

CONTACT: Dan Albrecht
Senior Planner, CCRPC
dalbrecht@ccrpcvt.org
802-861-0133

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Public Input Wanted on Chittenden County Multi-Jurisdictional All-Hazards Mitigation Plan; Comment Period Open Through April 7, 2022

(Chittenden County, VT) Winter storms, severe rainstorms, and human infectious diseases are the natural disasters most likely to cause widespread economic loss and personal hardship in Chittenden County. Public input on the draft Chittenden County Multi-Jurisdictional All-Hazards Mitigation Plan (MJAHMP) will help the community identify steps needed to minimize damage from natural disasters. Taking steps to minimize the damage from a natural disaster is focus of the Chittenden County MJAHMP.

Chittenden County municipalities are developing the plan update cooperatively with IEM, an international disaster response and recovery consulting firm, and the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC). The 2022 MJAHMP is a multi-jurisdictional plan that covers the cities of Burlington, South Burlington, and Winooski; the Towns of Bolton, Charlotte, Essex, Hinesburg, Huntington, Jericho, Milton, Richmond, Shelburne, St. George, Underhill, Westford, and Williston; the Village of Essex Junction; and Buel's Gore. The plan update also incorporates the concerns and needs of other stakeholder participants. Hazard mitigation is one of the four phases of an emergency management program, which are outlined in the FEMA illustration shown to the right.

Understanding the natural hazards that impact our communities and taking action to reduce or eliminate the impact of future disasters creates a more resilient Chittenden County. Hazard mitigation helps us to break the cycle of damage and repair caused by occurrences of flooding, ice storms, and severe wind events. Such events damage property, stress the economy, and threaten the personal safety of residents.

Sample mitigation actions include:

- Improvement of roads and culverts that experience repetitive flooding or erosion
- Construction of safe rooms at campgrounds, public parks, mobile home parks or schools to protect lives in the event of tornados or severe rainstorm and heavy wind events
- Burying powerlines that may fail due to heavy snow, ice or wind storms, ensuring timely emergency communication to the public through warning sirens and mass notification systems
- Conducting public awareness and education campaigns to help people to be prepared to take safe action before, during, or following a hazard event.



Image Credit: FEMA

Some mitigation activities may be eligible for future FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance grant funding.

Earlier in the planning process, the Chittenden County planning team distributed a public survey via Front Porch Forum requesting feedback from residents and businesses. The survey asked:

- What are the natural hazards you feel pose the greatest risk to your community?
- Have you experienced a previous disaster event?
- What concerns do you have, and what types of mitigation actions or projects do you feel would help to reduce damage from future hazard events to your personal property, your community, or the county as a whole?

Over 250 comments, concerns, and questions about natural disasters and potential mitigation actions were included in responses from those surveyed. Their input has been incorporated into the draft plan update.

Through this press release, we are asking for additional public feedback and comments on the draft plan posted at <https://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-work/emergency-management/hazard-mitigation-plan/>. We request that you review the plan before it is submitted for review by the State of Vermont.

The Federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 requires communities to update their plan every 5 years to maintain eligibility for FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) grant programs.

HOW TO SHARE YOUR COMMENTS

Please send comments or questions on the draft plan no later than **5:00 p.m., April 7, 2022** to: Dan Albrecht, CCRPC Senior Planner at dalbrecht@ccrpcvt.org or 802-861-0133; or Leroy Thompson, IEM, Senior Planner at leroy.thompson@iem.com or 850-570-9867.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT CCRPC

The CCRPC (<https://www.ccrpcvt.org/>) is one of 11 regional planning commissions in Vermont and serves as the State's only Metropolitan Planning Organization. The CCRPC acts as the principal forum for planning, policy, and community development in the region by providing planning and technical assistance that meets the needs of its member municipalities and the public, while remaining consistent with federal and state requirements. The CCRPC's work results in the development and implementation of plans that support sustainable development and improve the region's quality of life and environment.

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