



2018 Chittenden County ECOS Plan

Supplement 1 – ECOS Plan Process
First Public Hearing Draft 1/19/2018

For a healthy,
inclusive, and
prosperous
community



This plan is the Regional Plan, Metropolitan Transportation Plan, and Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy in one.

**This plan can be found online at:
www.ecosproject.com/plan**

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2018 Chittenden County ECOS Plan

SUPPLEMENT 1 – ECOS PROCESS SUMMARY

2018 ECOS Plan Process

In 2018 the ECOS Plan was updated with emphasis on three specific sections: the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), and enhanced energy planning. The Plan was also reorganized to bring the implementation section up front. The data, analysis, and specifics of the Regional Plan, MTP, CEDS and energy methodology are now located in separate supplements. In addition, minor Future Planning Area changes were made to address local zoning changes, forest integrity was addressed in response to Act 171, and other minor edits were made.

CCRPC's Long Range Planning Committee led the effort to update the ECOS Plan with CCRPC's Technical Advisory Committee acting as the working group on the MTP; the energy sub-committee acting as the working group on the enhanced energy planning; and the GBIC Staff and Board acting as advisors on the CEDS. In addition, the ECOS Leadership team provided guidance on the update.

While CCRPC, worked closely with its member municipalities throughout the update process, public comment periods were also held as follows:

- Enhanced Energy Plan: comment period was open from October 31, 2017 to November 22, 2017. 79 comments were received. CCRPC also conducted presentations for Planning Commissions, Energy Committees, and Conservation Commissions around Chittenden County and hosted two trainings at our offices focused on the Act 174 energy planning standards. In total, between 2016 and 2017, CCRPC staff presented to 16 of our member municipalities. Additionally, CCRPC formed an Energy Sub-Committee to inform the development of the Plan. The Sub-Committee was comprised of a diverse group of municipal representatives with knowledge of various aspects of energy planning. The Energy Sub-Committee guided the development of the energy sections.
- CEDS: comment period was open from November 17, 2017 to December 8, 2017. 55 comments were received.
- MTP: comment period was open from December 18, 2017 to January 5, 2018. 65 comments were received.

These comments were incorporated where applicable. The 2018 ECOS Plan was adopted by the CCRPC on June 20, 2018; and the CEDS component of it was also adopted by GBIC, as the official CEDS Committee.

There was also a minor ECOS Plan amendment in 2016 to better address a few statutory requirements. Only a few sections of the Plan were updated at that time.

Original 2013 ECOS Plan Process

The Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) is charged by the State of Vermont with preparing a regional plan at least every eight years to protect the County's resources and to guide its development. The CCRPC is also charged with establishing a Metropolitan Transportation Plan every five years to address the long term transportation needs of Chittenden County. The Greater Burlington Industrial Corporation (GBIC) is charged with establishing a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) every five years to establish economic development priorities for Chittenden County. An opportunity to update all three regional planning documents with one process became available when the region received a Partnership for Sustainable Communities grant (a partnership of Federal Housing and Urban Development, Environmental Protection Agency, and US Department of Transportation). The ECOS Plan *is* the combined Chittenden County Regional Plan, Metropolitan Transportation Plan and Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

The ECOS grant allowed CCRPC and GBIC to significantly expand both the depth of analysis and public engagement in developing a unified Regional, Transportation, and Economic Plan for Chittenden County. Beginning in March 2011, 65 partner organizations and many others have gone through a five phase process to develop this Plan (see below). All participants signed a memorandum of understanding agreeing to participate in the process, and to review the work with their individual organizations that they were representing. In addition, GBIC formed a CEDS committee composed of the GBIC board and Cynosure board members. The composition of this committee was intended to comply with EDA requirements for overseeing the preparation of a CEDS.

The ECOS Planning process started with the agreement of several key principles: transparency of process, setting priorities at each step, and accountability. Additionally, there has been a focus on building on previous planning work rather than starting from scratch, as much great work has already been done; and there has been a strong emphasis on community engagement.

The results of this collaborative process can be divided into two parts: analysis and actions. The first part (Supplement 2, the [Analysis Reports](#) and the ECOS Scorecard) looks at community goals, with an analysis of our existing situation, and establishes key indicators to measure our progress on an annual basis. Out of that process came a list of 33 concerns. The second part (the main part of the ECOS Plan) looks at the choices we have to address these needs and recommends priority strategies and actions with a focus on implementation.

