its constituent communities, in particular, the central City of Burlington. Chittenden County is comprised of many communities that have varying degrees of interest in differing forms of economic development. Taken as a whole, this provides the basis for a diverse and sustainable economy and quality of place in the future.

In reviewing the findings presented in the Competitive Assessment report (<http://ecosproject.com/analysis>), the following highlights were noted:

- Chittenden County is a mix of urban, suburban and rural areas, with an essential rural character that polling has consistently shown is important to many residents. Protection of this character must be reflected in economic development efforts if public sector economic development efforts are to be broadly supported.
- The County has a high quality of life, making it attractive to businesses and workers. The notable exception is the affordability of housing, which was rated the lowest quality of life factor in the 2012 Employers Survey. This issue persists as the most commonly observed weakness of the area in interviews of employers] While there are many reasons an employee in Chittenden County may choose to live outside the region, it is important to increase quality housing stock available to all income levels, to increase quality of life for current residents and to attract those who wish to live near their jobs.
- Based upon the results of the Employers Survey, recreational opportunities, safety from crime, and cultural opportunities all scored Very Good or higher, while the quality of the K – 12 educational system scored just below Very Good.
- Educational levels among residents 25 years old and older exceed state and national norms. (See Section 2.5 Education for more detail.) However, due to our aging

demographics and available workforce, we need more individuals with postsecondary training and experiences.

- The County represents 26% of the state's population, and is relatively young, with household incomes and educational attainment exceeding state and national norms.
- Between 2012 and 2016, Chittenden County's employment base has remained concentrated within five private industry sectors: healthcare and social assistance; retail trade; manufacturing; accommodation and food service; and professional, scientific and technical services. However, the proportion of jobs in these sectors has dropped from 71% of total employment in the County in 2012 to 54% in 2016.
- The number of subsectors with high location quotients (goods production, construction, manufacturing, education and health services and other services) shows a diversified employment base that offers opportunities for continued economic diversification and a broad base on which the County's economy can flourish.
- The County's ability to grow its economy in the future will be closely tied to its ability to provide available skilled labor, particularly once the currently unemployed are absorbed back into the ranks of the employed as much as their skills will allow. A broad-based strategy of skills upgrading, training, new methods of recruiting and alternative working arrangements will be necessary. An integrated workforce delivery system plan will need to be considered and implemented.
- Unemployment in Chittenden County is low. In January 2016, unemployment in Chittenden County was 2.9%, compared to the US average of 4.9%. However, Vermont's percentage of "underutilized" workers is 8.2%, much higher than the unemployment rate. Workers who are unemployed, involuntarily part time, or marginally attached fall into this category. Although Vermont's rate of underutilized workers is lower than the national average (10% in 2015), many Vermonters are still searching for a job that fits their skills and economic needs.
- The best recruiting experiences reported by county employers are typically from workers in the Northeast, the upper Midwest and areas with similar climate and outdoor recreational opportunities, such as the Northwest and Colorado. Recruiting people from large technology centers such as Boston, Austin and California is difficult.
- Employers report very good to excellent workforce quality, with good work ethic and productivity, and low turnover and absenteeism.
- The County's higher education infrastructure is excellent, although almost 30% of employers participating in the Employer Survey indicated that they have training needs that are not being met by local resources. While some of these needs are for skills that are unique to specific companies, several employers surveyed for this assessment reported similar training needs for skilled manufacturing occupations particularly in the machine trades. Interviewed manufacturers emphasized the strong need for local training programs in machining and other skilled occupations to support their growth and sustainability.
- With the notable exception of affordability of housing, most every kind of quality of life factor sought by most people is readily available in the County.
- S.135 directs the Commissioner of Labor and the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) chair to convene a working group to assess current workforce education and training and develop a comprehensive strategy that meets the needs of employers and employees. This study and workforce development system review includes expanded Career and Technical Education programming, and a more integrated approach across agencies to develop a career

pathways system to help link students to careers and workplaces in which they will best work. The working group's report is due by November 15, 2017.

