December 5, 2023

Advancing Equity Through Planning

Presented by:

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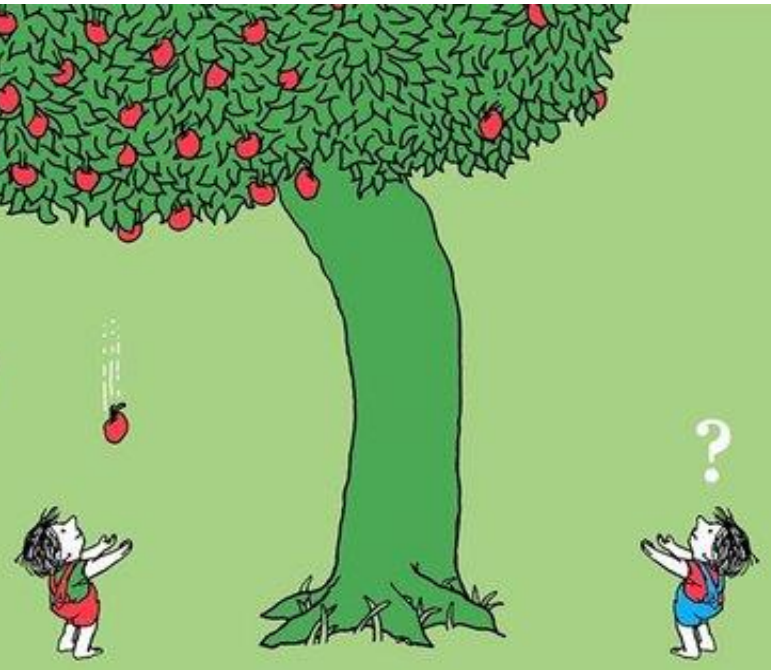
Chittenden County RPC

ccrpcvt.org/equity

Why Equity & Regional Planning?

Inequality

Unequal access to opportunities



With apologies to Shel Silverstein from @lunchbreath

Equity

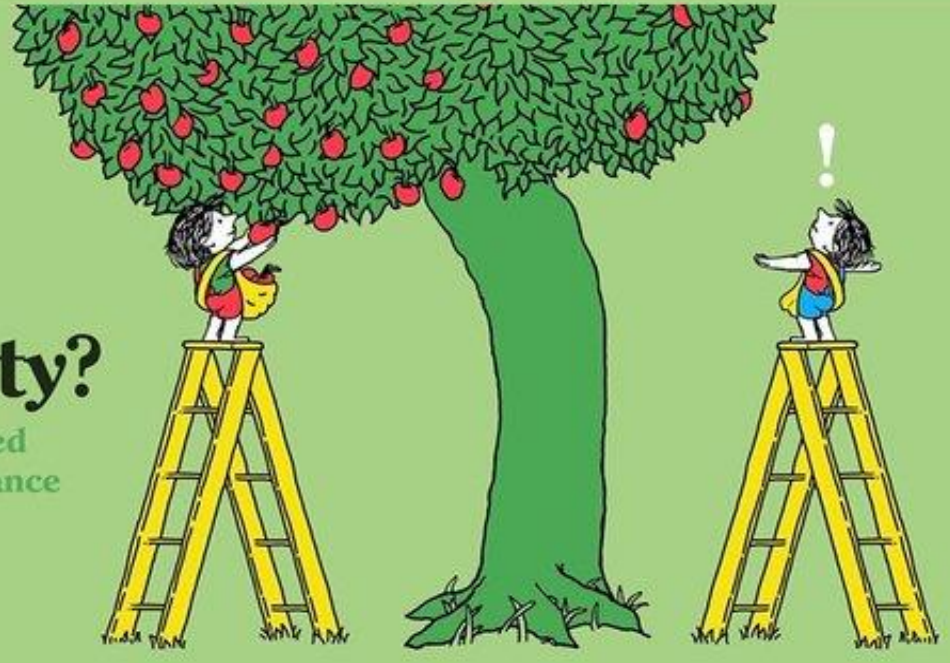
Custom tools that identify and address inequality

With apologies to Shel Silverstein from @lunchbreath

2019 Design In Tech Report | Addressing Imbalance

Equality?

Evenly distributed tools and assistance



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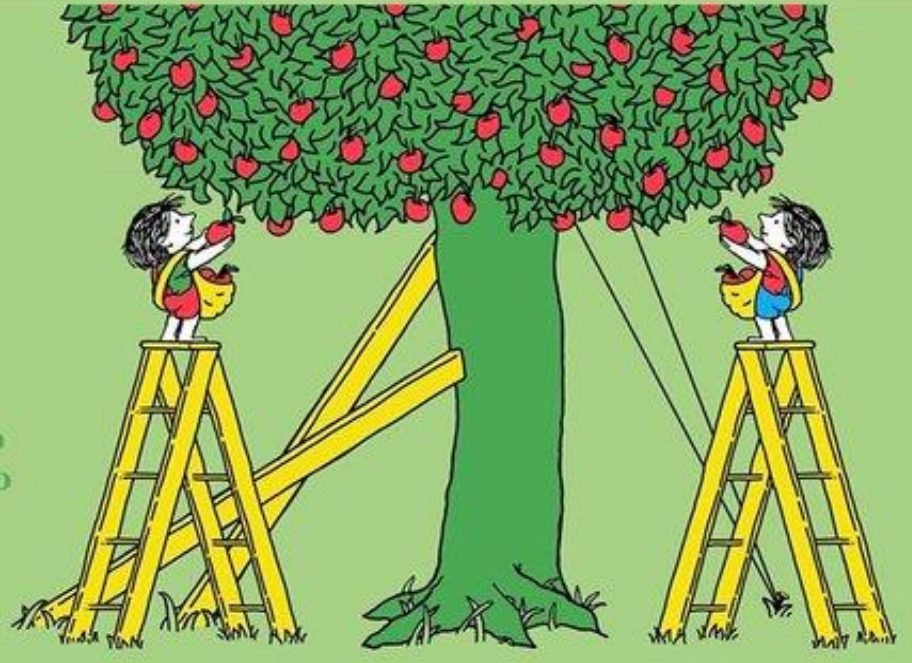
Justice

Fixing the system to offer equal access to both tools and opportunities



With apologies to Shel Silverstein from @lunchbreath

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Our Collective History: The Past is Recent!