There is a commitment to annually measuring the community indicators to see if we are achieving our goals and also measuring our collective performance in implementing the actions. This is similar to the Results-based Accountability Model™ that is used by United Way and many other organizations.

The specific process the ECOS Steering Committee and partners went through to develop this plan is summarized below.

1. Goals (found in Supplement 2) – based on the 60 existing planning documents.
 - a. ECOS Steering Committee Retreat – Held on May 25, 2011 to vet the Draft Goal Statements; there were 67 participants.
 - b. Public review from July 14 to September 30, 2011 including sub-committee reviews resulting in 123 comments from 65 groups/individuals.
 - c. Vision, Principles, and Goals were approved by the ECOS Steering Committee on October 26, 2011.
2. Analysis (referenced in Supplement 2, specific reports are here: <http://www.ecosproject.com/plan/sector-analysis/>)
 - a. Technical experts were brought in to analyze topic areas including economy, housing, land use and transportation, energy, natural resources, public health, education, and climate change. It is important to note that the land use and transportation analysis report is based on a significant scenario planning exercise conducted by the CCRPC (CCMPO at that time) from 2008 to 2010. Over 900 people participated in the workshops and follow-up survey.
 - b. Public review from November 15 to December 31, 2011 resulting in 686 comments from 18 individuals/groups. At the same time the technical experts and sub-committees continued to review and improve the analysis reports.
 - c. Analysis Reports were accepted by the ECOS Steering Committee on January 25, 2012.
3. Indicators (referenced in Supplement 2, found in the ECOS Scorecard: <https://app.resultsscorecard.com/Scorecard/Embed/8502>)
 - a. The University of Vermont Center for Rural Studies assisted with creating a possible list of indicators that will help monitor our progress toward goal attainment on an annual basis.
 - b. The draft Indicators were released for public review from February 1 to March 16, 2012. Over 400 comments were received.
 - c. The Interim Indicator Report was accepted by the ECOS Steering Committee on April 25, 2012.
 - d. The ECOS Steering Committee, CEDS Committee, CCRPC's Long Range Planning Committee and sub-committees (Natural Systems, Transportation, Social Community, Health, Education, Climate, Economic Development, Energy, and Housing) reviewed and recommended revised Indicators between July and September, 2012.
4. Plan Priorities (found in the main section of the 2018 ECOS Plan)
 - a. Public engagement activities managed by Burlington City Arts were conducted from June through August to gather more community input on concerns and strategies for addressing those concerns. 130 hours of public engagement took place in these efforts with over 600 people participating. See more detail about these activities below.
 - b. In order to connect with as many diverse constituents as possible, CCRPC's Equity Coordinator, met with representatives from community and issue-oriented groups and organizations whose priorities are to serve marginalized communities. Input from over 600 people has been collected over the eighteen month process. See more detail about this public engagement below.
 - c. The ECOS Steering Committee, CEDS Committee, CCRPC's Long Range Planning Committee, sub-committees and partners developed concerns and recommended strategies and actions between July and October, 2012. The concerns are listed at the

end of Supplement 2. Over-arching strategies and actions are in the main section of the 2018 ECOS Plan.

- d. These concerns, strategies and actions were incorporated into the Discussion Draft of the ECOS Plan, which was reviewed by the public between November 15 and December 31, 2012. A specific public engagement website tool was created to get direct feedback on the strategies and actions. Approximately 400 people participated - 130 comments were made, 2800 votes were cast. The most favorable responses were related to the water quality, planned development, and economic development strategies. Direct discussions were also held with each municipality's elected body from November, 2012 through January, 2013.

5. Plan Implementation

- a. The ECOS Steering Committee, CCRPC's Long Range Planning Committee and sub-committees and partners developed draft ECOS Criteria for prioritizing ECOS Grant projects between April 25 and July 25, 2012.
- b. A request for proposed ECOS Grant projects was released on August 1, 2012 with proposals submitted by September 15, 2012. 55 grant applications were received for a total request of \$2,205,537 and a total proposed investment of \$4,274,715.
- c. The ECOS Steering Committee awarded grant funds to eight (8) projects, for a total of \$280,000 on October 24, 2012. These projects were referred to as "Funded Vital Projects" in the actions section of the original 2013 ECOS Plan.