- The County's perceived regulatory environment rates as less than Good (where Good = 3 on the five point scale used in the Employer Survey conducted as part of this assessment), with local property taxes and the local construction permitting process (regulations and procedures) both topics of complaint.
- Most permitted industrial parks are approaching full build out, and consequently the supply of industrial land remains low. This will continue to inhibit industrial growth in the County.
- Commercial land sales have increased since the recession and high sales activity is projected to continue. However, the market for office space is currently somewhat oversupplied, and construction will likely slow.
- Chittenden County is well-served with a highway network that facilitates multi-directional travel and is well-planned for roadway and related improvements. Those plans must be implemented, often at substantial cost and sometimes (particularly for larger projects) with delays from state-mandated permitting. A potential impending decline in the adequacy of the County's roadway system caused by increasing traffic congestion, necessary roadway maintenance, and need for new road construction, coupled with the opportunity and need for future economic development, has resulted in the identification of a number of issues and situations that require immediate and careful consideration.
- The County is generally well-served with utilities and telecommunications services necessary to support economic development. The weakest part of the County's utilities and telecommunications system is the quality and costs of telecommunications, in particular cell phone service. A major state-wide initiative to improve telecommunications services is underway. Though almost all Chittenden County households are served by broadband internet, faster internet is an important utility for many of the region's key sectors, including those who work at home.
- Interviews and surveys show there are lingering misconceptions about the mission of GBIC.
- Continued and increased attention must be paid to providing services to existing businesses and entrepreneurs in Chittenden County. Organizations such as the Vermont Center for Emerging Technologies, BTV Ignite and the South End Arts and Business Association are key to the region. Encouraging the creation and growth of small, "home-grown" businesses is key to diversifying the economy instead of having relying solely on large employers like Global Foundries (formerly IBM) for all technology jobs.
- Three of the County's public high schools have low performance indicators, and employer interviews indicate that the limited proficiency of students remains a concern as they move into the workforce. Equal education that meets or exceeds state standards, especially for financially disadvantaged students and those for whom English is not their primary language, is key to the economy.
- Funding the water quality projects necessitated by the Lake Champlain TMDL will present a challenge for Chittenden County municipalities by straining municipal budgets. Additionally, complying with increased stormwater management requirements will increase the cost of development.

## Strategic Industry Sector Analysis

This sub-section provides a summary of the identification of target clusters and industry sectors that will likely be significant economic drivers for Chittenden County. The full Strategic Industry Sector Analysis report can be found at <http://ecosproject.com/analysis>. Based on the Economic Base Analysis and Competitive Assessment, the following 12 initial target clusters and industries for attraction and development efforts were identified and submitted to GBIC for consideration:

- Information Technology
- Value Added/Sustainable Agriculture
- Digital Media
- E-Commerce
- Clean Tech/Green Technology
- Tourism
- Retail
- Non-profit Organizations
- Health Care
- Business and Administrative Services
- Value-Added Manufacturing
- Higher Education

From this initial selection, five primary targets, one of which is a combination of three of the initial recommendations, were selected as value-adding industries with high location quotients and are profiled in the Strategic Industry Sector Analysis report referenced above:

1. Information Technology, Communications, and Media
  - Information Technology
  - E-Commerce
  - Digital Media
2. High Value-Added Manufacturing
3. Higher Education
4. Clean Tech/Green Tech
5. Health Care and Wellness

## **ECONOMIC RESILIENCE**

An area's ability to withstand, prevent, or quickly recover from major disruptions (i.e., 'shocks') to its underlying economic base. Identify vulnerabilities and withstand or recover from disruptions. The State of Vermont CEDS states that any economic development activity that meets one or more of the following criteria increases economic resilience:

1. Embraces complexity (Does it encourage flexibility and awareness of uncertainty?)
2. Plans for change (Does it reflect systems thinking and foresight? Does it consider multiple scales? Does it build adaptive capacities?)
3. Expands opportunities (Does it enrich human, social, cultural, economic, and ecological wellbeing? Does it build diverse and accessible forms of livelihood and local wealth?)
4. Develops diverse relationships (Does it forge trusted partnerships and rich feedback loops amongst a flexible network of people and resources?)
5. Designs for learning (Does it facilitate continuous learning, adaptation, knowledge, sharing, and innovation?)
6. Builds local and regional self-reliance (Does it empower communities?)

The actions throughout this CEDS meet these goals.

### 4.2.3 STRATEGIC DIRECTION/ACTION PLAN

A Project List is no longer required, but one will be developed, likely much shorter than previous versions, and it will hopefully include identifying funding sources besides EDA grants.

#### Goals

**Broad Goal:** Build the region's capacity for shared and sustainable improvements in the economic wellbeing of the community through support of both local and globally competitive initiatives.

**Economy Goal:** Retain and support existing employers and job growth, grow target sector employers and entrepreneurs, and work to attract a greater diversity of employers and employees.

**Household Financial Security Goal:** Improve the financial security of households.

**Working Lands Goal:** Support the growth and vitality of working farms and managed forests; and sustainably manage sand and gravel extraction operations.

#### Strategies – Currently found in Chapter 3 of the ECOS Plan

### 3.2.1 IMPROVE AND STRENGTHEN THE ECONOMIC SYSTEMS OF OUR REGION TO INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR VERMONT EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES.

Economic development is about building a community's capacity for shared and sustainable improvements in the economic well-being of residents. Providing access to good jobs that can support an adequate standard of living for all residents of a region or community; continuous and sustainable improvements in the internal functioning of the economy, where its structural underpinnings are made stronger without sacrificing long-term quality of life; and providing the means and the continuous processes to strengthen the foundation of our communities.