"Before there was the United States, there was slavery. It is the basis of our economic and social order."

- Roughly $70 trillion dollars were made off free Black labor
- If disparities in wealth were to continue at the current pace, it would take Black families 228 years to amass the wealth that white families now have.
- 2022 marks the first year that the US will have been an independent nation for as long as slavery lasted on its soil. **No current day adult will be alive in the year in which African-Americans as a group will have been free for as long as they have been enslaved. That will not come until 2111.**

Planning's History

- Redlining
- Racial covenants
- Urban renewal
- Poor quality public housing
- Exclusionary zoning & regulations
- Highway construction

- Environmental injustices
- Financial policies
  - Disinvestment
  - Lending practices
  - Tax assessments
  - Audits
  - Black land loss
- + MANY MORE

"The prejudice of race appears to be stronger in the states that have abolished slavery than in those where it still exists; and nowhere is it so intolerable as in those states where servitude has never been known... The negro is free, but he can share neither the rights, nor the pleasures, nor the labor, nor the afflictions, nor the tomb of him whose equal he has been declared to be; and he cannot meet him upon fair terms in life or in death."

Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America 1831

Planning's History... In Vermont

- Unceded Indigenous territory
- State-sanctioned eugenics
- Exclusionary housing covenants
- Urban renewal & poor-quality public housing
- Exclusionary single-family zoning
- I-89 Construction
- Environmental & climate injustice

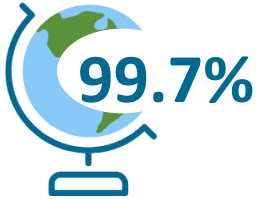
“My last plea as a Black Vermonter”

“Mississippi’s racism is the kind that will look you in your face and say, “Yes, I am a racist... Racism in Vermont is death by 1000 pin pricks... when you start with a population that can at least acknowledge the presence of racism it pushes the fight for equity twenty steps forward past the point of denial. How can we gain support to stop oppression from a population that won’t even say it exists?”

Where are we now?

Regional Context

Population Growth



of the population growth in Chittenden County over the last 10 years has been People of Color. This equates to **11,746** of the additional **11,778** people from 2010-2020. If this trend continues, there will be 60,000 new people of color by the year 2070.

Homeownership

Modern day homeownership disparities between Black and white households are shaped by systemic racism. Homeownership among Black and African American households is significantly lower than white households.

Of Black and African American households in Chittenden County:

86% Rent	14% Own

Margin of error: 1,134 (+/-320) *182 (+/- 81)*

Of White households in Chittenden County:

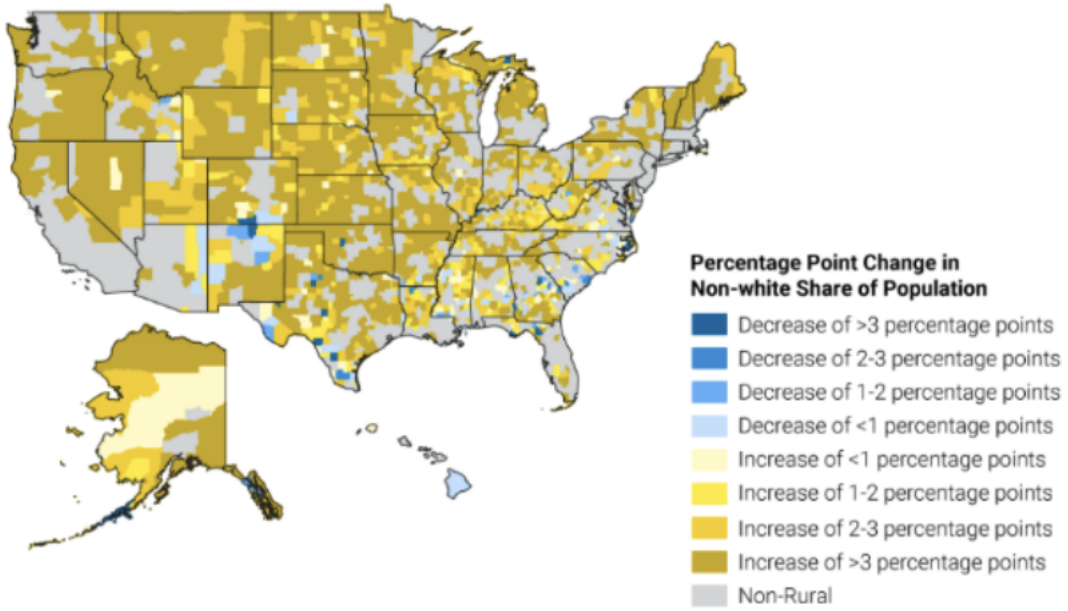
35% Rent	65% Own

Margin of error: 21,538 (+/-912) *40,101 (+/- 911)*

1. Rural America became more racially and ethnically diverse over the last decade

Contrary to the dominant narratives that use "rural" as a synonym for "white," 24% of rural Americans were people of color in 2020.[2] While rural America is still less diverse than the nation as a whole (42.2% people of color), it is diversifying as well: The median rural county saw its population of color increase by 3.5 percentage points between 2010 and 2020 (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Change in Rural Population of Color, 2010-2020



Source: Brookings analysis of 2010 and 2020 Census data.