6. ECOS Plan Adoption

- a. The revised Draft ECOS Plan was approved by the ECOS Steering Committee on January 30, 2013 and recommended to CCRPC and CEDS Committee for adoption.
- b. The CCRPC Executive Committee, on behalf of the full Board, approved the first Public Hearing Draft on February 6, 2013. The second Public Hearing Draft was approved by CCRPC and the CEDS Committee on April 17, 2013.
- c. Public hearings were held by CCRPC on March 20, 2013 and May 22, 2013. Both of these hearings were preceded by 30 day public comment periods.
- d. The Chittenden County ECOS Plan was adopted by CCRPC on June 19, 2013 and by GBIC/CEDS Committee on June 25, 2013.

Community Engagement Specifics

Community engagement is the foundation of the ECOS Plan. Meaningful community engagement breaks down silos and shrinks the distance between people from diverse and divergent perspectives, expertise, and experience. In order to build a vision and create a plan that leads to equitable access and opportunities for everyone, engagement must include people of all income, racial, and ethnic groups, with particular attention to groups that have been historically left out of the public policy decision-making processes. Intentional and innovative methods need to be developed that foster inclusion of and engagement by low-income communities and communities from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups.

Meaningful community engagement is not a one-time interview or survey; it is the development of an ongoing relationship with a continuous loop for input and feedback on decisions and outcomes. Successful community engagement leads to transformative engagement where democratic mechanisms are created to ensure that shared power and decision-making control are vested in marginalized communities.

As in the rest of the country, demographics in Chittenden County are dramatically changing. While the White, non-Hispanic population has slowly grown about four percent from 2000 to 2010, the population of underrepresented racial and ethnic groups has grown at a much more rapid pace, most over fifty percent. Chittenden County also has a growing population of those who make under 200% of the federal poverty level. (See <http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/index.cfm>.) Due to these changing demographics, it is critical to establish inclusive methods for outreach and meaningful engagement so we may achieve greater equitable outcomes for our region. In order to connect with as many historically underrepresented constituents as possible, CCRPC's Equity Coordinator met with individuals from community and issue-oriented groups and organizations whose priorities are to serve marginalized communities. The Equity Coordinator also met with key informants and informal leaders of various underrepresented ethnic and cultural groups. Input from over 600 people from marginalized communities has been collected over an eighteen month process. An initial large gathering of representatives from diverse cultural groups took place on September 24, 2011 to introduce the ECOS project and invite their input and participation. Follow up meetings for input and feedback have included individual meetings, personal interviews, focus groups, and various gatherings. Input has been collected from people in the following groups: persons of various socioeconomic statuses, diverse racial and ethnic communities, the aged and the young. New Americans that participated include immigrants from: Bosnia, Bhutan, Burundi, the Congo, Iraq, Kenya, Russia, Somali, including both Somali Bantu and ethnic, Sudan, Turkey, and Vietnam. The Equity Coordinator ensured that feedback was continuous through the development of this Plan.

In addition, the ECOS Project teamed-up with organizational partner Burlington City Arts to do outreach and community engagement. The goal was to learn about residents' priorities for initiatives – “**What** should we do and **who** should do it?” – by engaging community members in different creative endeavors as a means to reflect on what's important to them: what they like about living here, and what they would like to see change. Rather than conducting a survey, this creative, qualitative approach was meant to explore peoples' ideas and feelings about the institutions they interact with and their surroundings.