#### Actions

- 1. High wage employers** – The primary goal of any economic development strategy is retaining and growing the already existing high wage jobs within the economy. The region must maintain economic diversity by deepen existing sectors, and increase diversity by identifying and supporting businesses in sectors with high location quotients. Providing support and connecting available resources is critical to ensuring that this economic base remains vital and is able to grow. The high wage sectors in which Chittenden County expects to drive our economy are: Information Technology, Communications, and Media (including Information Technology, E-Commerce, and Digital Media); High Value-Added Manufacturing; Higher Education; Clean Tech/Green Tech; and, Health Care and Wellness (see the Target Sector Analysis – will be located here [www.ecosproject.com/analysis](http://www.ecosproject.com/analysis) shortly.).

- a. Build relationships with these employers. For example, ~~the recent~~ the Region's Tech Jams highlighted some of the region's many successful tech companies. Success here connects to the action on innovation and entrepreneurial development and includes: developing and attracting a tech workforce, access to financing, marketing VT and the region as a home for tech jobs and tech companies, supportive infrastructure such as broadband access, incubator space, and networking.
  - b. Facilitate access to employment and infrastructure development resources made available by the State. Currently these include programs such as the Vermont Employment Growth Incentive, Vermont Training Program, etc.
  - c. Market the quality of life – Chamber action
- 2. Industrial Site Locations** – With only a few years supply of existing buildings or permitted sites left for high wage industrial or manufacturing businesses in the region, additional sites need to be identified and carefully planned to ensure a smooth permitting process to be ready for employers' needs for expansion or relocation in Chittenden County. The most likely employment sectors with this need are high wage, technology-based and other types of manufacturing. The best opportunities for these sites are on vacant portions of land owned by current major employers, within close proximity to - or already connected to - existing infrastructure services for long term efficiency.
- ~~a.~~
  - b.a. CCRPC and GBIC will work with ACCD to have business/industrial parks recognized as benefit locations in state designation programs. (Funded by GBIC and CCRPC. No direct additional employment is expected, but this would help to create future opportunities.)
  - b. Efforts should be made by CCRPC to educate businesses and developers about "Smart Growth" ~~on~~ development practices that achieve a higher level of density, greater compatibility within traditional development patterns, use less land, and provide for all modes of transportation.
  - c. GBIC should prepare a "longevity analysis" to project when additional fully-serviced land should be added to the regional inventory.
- 3. Workforce Education and Skills Development** – Promote public/private partnerships for education that connect the skills development infrastructure of our institutions of higher education, vocational programs, and technical schools with the direct needs of the Vermont workforce. If education takes place with connections to our economic needs, students and retrained workers will have their skill sets match with the employment market.
- a. See Strategy 3.2.6 for more actions related to education.
  - a. Maintain, improve and market the assets that attract and retain young professionals, such as the "Vermont brand," social and professional opportunities, and affordable and attractive housing

- 4. Innovation and Entrepreneurial Development** – Coordinate and promote the providers, programs, and services already available in the State to create an economic system of resources that is easily navigable at all stages of the innovation and entrepreneurial continuum. This must aggregate and address services such as finding capital, mentorship, prototyping, commercialization, etc.
  - a. Encourage home-based small businesses in villages throughout the Region as allowed by municipal zoning, and ensure that sufficient telecommunications infrastructure, especially high-speed internet, is available to make these businesses possible.
  - b. Research Dayton, OH's work which capitalizes on the entrepreneurial spirit of recent immigrants as a cornerstone of their economic development policy and actions.
  
- 5. Creative Economy and the Arts** – Arts and the creative economy are what drives a large and diverse amount of economic activity in our region (e.g. local foods, design, technology, media, craftsmanship/fabrication, arts, emergent media, music, dance, festivals, education, and recreation). This portion of the economy is fundamentally unique in that it is a significant contributor to the culture in our region. Support creative economy and arts programs and efforts.
  - a. Create collaborations between arts, culture and recreation groups and the Chamber of Commerce and local businesses to promote the use of local artists in regular business needs (i.e. advertising, branding, communications, etc.) and to share vacant or underutilized commercial spaces with artists for gallery and/or studio space.
  
- 6. Working Lands** - Support value-added foods, farms and forest products through the work of Farm to Plate by Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund and Working Lands Enterprise Board. See Strategy 4 for more details.
  
- 7. Tourism** – Continue good efforts in tourism including VT Convention Bureau, Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce, and Lake Champlain Byway.
  - b.a. Support the work of the Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative, a task force created by Governor Phil Scott in 2017, to strengthen and expand Vermont's outdoor recreation economy.
  
- 8. Economic Development Coordination** – Both the State of Vermont and Northwest Regional Planning Commission have begun economic development planning efforts to develop CEDS for the State and Northwest region. There has not previously been a Statewide CEDS. A Statewide CEDS process is beginning in 2013 and this Plan will help inform that effort. Any recommendations that come out of that process will be considered in future ECOS Plan amendments or revisions as appropriate. CCRPC staff is actively participating on behalf of CCRPC and GBIC in both efforts as part of their advisory committees. GBIC and CCRPC will coordinate and assist those efforts to improve the effectiveness of efforts in Chittenden County and for the State.