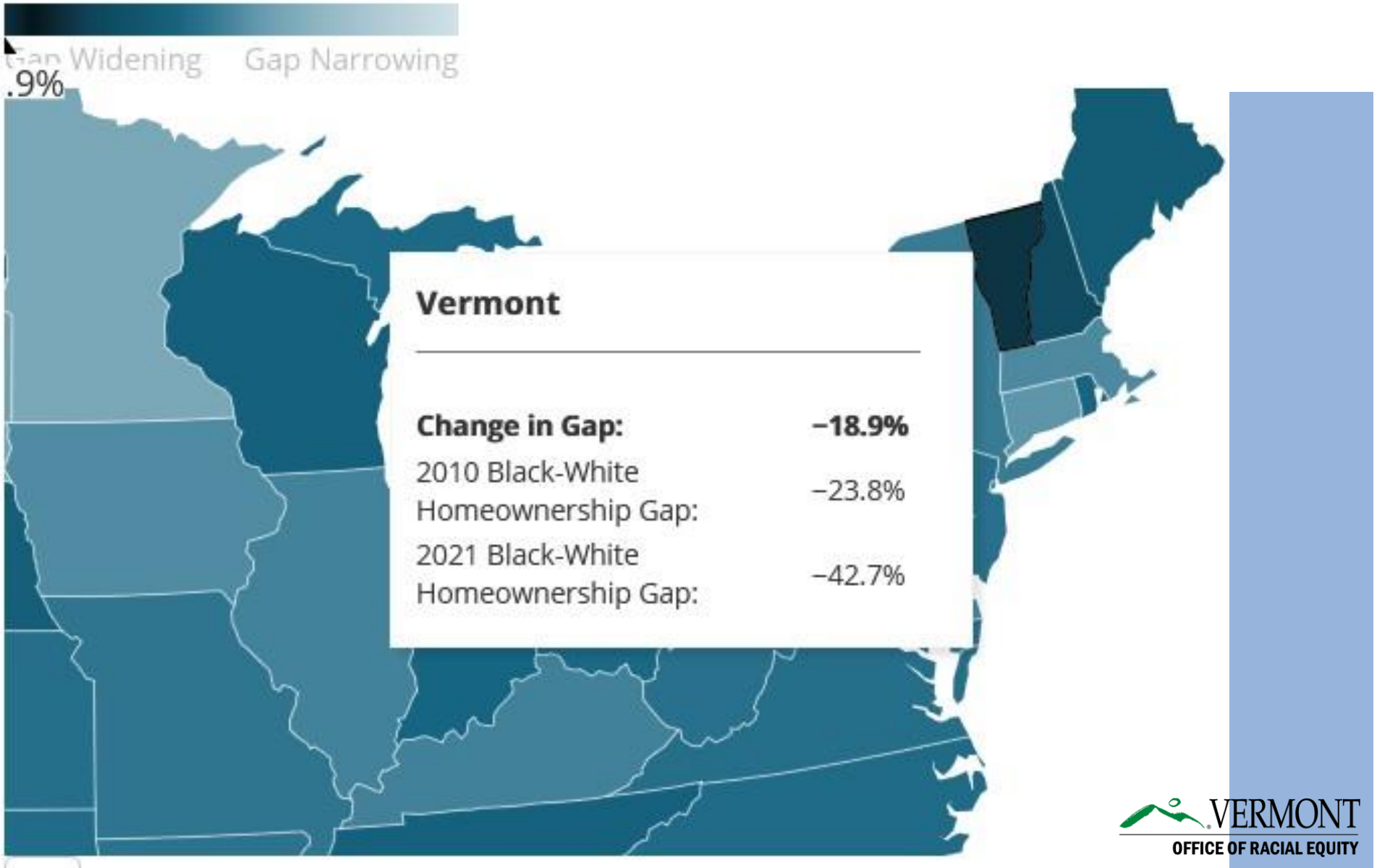
B | Metropolitan Policy Program at BROOKINGS

Rural Diversity

22% of rural populations are racially/ethnically diverse.

Rural America is growing racially more diverse.

