



**CHITTENDEN COUNTY RPC**  
*Communities Planning Together*

# **Fiscal Year 2023 ANNUAL WORK PLAN**

*(Unified Planning Work Program - UPWP)*

***Mid-year Adjustment – ADOPTED January 18, 2023***

Chittenden County  
Regional Planning Commission

July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023



**CHITTENDEN COUNTY RPC**  
*Communities Planning Together*

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# Introduction and Purpose of the UPWP

This document, the *Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Work Plan (Unified Planning Work Program)* (FY 2023 UPWP) defines the regionally agreed upon transportation and land use planning priorities and the roles and responsibilities of various participants in the planning process for Chittenden County. The work elements described are to be accomplished during the period between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023. The following sections provide an overview of the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) and describe how all the municipalities, agencies, partners, stakeholders, and other interests involved in the activities of CCRPC work together in a comprehensive, continuing, and cooperative process to meet critical transportation and land use needs of Chittenden County.

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## *Introduction to Land Use Planning*

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The CCRPC is one of Vermont's 11 State designated Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs). CCRPC was created by its member municipalities in 1966, approved by the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development specifically to undertake regional planning, and by statute are considered municipalities.

In Vermont, planning is performed collaboratively by the State, RPCs, and municipalities. Laws define how this collaboration is to work, specifying different responsibilities for each level of government. This means that the regional planning undertaken by each RPC is intended to be different from the planning undertaken by municipalities and the State.

Regional planning performed by RPCs is at an intermediate level between the local planning performed by municipalities and the general statewide planning performed by the State. Consequently, it makes sense that the regional planning responsibilities of RPCs are intended primarily to promote the coordination and collaboration of planning activities, both between each RPC's member municipalities and between those municipalities and the State.

The State calls upon each RPC to fulfill the following duties:

- ✦ Promote the mutual cooperation of the RPC's member municipalities and cooperate with neighboring states, regions, counties, and municipalities;
- ✦ Assist and advise municipalities in the preparation of plans, studies, and Bylaws regarding the appropriate development and use of the region's physical and human resources;
- ✦ Prepare a regional plan at least every eight years;

- ✦ Review proposed State capital expenditures for compatibility with the RPC's regional plan and assist municipalities in assessing compatibility with municipal plans;
- ✦ Appear before District Environmental Commissions to aid in *Act-250* reviews of proposed developments and appear before the Public Service Board to aid in *Section-248* reviews of proposed utilities; and
- ✦ Confirm municipal planning programs and approve municipal plans.

In order to fulfill these responsibilities, the State empowers each RPC to exercise certain powers:

- ✦ Prepare studies, plans, and recommendations on a broad set of issues;
- ✦ Retain staff and consultant assistance, enter upon land with the prior approval of the owner to make examinations and surveys, hold public hearings, and require municipalities and the State to provide information;
- ✦ Carry out, with the cooperation of member municipalities, programs for the appropriate development and use of the region's physical and human resources; and
- ✦ Perform other acts or functions that the RPC deems to be necessary or appropriate.

## **ECOS Regional Plan**

The regional plan for Chittenden County must be updated on a five-year cycle to comply with federal Department of Transportation and Economic Development Administration regulations governing the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) which are encompassed in the regional plan. The 2018 ECOS Regional Plan was adopted by the CCRPC Board of Directors on June 20, 2018. The ECOS Regional Plan lays out four broad goals and eight strategies for the region:

### **Broad Goals**

1. **Natural Systems** – Design and maintain a strategically planned and managed green infrastructure network composed of natural lands, working landscapes, and open spaces that conserve ecosystem values and functions, and provide associated benefits to our community.
2. **Social Community** – Promote the skills, resources, and assurances needed for all community members to participate in the workforce and in their family, civic and cultural lives, within and among their neighborhoods, and in the larger community.
3. **Economic Infrastructure** – 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.
4. **Built Environment** – Make public and private investments in the built environment to minimize environmental impact, maximize financial efficiency, optimize social equity and benefits, and improve public health.

## **High Priority Strategies**

1. Improve and strengthen the economic systems of our region to increase opportunities for Vermont employers and employees.
  2. Strive for 80% of new development in areas planned for growth, which amounts to 15% of our land area.
  3. Improve the safety, water quality, and habitat of our rivers, streams, wetlands and lakes in each watershed.
  4. Increase investment in and decrease subdivision of working lands and significant habitats and support local food systems.
  5. Increase opportunity for every person in our community to achieve optimal health and personal safety.
  6. Equip our residents with the education and skills that they need to thrive.
  7. Develop financing and governance systems to make the most efficient use of taxpayer dollars and reduce costs.
  8. Ensure that the projects and actions in all ECOS strategies assess equity impacts, and that the design and development of programs are inclusive of all and engage underrepresented populations.
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## ***Introduction to Transportation Planning***

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The CCRPC also serves as the sole Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) operating within Vermont. MPOs are federally mandated and funded transportation planning and policy organizations that are governed by representatives from local governments and governmental transportation authorities. They were created to ensure regional cooperation in transportation planning for any urbanized area with a population greater than 50,000. Federal funding for transportation projects and programs is channeled through this planning process to ensure that existing and future expenditures of governmental funds for transportation projects and programs are based on a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive (“3-C”) planning process.

As the MPO for the region, the CCRPC is required to prepare and update a number of planning documents that detail the investments and planning activities that will help improve the transportation system within the MPO Planning Area. They include:

- ▶ A Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)
- ▶ A Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)
- ▶ A Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The CCRPC is also responsible for providing transportation planning assistance to its member municipalities, other partners, and to the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans).