WHAT WE LEARNED

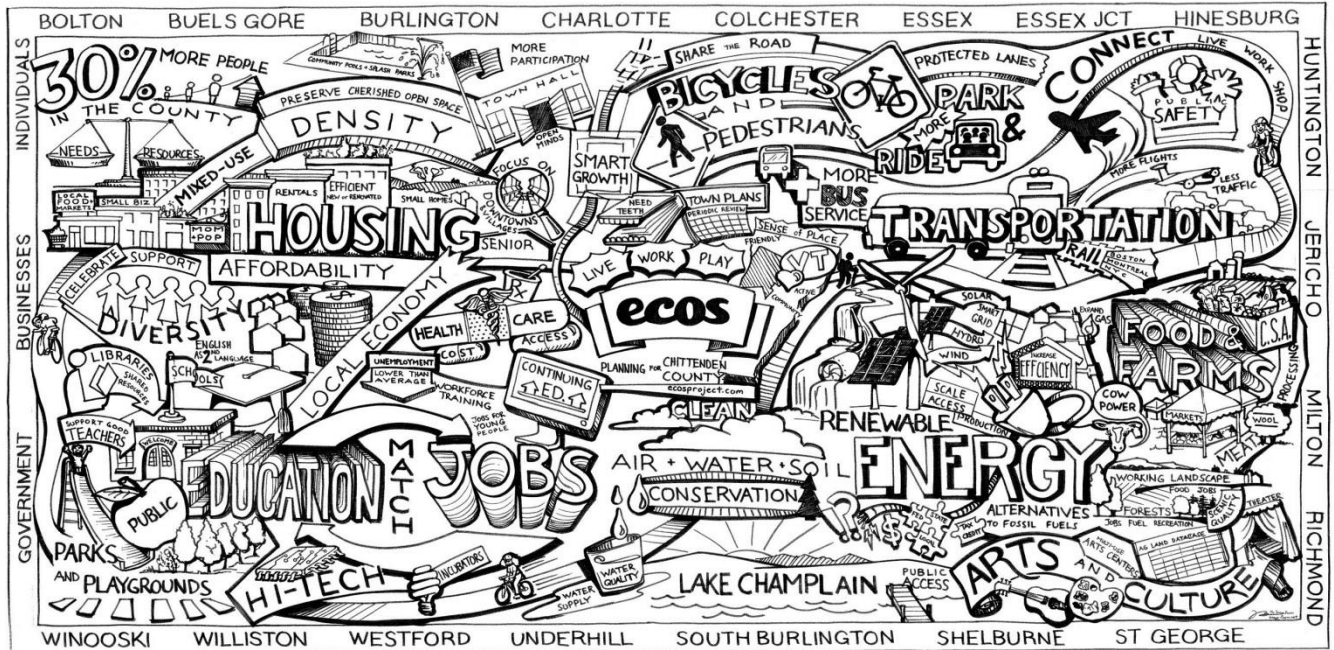
It's not surprising that most people who live here – whether young, old, new comer or 7th generation – all care about similar things: protecting the environment and our open lands; affordable housing; a variety of transportation concerns, including a desire for more busses and bike paths; access to health care, good schools and job training; and access to healthy foods. From the works on display, you'll see these themes expressed in different ways. The ECOS Project will now take all this input, and integrate it into the project's priorities moving forward.

The Burlington City Arts engagement activities included:

❖ Community-created murals

- **WHAT:** We went to four different towns (we couldn't go to all 19!) and conducted workshops with residents.
- **PROCESS Part I:** We led them through a series of exercises and discussions, where their thoughts and ideas were visualized live by illustrator Matt Heywood. Then we asked them to indicate their priorities by adding colored stickers to the mural indicating who (Individuals, Businesses or Government) they thought should do what.

- **PROCESS Part II:** Then we took those murals out into the public – to Church Street during the Discover Jazz Festival, and to the Champlain Valley Fair – and asked passers-by to draw on the murals, indicating what their priorities are for the County.
- **PROCESS Part III:** Illustrator Matt Heywood then took all of the original drawings and synthesized them into a single work, which further reflects the threads of the conversations and reinforces the themes discussed.



Mural by Matt Heywood, The Image Farm

❖ Community Portraits

- **WHAT:** While Chittenden County's growth includes many people from many places, a good number of them are "new Americans," who have often come to this area because of difficult situations in their homelands. The immigrants have tended to concentrate in Burlington and Winooski, though previous influxes of new comers have also settled in Essex and South Burlington, among other towns.
- **PROCESS:** We recruited photographer Dan Higgins to learn about the interests and concerns of different groups of New Americans, who are in different stages of assimilation into our communities. The series of portraits are the result of his sensitive and generous time with people, who invited him into their world to capture their current experience. The words that accompany the exhibit are their responses to the question of what works, what doesn't work, and, from their perspectives, what could be improved in the Chittenden County of the future.

❖ Youth Creative Writing

- **WHAT:** The decisions we make now are going to be inherited by our children, and so we wanted to find out what young people are thinking about the future, and what is important to them.
- **PROCESS:** We partnered with the Young Writer's Project to create a prompt for their engaged community of young writers, asking them "What does 2035 look like to you?"

The three winning entries and two honorable mentions can be found on the ECOS website. The winning three pieces are also recorded by the authors.