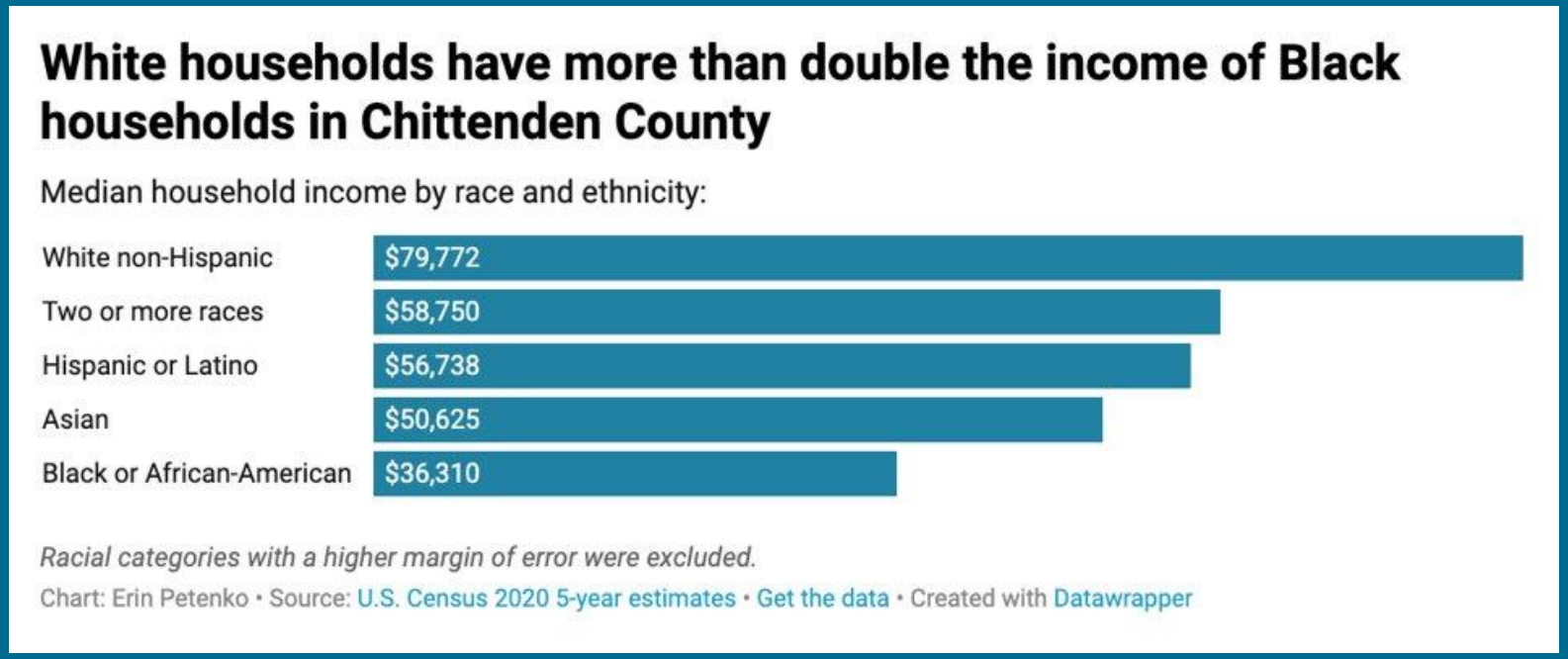
How the Black-White Homeownership Gap Has Changed Since 2010



VERMONT
OFFICE OF RACIAL EQUITY

Income Inequality

“In the area of wealth, we’ve seen almost no change, none, since the civil rights days... the wealth disparity has gotten wider.”



Income inequality rising steadily since the 1970s (by 27%).

16% of Chittenden County residents are "severely cost-burdened"

Vermont's rates of homelessness are (almost) the worst in the country

By Lola Duffort
February 7, 2023, 7:56 pm

Among the lowest vacancy rate in the country.

Over ½ of Chittenden County residents pay over 1/3 of their income on housing.

Homelessness rates by state

Based on a point-in-time count conducted in each state in January:

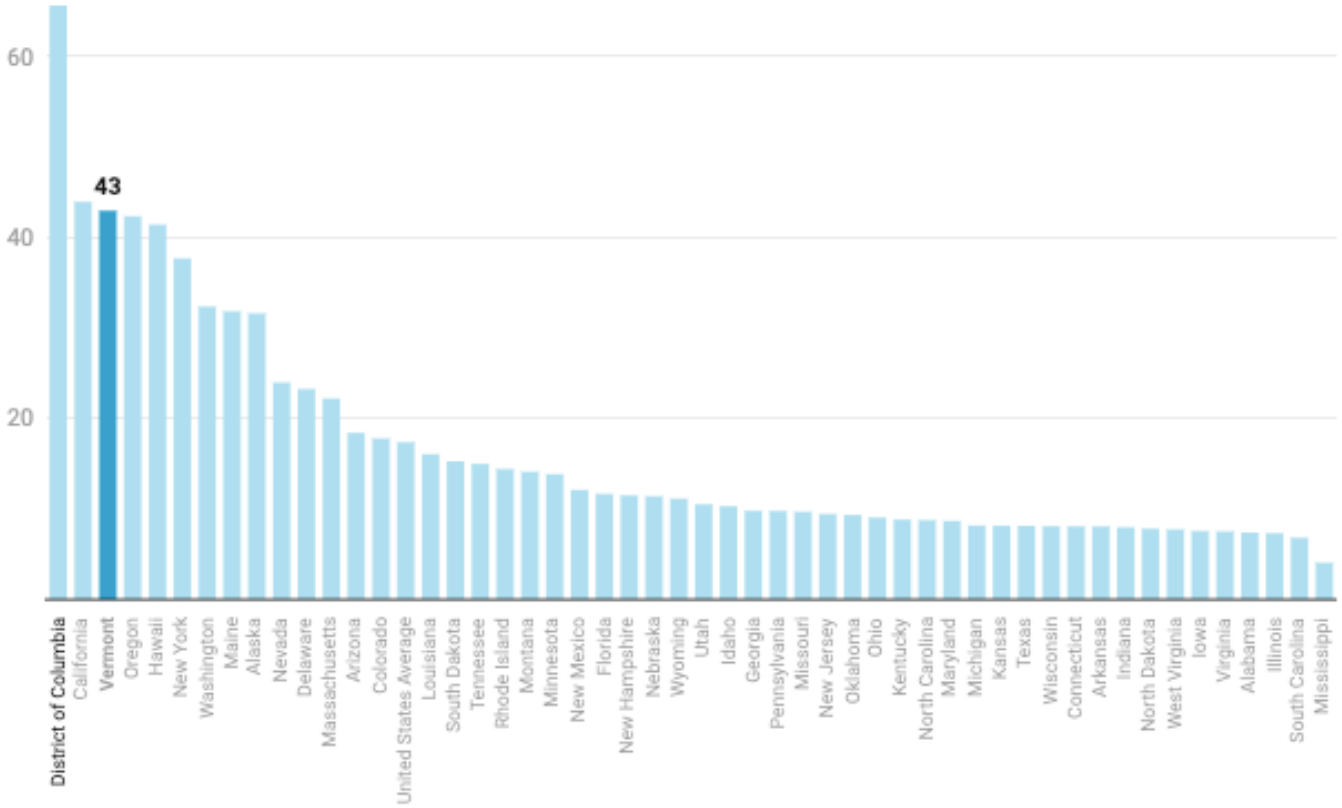


Chart: Erin Petenko • Source: HUD • Get the data • Created with Datawrapper

Climate Change

“Not ‘Going to put it on the most expensive land...’”

10% of the State’s manufactured home lots are in flood plains.

ECONOMY

The flood waters disproportionately hit Vermont’s affordable housing stock — at the worst time

“Just the lack of available affordable housing in high, dry places, is a major factor in all of this,” said state Sen. Kesha Ram Hinsdale.

By Lola Duffort
July 31, 2023, 6:19 am

How can we better plan for *everyone?*

Our Approach: Targeted Universalism

- Targeted universalism means setting universal goals pursued by targeted processes to achieve those goals
- “a universal reduction goal with targeted and tailored solutions based on the structures, cultures, and geographies of certain groups to help them overcome unique barriers”
- A why-not-both approach
- Focus broadly on how social determinants affect all Americans (versus a specific ethnic group or socioeconomic class)
- Race-conscious rather than race-based

Our Theory of Change

NORMALIZE

Develop a shared understanding & values

ORGANIZE

Build staff & organizational capacity, skills, competencies, and infrastructure

OPERATIONALIZE

Put theory into action through implementing tools for decision-making, measurement, & accountability

Recent Work

Addressing inequities in our communities is one of the eight key strategies in our regional plan.

2020

Outlined a **commitment** to address systemic racism and inequities in our communities

Increased internal **staff and board work** to strengthen equity

2021

Hired an **equity consultant**

Hosted a ***Planning for Equity*** **summit** to learn from community members, partners, and municipalities

Completed an **organizational equity assessment** which included recommended actions

Hosted a series of **equity workshops** for staff, board, and community members

2022

Hired an **Equity and Engagement Manager**

Established an **Equity Advisory Committee** to oversee CCRPC activities to ensure equitable processes and outcomes

Equity Advisory Committee

New (*formally established November 2022*)

Membership

Currently 18 members, including primarily community leaders with diverse lived experiences, interests, and expertise; CCRPC Board members; and CCRPC staff (non-voting)

Priorities

- **Support the Equity and Engagement Manager**
- **Provide accountability**
- **Identify opportunities for direct action**
- **Engage with Chittenden County residents**

Equity Advisory Committee *Work in Progress*

Priority 1: Support the Equity and Engagement Mgr.