**9. Local and state construction permitting** – The permitting process must be streamlined. Create a Public/Private Sector Development Process Review Task Force for the County and similar initiatives at the municipal level to identify ways to streamline the development permit and approval process and related regulations, and incorporate this initiative in the County’s sustainability planning.

CEDS Project List for Actions, and identify grants if possible?? <http://swcrpc.org/grants/>

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# EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

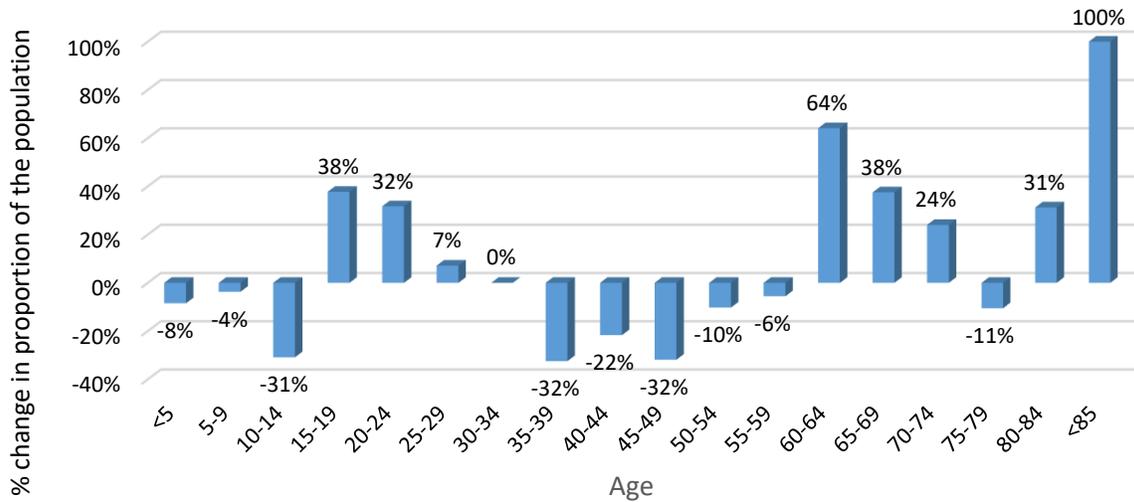
The Key Indicators below are reported on the ECOS Scorecard:

<https://app.resultsscorecard.com/Scorecard/Embed/8502>

## Proposed New Indicators:

- Wages in Chittenden County by target industry sectors
- Percent of employment and location quotient of target industry sectors in Chittenden County
- Economic Diversity – **unsure how to measure.**
- Population Age Trends

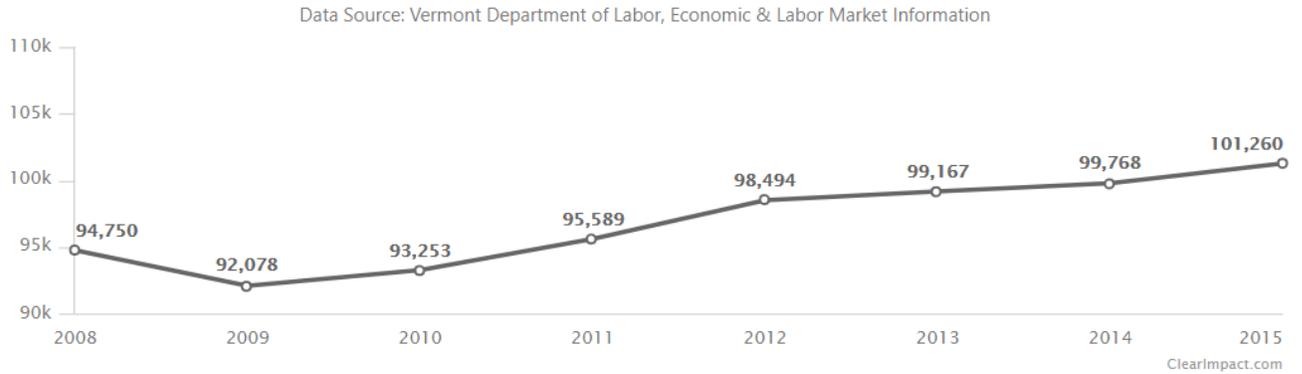
Figure 2. Change in Age Cohorts, 2005-2014



