

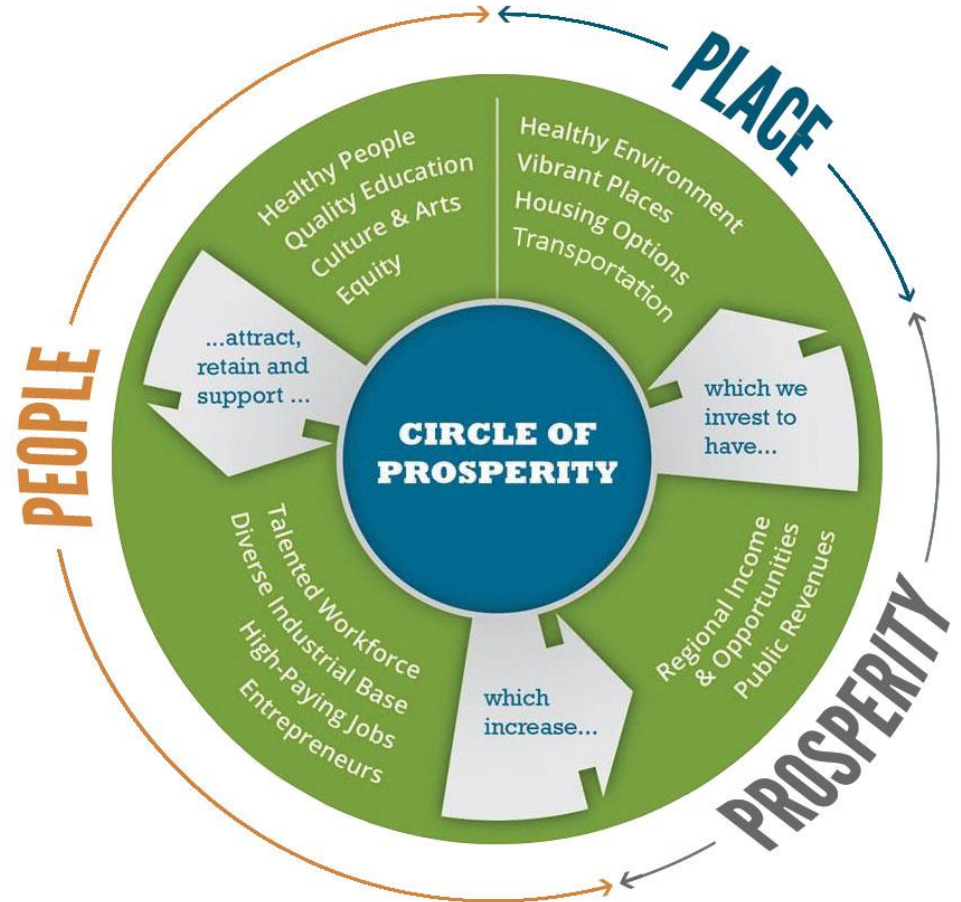
Chittenden County Municipal Legislative Briefing

December 8, 2020

- 8:00 - 8:10 Welcome and Introductions – Mike O'Brien, CCRPC Chair
- 8:10 - 8:30 Key Issues Discussion
1. Act 250 changes
 2. Housing policy and investment
 3. Broadband
 4. Regional Dispatch Start-up funding
 5. Energy/Climate
 6. Transportation Funding
 7. WQ Funding
 8. Cannabis
 9. Economy
 10. Property Tax Implications of COVID
 11. Racial Equity
- 8:30 - 9:00 Discussion

Implementing Our ECOS Plan

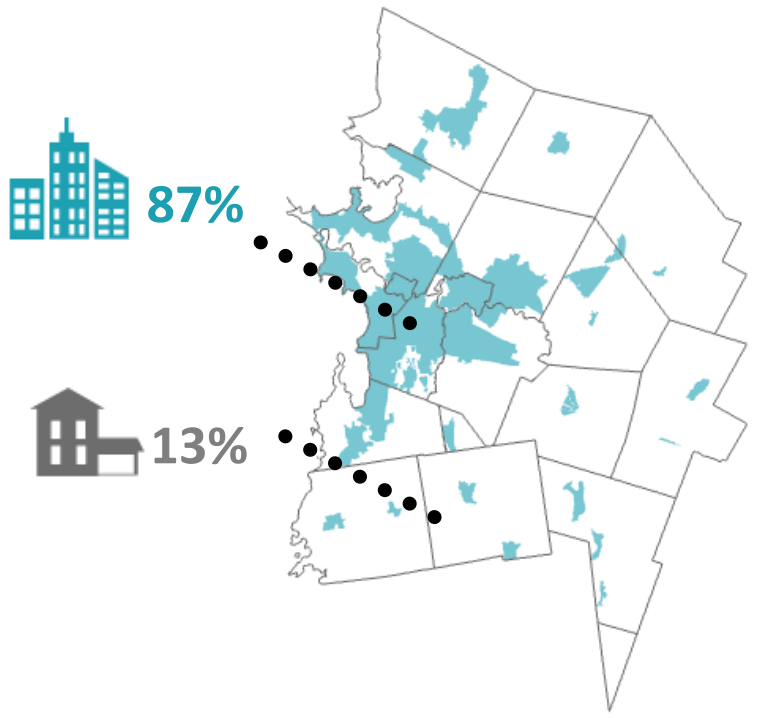
- Circle of Prosperity
- Continued investment in Chittenden County/Northwest VT is critical to further the financial health of Vermont's economy and government expenditures to support the social safety net, environmental protection, and public services.
- **WHEN CHITTENDEN COUNTY PROSPERS, VERMONT PROSPERS**