Learn and build relationships

Increase internal capacity to address equity

Sustain and strengthen Equity Advisory Committee

Support municipalities in their equity work

Explore funding opportunities

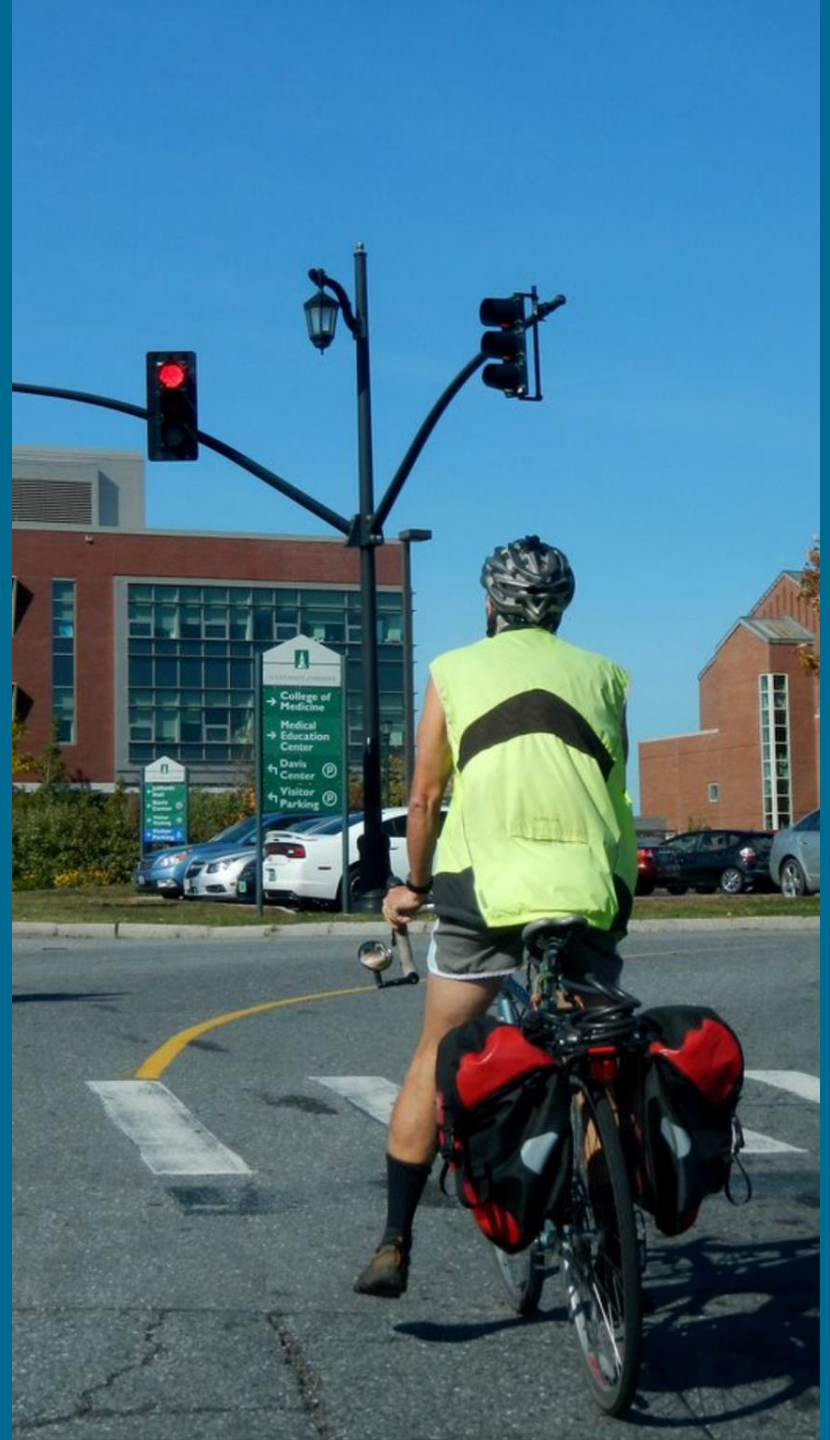
Priority 2: Provide Accountability

Develop CCRPC Equity Statement

Develop CCRPC Code of Conduct

Develop an Organizational Equity Strategic Action Plan

Update *Public Participation Plan*, including stipend policy



Equity Advisory Committee *Work in Progress*

Priority 3: Identify Opportunities for Direct Action

Support ECOS Plan update public engagement

Participate in & support project engagement opportunities

Priority 4: Engage with Chittenden County residents

Work on CCRPC projects directly:

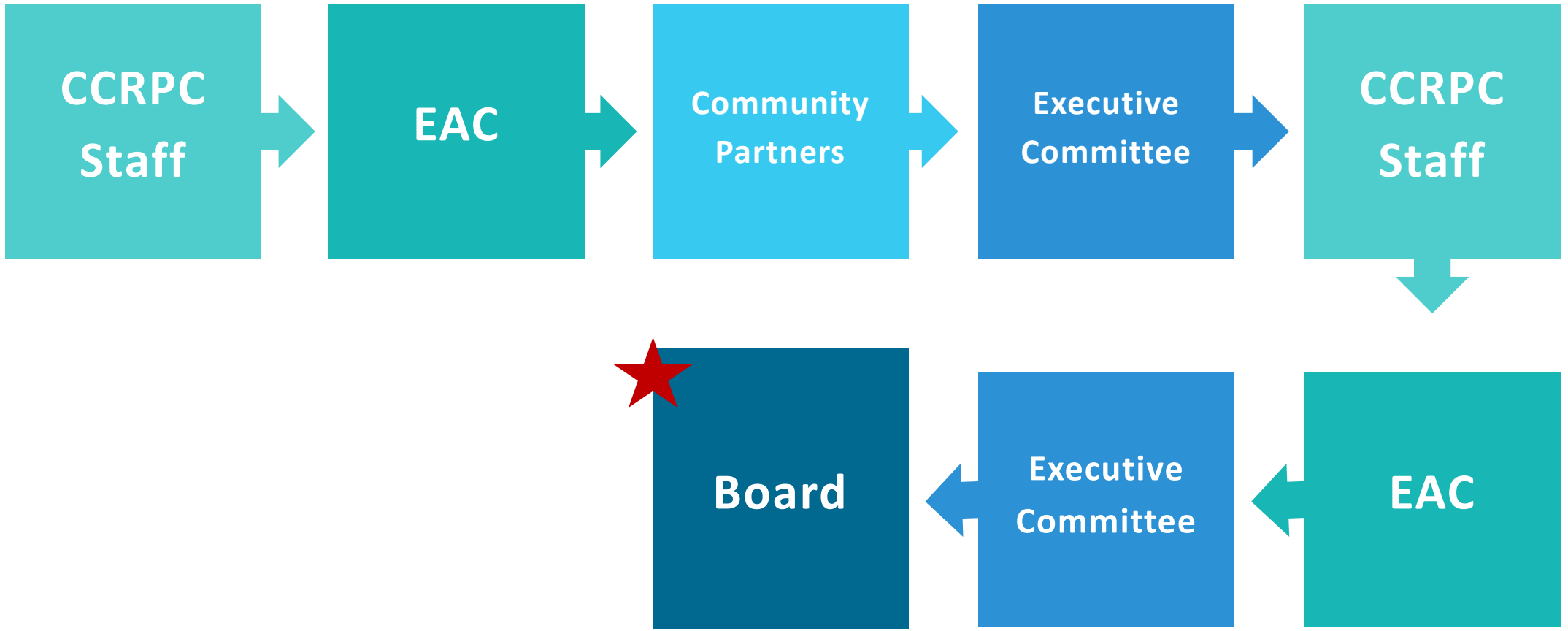
- Serve on project advisory committees
- Review public engagement plans
- Help with community engagement

