



# 2018 Chittenden County ECOS Plan

Supplement 3 – Regional Plan  
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](http://www.ecosproject.com/plan)**

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# 2018 Chittenden County ECOS Plan

## SUPPLEMENT 3 – REGIONAL PLAN

### Introduction

While, this Supplement is the basis for the County's Regional Plan, the ECOS Plan in its entirety serves as the Regional Plan.

The regional plan is a comprehensive document that needs to include the following content:

- The policies to guide future growth and development. These policies include the 17 Goal statements in Supplement 2, the 8 Strategies in the main part of the ECOS Plan and are further supported by the following sections in this Supplement: ECOS Plan Policies & Maps; and Act 250, Section 248 & Substantial Regional Impact.
- A land use section that indicates the locations for an extensive list of land use types such as housing, recreation, open space, commerce, agriculture, projects with regional impact etc., and describe the intensity and character of these land uses. This can be found throughout Supplement 2 (and particularly within topics under the Natural Systems and Built Environment Sections), the *Historic Development and Future Land Use/ Transportation Analysis Report*, Strategy 2, and the ECOS Plan Policies & Maps Section of this Supplement.
- An energy element. This can be found in the Energy Section of Supplement 2, the Energy Analysis Reports and throughout Strategy 2. In addition, the Climate Change section in Supplement 2, [Chittenden County Climate Change Trends and Impacts](#) and *Chittenden County Regional Climate Action Plan*, and throughout Strategy 2.
- Transportation element (see the MTP in Supplement 5 as this fulfills the regional plan transportation element requirement.). In addition, this can be found in the transportation Section of Supplement 2, the *Historic Development and Future Land Use/ Transportation Analysis Report*, and throughout Strategy 2.
- Utilities and facilities. This can be found in the Infrastructure & Facilities Section of Supplement 2, the CEDS/ECOS project list in Supplement 4, and throughout Strategy 2.
- Policies on preservation of natural and historic resources. This can be found in the *Natural Resources Analysis Report*, the Ecological Systems and Scenic, Recreational, and Historic Resources Sections of Supplement 2; and Strategies 2, 3 & 4.
- Implementation strategies. These can be found in the Strategies and Actions in the main part of the ECOS Plan, and Section Act 250, Section 248 & Substantial Regional Impact in this Supplement, the CEDS/ECOS Project List in Supplement 4, and the MTP Project List in Supplement 5.
- How the plan relates to adjoining regions. This can be found in the Statement of Compatibility and Consistency Section in this Supplement.

- Housing element. This can be found in the Housing Section in Supplement 2, the *Housing Analysis Report*, the *Fair Housing and Equity Assessment Report* and throughout the Strategies in the main section of the ECOS Plan (and particularly within Strategies 2 and 7).
- Economic development element (See the CEDS in Supplement 4 as that plan fulfills the requirements of this element.) In addition, this can be found in the Economic Infrastructure Section of Supplement 2, the Economic Analysis Reports, and Strategy 1 and 2.
- Flood resiliency element. This can be found in the following Supplement 2 Sections: Ecological Systems; Public Safety, Criminal Justice & Hazard Mitigation (this section also includes a reference to the Chittenden County All Hazard Mitigation Plan); and Infrastructure & Facilities; the following Strategies: 2, 3, and 4, and Map 8.

More information on regional plans can be found here:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/statutes/section/24/117/04348a>

All of the Analysis Reports referenced above can be found at:

<http://www.ecosproject.com/plan/sector-analysis/>

## ECOS Plan Policies & Maps

For the purposes of complying with VT Statute (24 VSA 4348a), the ECOS Plan's goals in the main section of the ECOS Plan serve as the policy statements, and the maps are located throughout this document and online (more detail about the maps can be found below). These goals were influenced by analysis reports, data, sub-committee expertise and public participation efforts. The strategies and actions described in the main section of the ECOS Plan will help CCRPC, member municipalities and partners reach the desired goals. CCRPC deliberately chose to make the 2018 ECOS Plan a strategic plan that is intended to provide **general advisory guidance** and intentionally chose to use "should", rather than shall, in the Plan's goal statements.