Source: American Community Survey 1-year estimates, Table S0101

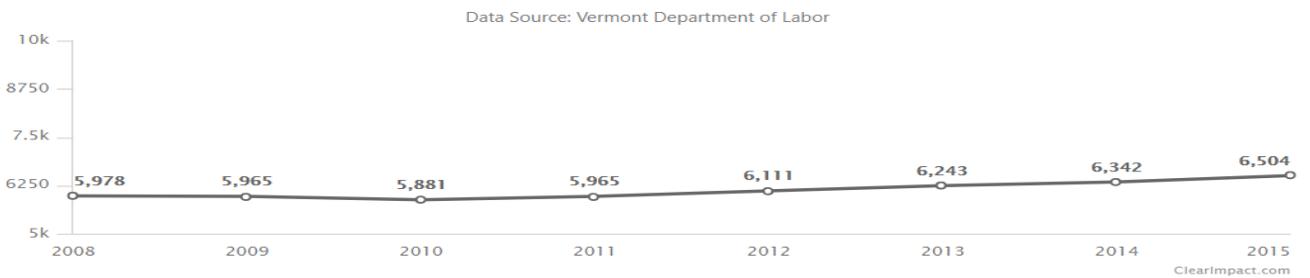
## ➤ Chittenden County job growth

### ECOS Total (Covered) Employment - Chittenden County



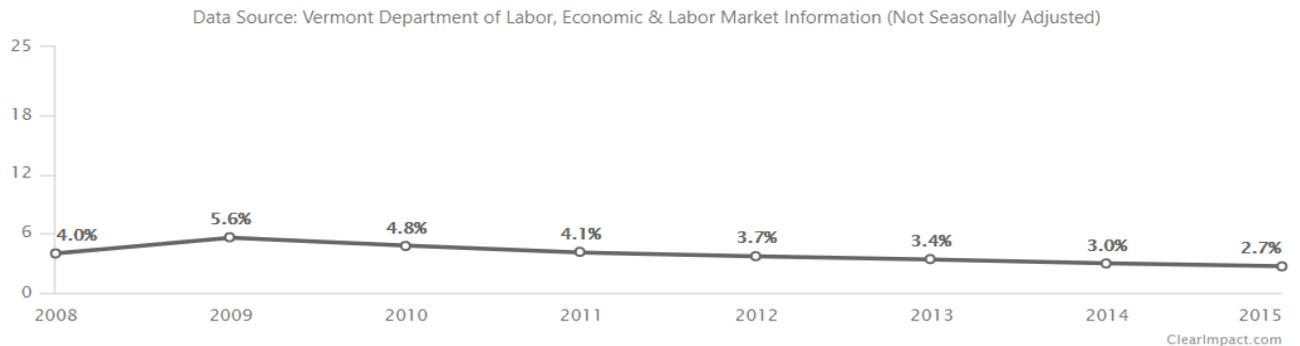
## ➤ Total number of businesses in Chittenden County:

### ECOS Number of Businesses



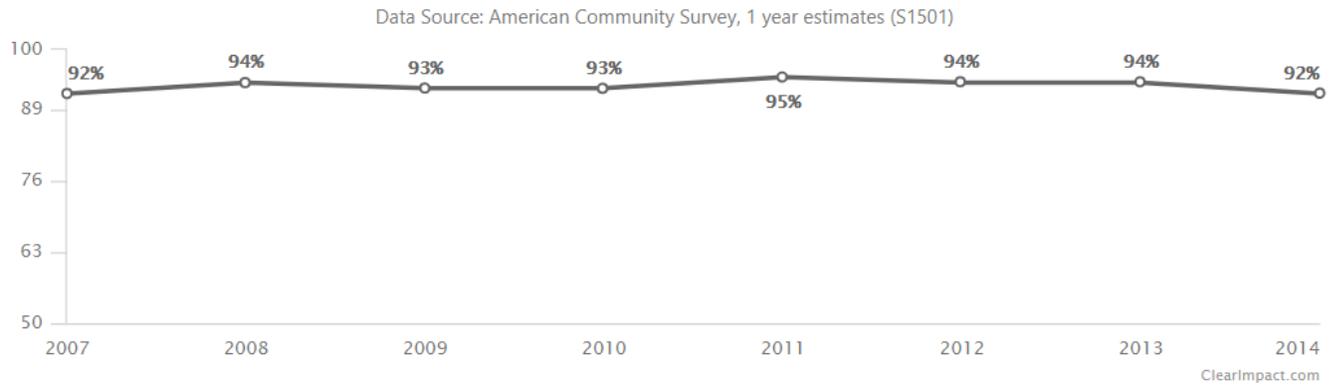
## ➤ The unemployment rate in Chittenden County