Project examples:

West Central Vermont Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

Winooski Walk/Bike Plan

Policy Development Process



Equity Statement & Commitment

Acknowledgement of the Problem: CCRPC acknowledges that structural oppression contributes to persistent disparities and condemns racism and discrimination in all its forms.
Recognition of Our Role & Responsibility: As a governmental planning organization with decision-making influence, the work of CCRPC significantly impacts people throughout Chittenden County. We hold ourselves responsible for identifying and addressing historic and current inequities in our own practices as well as those of the planning field as a whole.
Our Commitment: We commit to constantly evaluating our work to transform our actions, policies, and procedures through continuous education, leveraging assets to improve access, and meaningful collaboration with those most impacted by the problems we seek to address.
Our Goal: In doing so, we hope to co-create a community where identity and socio-economic status no longer influence life outcomes and where all – not the select few—are heard, seen, belong, and treated as experts in their own experience.

Organizational Code of Conduct

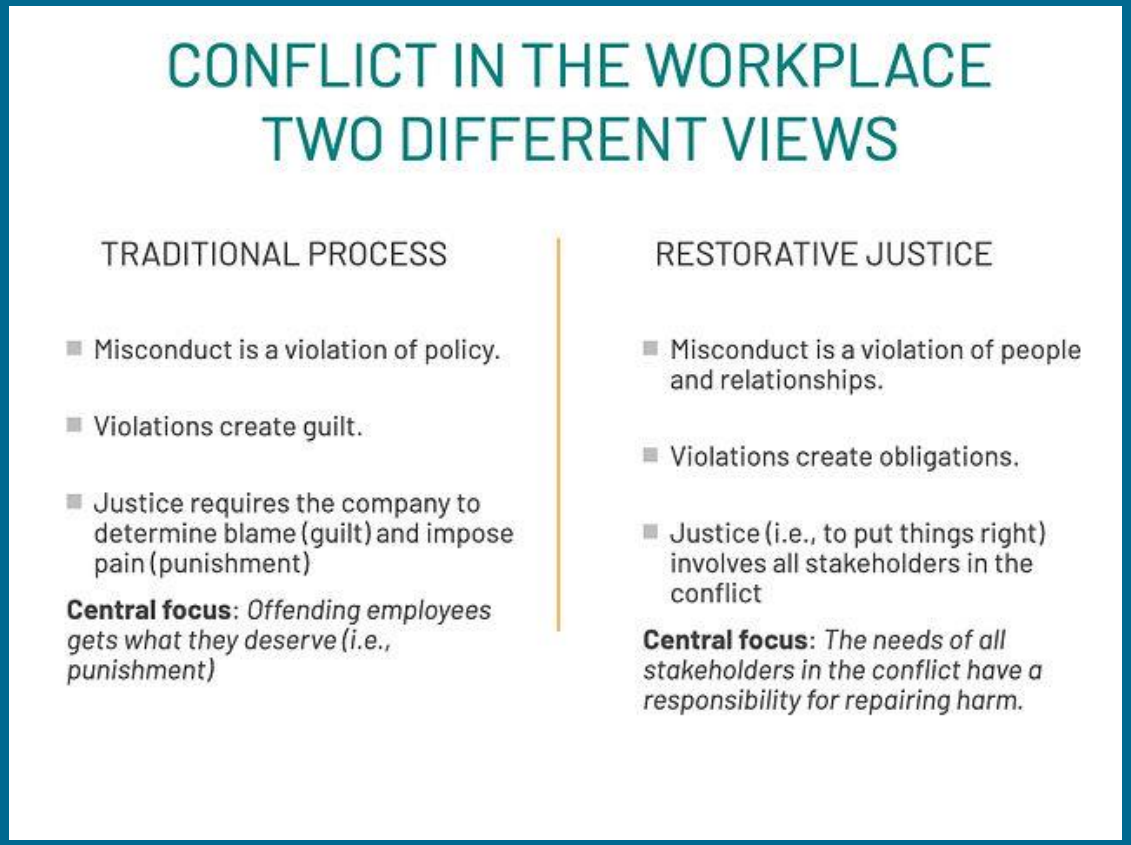
Organizational Values

- INTEGRITY
- ACCOUNTABILITY
- INCLUSION
- RESPECT

Code of Conduct

Behavioral expectations to uphold organizational values

Conflict Resolution Process – Restorative Justice

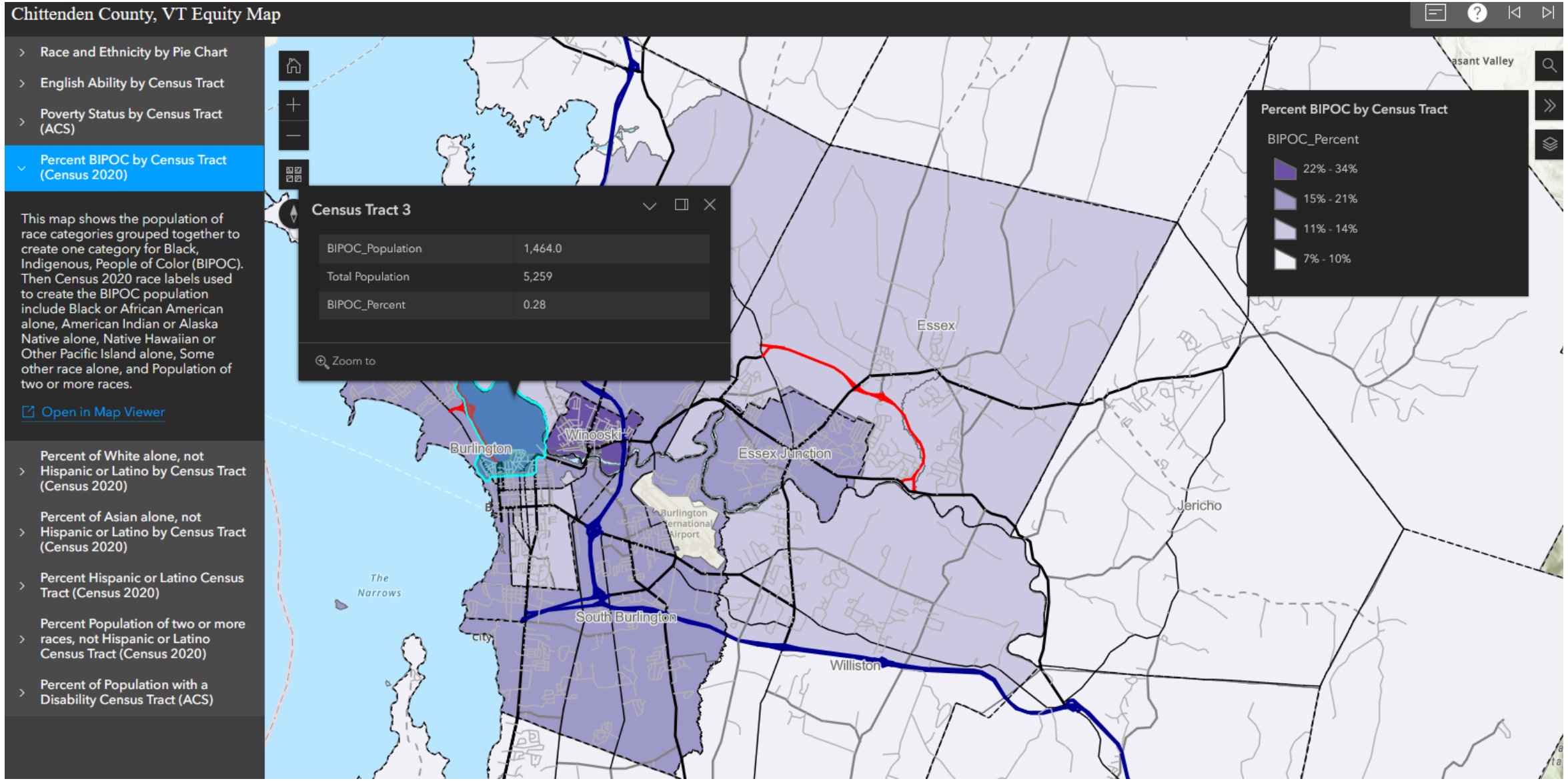


Equity Action Plan

Pillar > Goal > Action	Outcome
BUILD | Build CCRPC's internal organizational capacity	Accountability, transparency, and awareness within CCRPC on the importance of equity work and how it will be achieved.
TRANSFORM | Transform CCRPC's project and regional planning processes	A formalized processes and resources allocated to translating CCRPC equity goals into action.
COLLABORATE | Collaborate to increase meaningful engagement and mutually beneficial relationships with marginalized and underrepresented communities	CCRPC planning projects that are generated with, and not for communities and the lasting stewardship of mutually beneficial relationships.