Invest in Vermont/Chittenden County - Smart Growth

Homes Built in Chittenden County 2015-2019

5-Year Average for Net New Units



2019 Smart Growth Result

- Chittenden County has exceeded its [ECOS Plan goal](#) of 80% of development occurring within planned growth areas – 8th year.
- Of 775 residential net units built in 2019, **89% (690)** were in areas planned for growth.

- **Update Act 250**
- **Invest/Encourage more housing**
- **Invest in village water/wastewater**

1. Act 250 & Permit System Change

- ***Change Act 250 to accomplish smart growth goals: encouraging development in our centers and discouraging rural development***
- ***Remove Act 250 jurisdiction for smart growth development in state designation areas***
- ***End duplication of review between Act 250, State agencies, and municipalities – single review for each issue***
- *Include assessment of equity impact.*

2. Housing

- **27%** of homeowners and **56%** of renters are cost burdened.
- Missing middle of housing market between affordable and high end of the market
- Causing impacts on employee recruitment and job growth.
- ***Provide permitting/zoning incentives for housing in smart growth locations (Act 250 reform/housing bill).***
- ***Invest in housing development, especially affordable.***
 - *Include assessment of equity impact.*

3. Broadband

- COVID has demonstrated the challenges for our rural residents and students without good internet service.
 - Communications Union Districts in adjacent regions are starting up and may present a possibility for serving our rural towns.
 - [Draft Covid-19 Response Telecommunications Recovery Plan](#) under review now, review for implementation recommendations
- ***Expand access to usable internet service; especially for low-income Vermonters.***

4. Regional Dispatch Start-up

- As the State looks for alternatives to the current system, we created a Chittenden County Public Safety Authority for the purpose of regional dispatch.
- This concept works financially and operationally in the long term and will provide better service; however, there is a significant amount of capital needed for start-up
 - ***There is a \$2,100,000 total needed.***
 - ***So far, the municipalities have come up with about \$325,000; leaving a gap of \$1,775,000***
 - ***\$750,000 of this gap is just for the technology and communications***

5. Energy/Climate

- **CCRPC developed a Regional Energy Plan in 2018** to achieve 90% renewable by 2050. Working with municipalities on enhanced municipal energy plans
 - ***Invest in weatherization and energy efficiency (need 30% reduction in energy consumption)***
 - ***Encourage more local renewable energy generation*** (very close to achieving the 2025 CEP milestone - 25% renewable, Reaching 90% by 2050 will require 5x more solar and increases in other renewables.)
 - ***Encourage alternative modes of transportation (Reduce solo commutes from 81% to 50%) – smart growth & investments in TDM, bus, bike, ped***
 - ***Encourage electric vehicle transition along with charging stations (need 89% of passenger cars/trucks)***
 - ***Consider joining Transportation Climate Initiative***
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2020 Municipal Legislative Briefing

6. Transportation Investments

- 33% of workers in Chittenden County live outside County compared to 25% in 2002. Causes multiple issues: energy, traffic, housing, etc.
- Investment in Chittenden County has been averaging about 15%
- ***Invest in all Capital Program & Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Projects***
 - ***Circ Alternative Projects need to keep moving***
 - ***Finish legacy projects (Champlain Parkway, Exit 16, Williston Park & Ride, Amtrak, etc.)***
 - ***Continue to invest in walking, biking, transit, electric vehicles, water quality, and intelligent transportation system projects***
- ***Monitor town highway and bridge funding programs to try to get back to pre-COVID funding levels.***

I-89 2050 Study

- CCRPC started this study in 2019 driven by our ECOS Metropolitan Transportation Plan finding that the Exit 14 area and I-89 between Exits 14 and 15 will have significant capacity/delay part of the system that is a significant issues in the future.
- Looking at potential interchange improvements and a suite of multi-modal investments (transit, walk/bike, park and ride, transit, electric vehicles, technology, maintenance needs)
- Interchange recommendation stage to be completed in Q1 2021
- Multi-modal package to be developed by Q3 2021
- Implementation plan with triggers to be developed by end or 2021 or early 2022
- Public engagement including outreach to underrepresented populations will occur at key steps.