### ECOS Unemployment Rate, Chittenden County

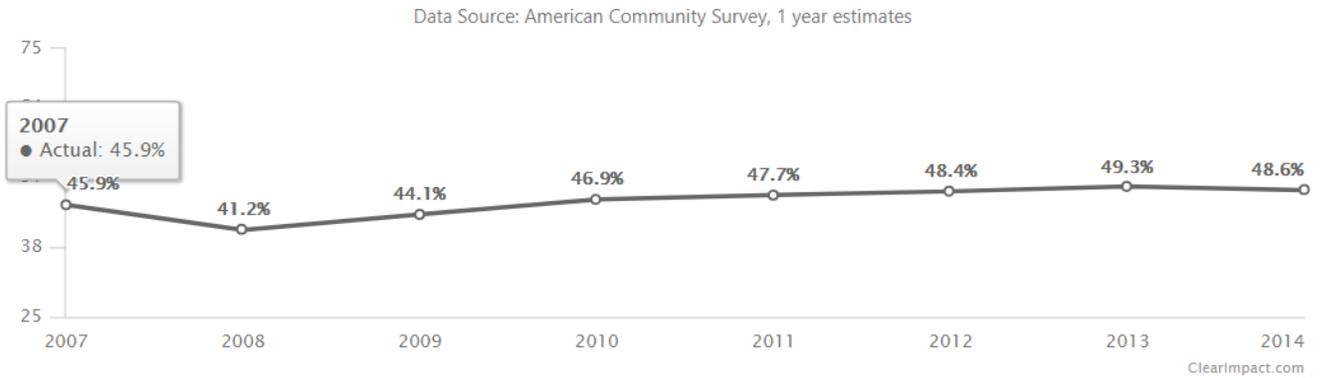


➤ **Education rates in Chittenden County**

ECOS Percent of Adults (25+) with High School Degree or Higher in Chittenden County

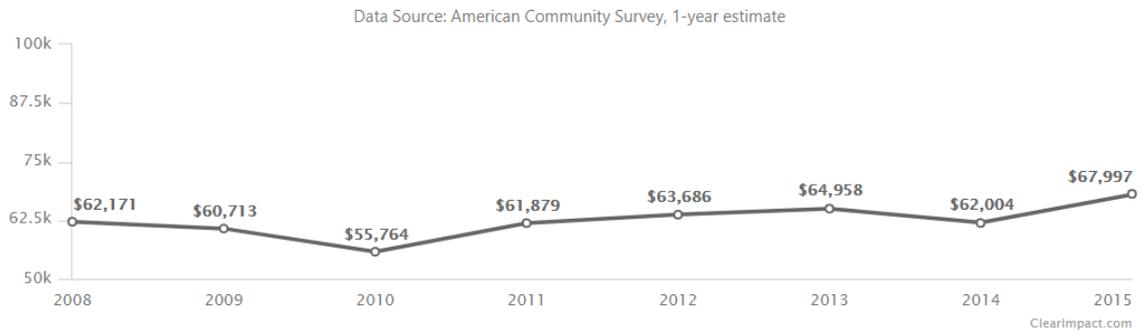


ECOS Percent of Adults (25+) with Bachelor's Degree or Higher in Chittenden County



➤ **Chittenden County household income**

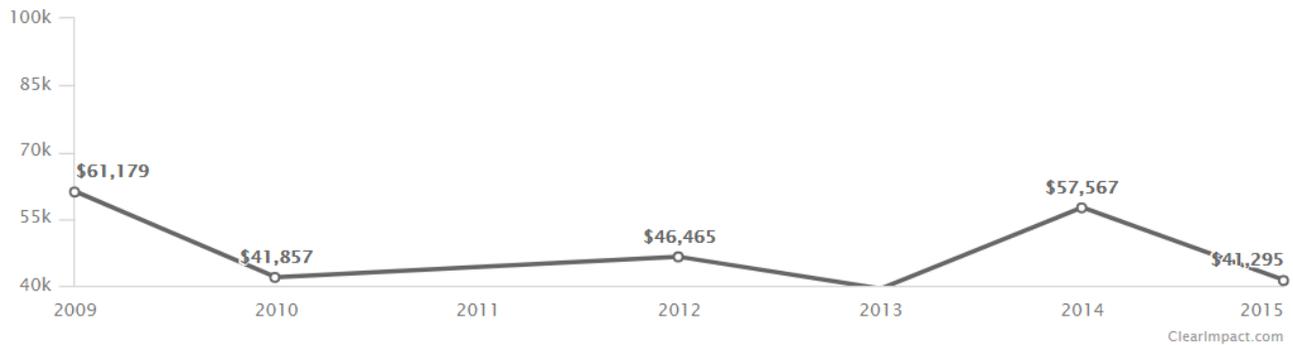
ECOS Median Household Income, Chittenden County