## **Metropolitan Planning Area**

The CCRPC metropolitan planning area consists of the 19 Chittenden County municipalities. In the year 2019, the population of the County was 163,774. The land area is 539 square miles. Chittenden County is currently defined as being in “attainment” for air quality under the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 (CAAA).

## **Unified Planning Work Program**

The CCRPC’s Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) serves as the annual work plan for local and regional transportation projects and other planning activities. Each fiscal year (July 1 to June 30), the CCRPC prepares a UPWP that describes our numerous programs and identifies the transportation, land use and other planning activities and projects that the CCRPC is engaged in collaboration with its member municipalities and other state and regional partners and agencies. The UPWP also serves as a management tool, including each task’s staff manager, deadline, budget, and funding sources.

The process for developing the annual UPWP includes a careful consideration of critical transportation and land use issues facing the region and the analytical capabilities necessary to address them. This assessment is tied to the 2018 ECOS Regional Plan goals which encompass the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) for the region. Opportunities for public comment on the draft UPWP are available between January and May of each year, with a final public hearing in May prior to Board adoption of the UPWP.

## **Metropolitan Transportation Plan**

The Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) is the region’s principal transportation planning document that sets regional transportation priorities. The MTP must have a minimum 20-year time horizon and consider needs and issues across all transportation modes. It consists of short- and long-range strategies to address transportation needs that lead to the development of an integrated, inter-modal transportation system that facilitates the efficient movement of people and goods. As mandated by federal regulations, the MTP must both articulate and work towards the region’s comprehensive long-range land use plans, development objectives, and overall social, economic, environmental, system performance and energy conservation goals and objectives. It should also be consistent with the statewide long-range transportation plan.

Federal law requires the MTP to address ten metropolitan planning factors to ensure the federal funds spent on the region’s transportation system also address national level goals for transportation. The MTP must also be fiscally constrained, which means the projected capital and operating costs associated with all the transportation projects and programmatic actions in the MTP cannot exceed the projected level of financial resources available during the life cycle of the MTP. In addition, the CCRPC is required to make special efforts to engage all interested parties in its development.

## **Transportation Improvement Program**

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) implements the MTP through a prioritized and fiscally constrained four-year program of federally funded projects in Chittenden County. The TIP is updated on an annual basis and submitted for state and federal approval by the end of July.

The TIP includes the anticipated timing and costs for transportation projects in Chittenden County from planning through construction. Federal law requires the TIP to be fiscally constrained. In addition, documentation of private enterprise participation and financial capacity (as required for FTA Sections 3 and 9 programs) are included in the TIP. Projects in the TIP must be prioritized and adhere to project selection criteria established by the CCRPC. Finally, the TIP development process must give the public ample opportunities to review and comment in a constructive manner prior to document finalization.

## **Transportation Funding**

The CCRPC receives funding for regional transportation planning from several sources, but there are only two primary sources. Annually, the federal government, through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA), provides about 80% of the CCRPC's transportation funding. Under federal law, these funds must generally be matched by the recipient at a ratio of 80% federal and 20% non-federal. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the CCRPC, VTrans, and the Chittenden County Transportation Authority (dba GMT) includes guidance as to which agency provides the local match for various funding sources and work types. The responsibility for the non-federal matching funds for both FHWA and FTA funds is shared evenly between the CCRPC member municipalities and VTrans at 10% each. GMT provides 10% match for funding passed through to them. Local jurisdictions are annually assessed for the CCRPC share of the 10% of the non-federal match. VTrans or the local governments may provide additional matching funds to leverage federal funds for certain specific planning projects. Infrequently, matching funds may also include the value of "in-kind" labor donated by volunteers and municipal staff in support of specific UPWP tasks.

## **Title VI, Environmental Justice, and Limited-English Proficiency (LEP)**

Planning must be done with the involvement and for the benefit of all the region's residents. The CCRPC is guided by federal Title VI (Civil Rights Act of 1964, As Amended) and environmental justice (EJ) mandates, and we strive to not only meet these mandates, but to create an overall transparent, inclusive planning process where Title VI, EJ, and LEP are integrated into all of our United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) federally funded programs and plans and is a guide for our public participation efforts.



Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, As Amended, states that "no person in the United States, shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance." The Civil Rights Act of 1964, As Amended, has added sex (23 United States Code 324), age (Age Discrimination Act of 1975), and disability (Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990).

Federal Executive Order #12898 (*Federal Actions To Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations*) defines environmental justice as, "*the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.*" President Clinton issued Executive Order 12898 on February 11, 1994, which reinforces the importance of fundamental rights and legal requirements contained in Title VI and the National Environmental Policy Act and introduces low-income populations as an emphasis area (when addressing socio-economic concerns). Fair treatment means that no group of people, including a racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic group, should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations or the execution of federal, state, local, and tribal programs and policies. Recipients (such as Agency of Transportation, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, etc.) must identify EJ populations (EJ Mapping) and define a process to ensure that EJ populations participate in the Planning Process.

Federal Executive Order #13166 (*Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency*) defines LEP as "*ensuring that recipients of Federal financial assistance (recipients) provide meaningful access to their LEP applicants and beneficiaries.*" Recipients must identify LEP populations (LEP Mapping) and define a process to allow for reasonable accommodation of LEP persons and populations in the Planning Process.

The CCRPC recognizes the importance of including all populations in our work and strives to meet the requirements outlined in legal statute for the benefit of all residents. More information on Title VI, EJ, and LEP is available in the 2017 Public Participation Plan.

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# **Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Work Plan**

*(Unified Planning Work Program - UPWP)*

## **Legend:**

Project Completed or Not Funded	
New Land Use Project/Funds	
New Transportation Project/Funds	
Pending Project/Contract or General Question	
<b>Red Text Indicates Discrete Changes to Project Title/Description/Deliverable</b>	













































