LEAD | Leverage CCRPC's authority, expertise, and resources to support member municipalities and become a regional equity leader	Collaboration across the planning sector in Vermont and join the national conversation for comprehensive systemic change.

Equity Map Viewer

https://www.ccrpcvt.org/equity/



Religious & Cultural Days of Significance

2023 Religious and Cultural Days of Significance						
CONTACT: For questions or suggestions, contact Emma Vaughn, CCRPC Communications Manager: evaughn@ccrpcvt.org						
(F) = Federal Holiday // Orange Fill = CCRPC Holiday						
Month	**Day**	**Day of Week**	**Holiday Name**	**Religious Groups**	**More Information**	**Recommended Accomodations**
November	7	Tuesday	**Federal Election Day**		Not a federal holiday. No work restrictions.	
November	11	Saturday	**Veterans Day (F)**			
November	12	Sunday	**Diwali**	Hindu	Festival of Lights; one of four seasonal celebrations in India.	Avoid scheduling important deadlines, events and activities on this date.
November	23	Thursday	**Thanksgiving (F)**			CCRPC holiday. Avoid scheduling important deadlines, events and activities on this date.
November	24	Friday	**Day after Thanksgiving**			CCRPC holiday. Avoid scheduling important deadlines, events and activities on this date.
December	Dec 7-15	Sundown Thursday-Sundown Friday	**Hanukkah**	Jewish	Work permitted, not a work holiday.	Provide food accommodation as requested (kosher restrictions apply—potato pancakes, doughnuts or other fried food is customary).
December	8	Friday	**Bodhi Day**	Buddhist	Buddhist holiday. Some observe the holiday in January.	
December	24	Sunday	**Christmas Eve**			CCRPC holiday. Avoid scheduling important deadlines, events and activities on this date.
December	25	Monday	**Christmas Day (F)**	Roman Catholic, Protestant	Celebration of the birth of Christ.	This is a national holiday in the United States, so special accommodations are likely not required.
December	Dec 26-Jan 1	Tuesday-Monday	**Kwanzaa**	Cultural African American and Pan-African holiday; Interfaith	As an African American and Pan-African holiday celebrated by millions throughout the world African community, Kwanzaa brings a cultural message which speaks to the best of	

Questions? Thoughts? Feedback?