2013 ECOS Steering Committee Members

Town of Bolton

Rodney Pingree, Leslie Pelch

Town of Buel's Gore

Garret Mott

City of Burlington

Miro Weinberger, Peter Owens, David
White, Bill Keough, Andy Montroll,
Karen Paul, (Former Participants Bob
Kiss, Larry Kupferman)

Town of Charlotte

Charles Russell, Marty Illick

Town of Colchester

Marc Landry

Town of Essex

Linda Myers, Irene Wrenner, Max Levy

Village of Essex Junction

Jon Lajza, Lori Houghton

Town of Hinesburg

Andrea Morgante, Joe Colangelo

Town of Huntington

Edmund Booth

Town of Jericho

Catherine McMains, Tim Nulty, Kim Mercer

Town of Milton

Lou Mossey, Lori Donna

Village of Richmond

Geoffrey Urbanik (Former Participant Erik
Filkhorn)

Town of St. George

Phil Gingrow

Town of Shelburne

Bob Roesler, Jim Dudley

Town of South Burlington

Rosanne Greco, Sandra Dooley (Former
Participant Sandy Miller)

Town of Underhill

Steve Owen, Dick Albertini, Kari Papelbon

Town of Westford

Dave Tilton, Suzanne Blanchard

Town of Williston

Ginny Lyons

City of Winooski

Megan Moir, Tom Buckley

AARP

Jennifer Wallace Brodeur

Alpha & Omega Christian Center

Oscar Hernandez

Association of Africans Living in Vermont

Yacouba Bogre

**Burlington City Arts*

Doreen Kraft, Sara Katz

Burlington Legacy Project

Jennifer Green (Former Participant Margaret
Bozik)

Champlain Housing Trust

Michael Monte, Brenda Torpy

**Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity*

Jan Demers, Ted Wimpey (Former Participant
Kevin Stapleton)

Champlain Water District

Jim Fay, Bernie Lemieux

Chittenden County's Reading to End Racism

Denise Dunbar

*Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission
(MPO)*

Michele Boomhower

Chittenden County School Superintendents

Elaine Pinckney, Jeanne Collins

Chittenden County Transportation Authority

Jon Moore, Aaron Frank, Meredith Birkett

Chittenden Solid Waste District
Tom Moreau

Fletcher Allen Health Care
Penrose Jackson

**Greater Burlington Industrial Corporation (GBIC)*
Frank Cioffi, Curt Carter, Seth Bowden

Home Builders and Remodelers Association of Northern Vermont
Amanda Ibey (Former Participant Joe Sinagra)

IBM
Thom Jagielski

Intervale Center
Travis Marcotte, Mandy Davis

Just Transformations
Denise Dunbar

Lake Champlain Basin Program
Jim Brangan, Bill Howland

Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce
Tom Torti, Dawn Francis

Local Motion
Chapin Spencer, Brian Costello

Northern Vermont RC & D
Charlie Baker

Northwest Regional Planning Commission
Catherine Dimitruk, Katelin Brewer-Colie

SerVermont
Hal Colston

**Smart Growth Vermont (became part of Natural Resources Council)*
(Former Participant Faith Brown)

Tetra Tech ARD
Lindsay Reid

United Way / Champlain Initiative
Martha Maksym (Former Participant Barry Lampke)

**University of Vermont*
Joe Speidel, Elizabeth Reaves

University of Vermont Geography Department

Vermont Agency of Commerce & Community Development
Noelle MacKay, Faith Ingulsrud (Former Participant Joss Besse)

Vermont Agency of Human Services
Jane Helmstetter

Vermont Agency of Natural Resources
Deb Markowitz, Peter LaFlamme

Vermont Agency of Transportation
Amy Bell, Sue Minter, Chris Cole

Vermont Center for Independent Living
Sarah Launderville, Janet Dermody

**Vermont Department of Health*
Heather Danis, Amy Malinowski

Vermont Department of Emergency Management
Joe Flynn

**Vermont Energy Investment Corporation (VEIC)*
Scott Johnstone, Alison Hollingsworth, Scudder Parker

**Vermont Housing Finance Agency*
Sarah Carpenter, Maura Collins, Leslie Black-Plumeau

Vermont Interfaith Action
Debbie Ingram, Charlie Rathbone

Vermont Legal Aid
Eric Avildsen, Rachel Batterson

**Vermont Multicultural Alliance for Democracy*
Sara Martinez de Osaba

**Vermont Natural Resources Council*
Brian Shupe, Kate McCarthy

Vermont State Refugee Coordinator
Denise Lamoureux

Winooski Valley Park District
Yumiko Jakobcic

Pablo S. Bose

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Jeff Munger

Senator Patrick Leahy's Office
Ted Brady

Rep. Peter Welch's Office
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The Image Farm – Matt Heywood

* = Organizations that consulted and/or contributed to analysis reports.

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