➤ **Household income by race**

**ECOS Median Household Income by Race, (Black/African American Householder)**

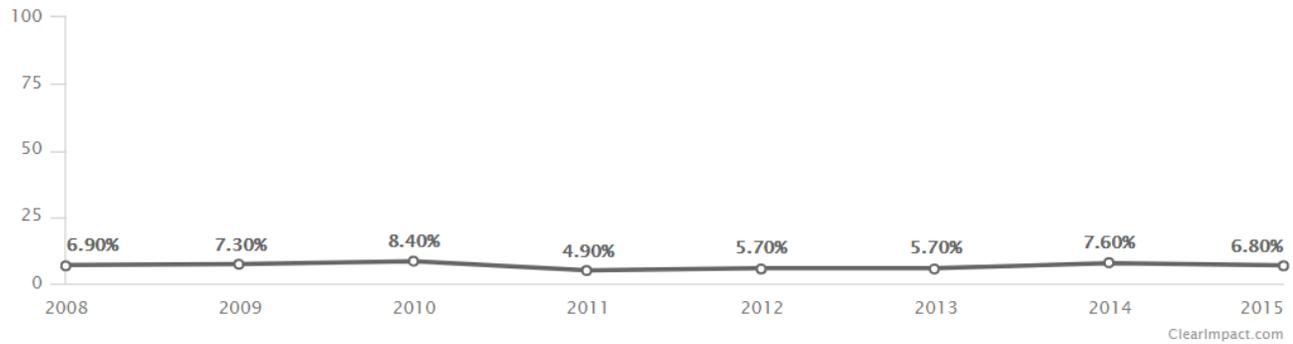
Data Source: American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates, Table B19013B



**Percentage of Families whose Income in the Last 12 Months is Below Poverty Level**

**ECOS Percentage of families whose income in the last 12 months is below poverty level, Chittenden County**

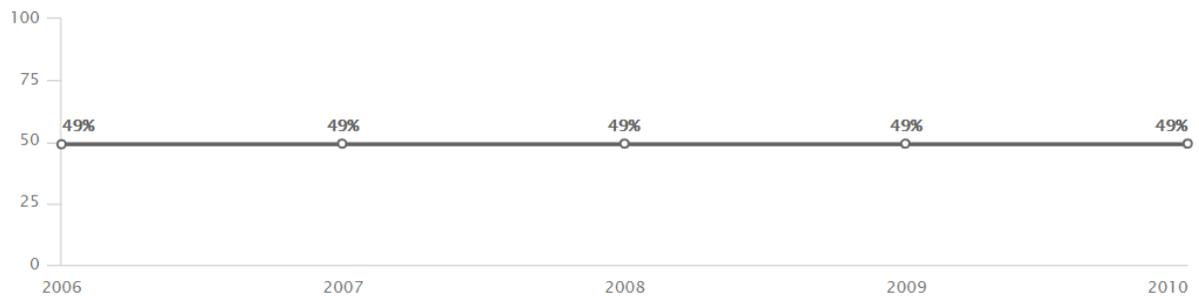
Data Source: Percentage of families whose income in the last 12 months is below poverty level. U.S. Bureau of the Census, ACS 1-year estimates



**➤ Average Combined Housing + Transportation Costs**

**ECOS Housing + Transportation Costs for Median Income Family**

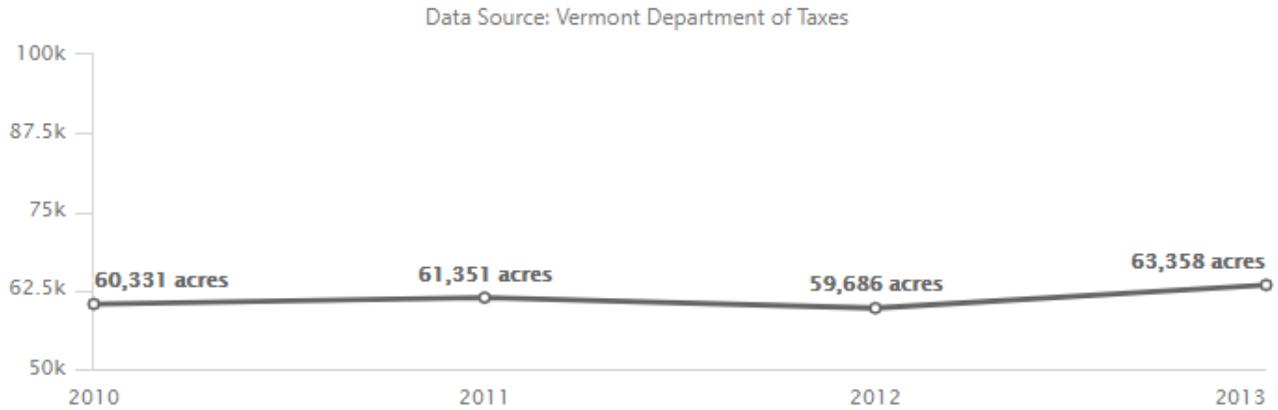
Data Source: <http://www.locationaffordability.info/lai.aspx>