7. Water Quality Funding

- CCRPC has offered to be a Clean Water Service Provider in the Northern Direct to Lake watershed. Northwest RPC will cover the Lamoille watershed and Central Vermont RPC will cover the Winooski watershed. Rulemaking is in final stages. Anticipating LCAR in February.
 - Keep the focus on making investments that have the “biggest bang for the buck.” However, investments in wastewater will still be needed to address TMDL requirements and new systems in villages.
- ***Investment in clean water projects will continue to be a need.***

Note: Please keep in mind that any municipal costs that are not covered by the State will still be borne by taxpayers at the municipal level. 80% cost share is needed.

8. Cannabis

- Local municipalities (via voter approval) may opt in to allow retail sales in their community.
 - Municipalities cannot issue blanket prohibitions of cannabis establishments (cultivation, testing, warehousing, and distribution) via ordinance or zoning, but can regulate via zoning and local licensing boards.
 - CCRPC will assist municipalities with zoning issues upon request.
- ***Add at least one municipal representative to the Cannabis Commission***

9. Economy & Workforce

- CCRPC & GBIC received funding from EDA to update our Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy with Central Vermont, Addison, and Rutland RPCs and RDCs.
 - Vermont and Chittenden County labor market is at virtual full employment. However, both the state and the County have seen a significant decline in available labor from last year (7,000 fewer employees in Chit. Co. and 20,000 fewer in Vermont).
 - Workforce continues to be one of GBIC's major areas of concentration. Access and exposure to Career Technical Education (CTE) and professionalization of technical & vocational training within education centers is a critical need for both youth and adults. We continue to work with the Governor, his administration officials, and legislators to find ways to enhance these opportunities.
 - VSAC-VSC report Senior Survey of the Class of 2012 to 2016
 - ~50% of Vermont High School Graduates either go on to NO higher education or are no longer enrolled within 3 semesters.
- ***Develop Career Pathways program and continue to implement the state workforce development programs in Act 189 report.***

10. Property Assessment

- Due to COVID, there is concern about drops in commercial property valuation. This will have significant impacts on municipal budgets and the education fund.
- Municipalities will need help to avoid major ups and downs in their grand list due to COVID causing a drop in the CLA and triggering a reappraisal. Hoping this is only a short-term situation.
- If not addressed, this could have dramatic impacts on residential property taxes, municipal budgets, and the education fund.

possible policy solutions are:

- ***capping the CLA decrease for a number of years to avoid these huge spikes***
- ***freezing commercial assessments with possible tax prebate relief***

11. Racial Equity

- This is one of our ECOS Plan Strategies. Addressing systemic racism will take a concerted effort by everyone.
- CCRPC hiring a racial equity partner to deepen our understanding, help our municipalities, and help us create meaningful change.
- We'll be updating our equity impact assessment tool.
- ***Housing – Assess policies that make it easier for BIPOC residents to more easily own homes in integrated neighborhoods (Act 250, Housing policy and investment)***
- ***Public Safety – include municipalities in these discussions, particularly around data collection, body cameras, video storage, and public record requests.***
- ***Encourage systematic use of Equity Impact Assessments. Potentially a need for regional equity committees to review.***
- ***Other opportunities?***

CCRPC Resources

- **ECOS Scorecard** | 90+ indicators tied to our ECOS Plan goals relating to people, place, and prosperity | <https://app.resultsscorecard.com/Scorecard/Embed/8502>
- **Our Communities** | A link to all of our municipalities; our current and past work with each; links to their websites; basic data | <https://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-communities/>
- **Current Transportation Projects** | Organized by topic | <https://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-work/transportation/current-projects/>
- **ECOS Map Viewer** | State, regional & municipal data layers | <http://map.ccrpcvt.org/ChittendenCountyVT>
- **Data** | Links to various transportation, socioeconomic, and geo data | <https://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-work/transportation/data>
- **Legislative Breakfast Data** | Data discussed or used for background | https://www.ccrpcvt.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Data-Presentation_20201208.pdf

CCRPC Current Work

This is only a snapshot of current CCRPC work; for more information view our 2020 Annual Report at www.ccrpcvt.org/annual-reports

- **Water Quality** | Completed road erosion inventories and developing conceptual designs. Proposed to serve as a Clean Water Service Provider. Assisting towns with wastewater planning.
- **Transportation Studies** | Corridor studies, scoping, safety, traffic signal timing analyses, and inventories.
- **Emergency Management** | Supplemental SEOC staffing, disaster local liaison, FEMA and LGER grant assistance, local emergency management plans
- **Energy Plans** | Regional Energy Plan; Municipal Energy Plan assistance with CCRPC's Determination of Energy Compliance.
- **Housing** | Building Homes Together campaign and regional housing convenings.
- **Land Use** | Municipal plan, bylaw, and capital program assistance.
- **Community Justice** | Hosted summit in Oct. 2019. Produced short report summarizing issues.

Thank you!

We are a resource to you!

Questions/Discussion?

Please contact us for any assistance or to find people to testify:

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www.ccrpcvt.org

www.ecosproject.com

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