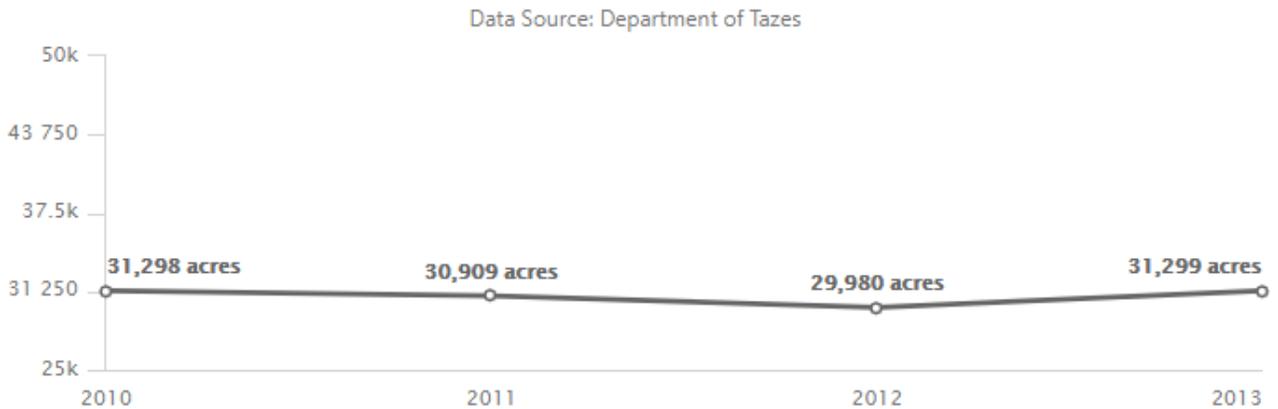
## Working Lands & Land Based Industries

### ▪ Use Value Appraisal (UVA) Enrollment

- [-] **I** **ECOS** Economy: Number of Forested Acres enrolled in the Current Use Program

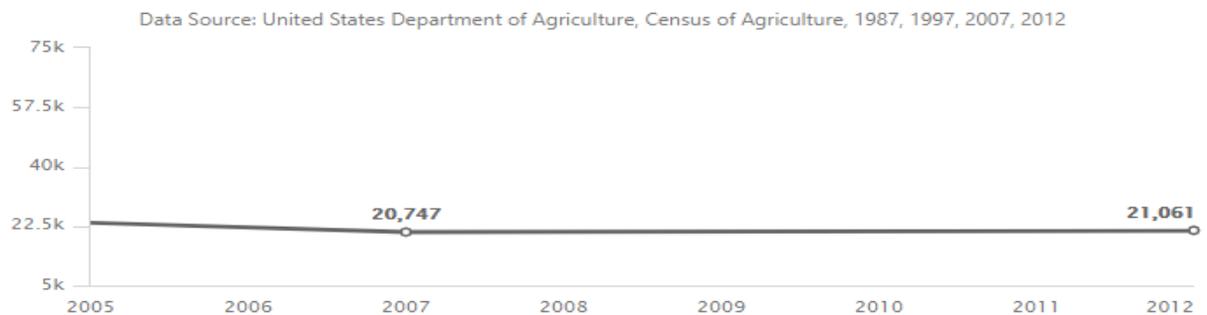


- [-] **I** **ECOS** Economy: Number of Agricultural Acres enrolled in the Current Use Program

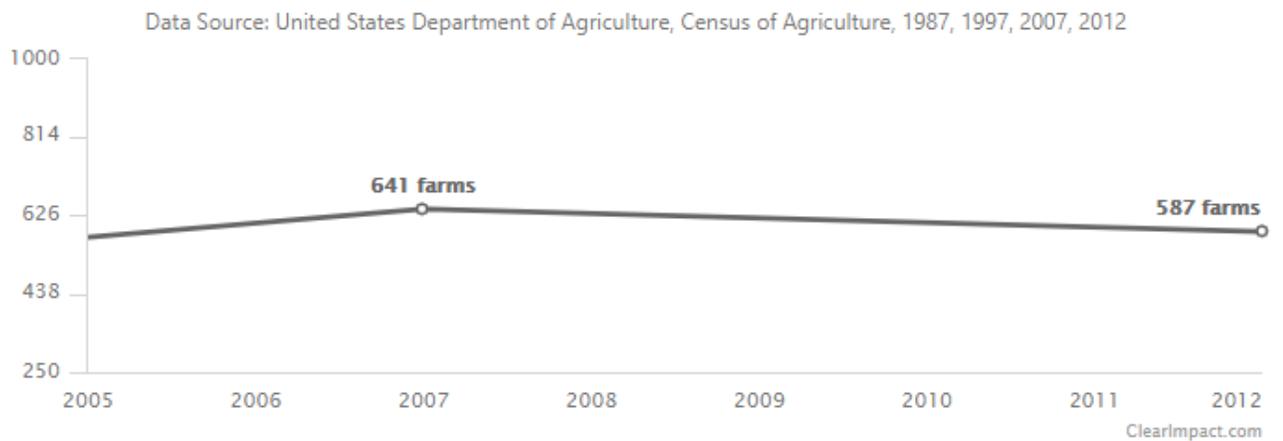


- **The number of farms versus acreage of farmland.**

- [-] **I** **ECOS** Economy: Acres Devoted to Crops and Forests



ECOS Economy: Total Number of Farms by size



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