### ECOS Plan Maps

The following ECOS Plan maps can be found within the Plan itself:

- Map 1 - Economic Infrastructure (located with Strategy 1)
- Map 2 - Future Land Use (located with Strategy 2)
- Map 3 - Utility and Facilities (located with Strategy 2)
- Map 4 – Future Transportation Improvements (located with Strategy 2)
- Map 5 – State Preferred Sites for Solar Generation + Existing Renewable Energy Generation Sites (located with Strategy 2)
- Map 6 – Solar Generation Potential (located with Strategy 2)
- Map 7 – Wind Generation Potential (located with Strategy 2)
- Map 8 - Water Quality and Safety (located with Strategy 3)
- Map 9 - Natural Systems/Development Constraints (located with Strategy 4)
- Map 10 - Opportunity and Race (located with Strategy 8)
- See the MTP in Supplement 5 for more transportation related maps.
- See the Energy Data & Methodology in Supplement 6 for the Woody Biomass Resource Areas map and the Energy Generation of Existing Hydro Facilities map

The maps included in the ECOS Plan are limited illustrations of the underlying datasets that reside in CCRPC's Geographic Information System (GIS) and are intended to provide a general overview of future and existing conditions. The accuracy of information presented in the maps is determined by its sources. Errors and omissions may exist. The Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission is not responsible for these. Questions of on-the-ground location can be resolved by site inspections and/or surveys by registered surveyor. These maps are not sufficient for delineation of features on-the-ground. These maps identify the presence of features, and may indicate relationships between features, but are not a replacement for surveyed information or engineering studies. More detail of the mapped data can be accessed through the ECOS Online Map (<http://maps.ccrpcvt.org/ChittendenCountyVT/>). Map updates will be incorporated into the online map as data is available and time allows. Once a year, a thorough examination of available data will be conducted. The ECOS Online Map contains data which helped to inform the regional analysis and is presented in four categories: Built Environment, Social Community, Economic Infrastructure, and Natural Systems. The ECOS Online map is a data viewer that allows a user to locate their area of interest and control the display of various layers. A user can see data at the County level as well as at the address level. The ECOS Online Map essentially enables unique creation and printing of individual maps through the Internet.

### Map 1- Economic Infrastructure Map

The Economic Infrastructure Map identifies areas within the County that are appropriate for commercial and industrial uses, per municipal zoning regulations. These uses exist throughout the County and include warehouses, manufacturing, office buildings, hotels, retail stores, medical buildings, and auto sales. This map also shows whether the areas zoned for commercial and industrial uses are within the sewer service area.

### Map 2 - Future Land Use Map

The future land use map identifies the location and boundaries of the Chittenden County Regional Planning Areas as described below.

### Planning Areas

The ECOS Plan uses the Planning Areas concept to identify places that share similar existing features and future planning goals. The Planning Areas reflect current municipal zoning. In addition, scenario exercises done in preparation for the 2013 ECOS Plan showed public support for growth in line with these Planning Areas. The Planning Areas aim to describe the appropriate type of future growth expected in each Planning Area; however, the exact uses and densities allowable are determined by local ordinances. The Planning Areas also aim to illustrate a regional picture of future land use policies in the County necessary to promote a regional conversation about land use in Chittenden County municipalities. The six Planning Areas are depicted on the Future Land Use Plan Map. They are Center, Metro, Suburban, Village, Rural, and Enterprise.

**Center Planning Areas** are intended to be regional centers or traditional downtowns that serve the County and beyond and contain a mix of jobs, housing, and community facilities. Center Planning Areas also contain the County's highest density and largest-scale developments with residential densities generally ranging from 7 to more than 60 dwelling units per acre. Center Planning Areas may contain a state designated New Town Center, Growth Center, Tax Increment Financing District, or high density

Village Center. Development in downtown centers primarily happens through infill development of underutilized vacant land and adaptive reuse of older structures whereas, development in municipal growth centers occurs in targeted areas that will accommodate future anticipated growth. These land uses are locally planned and managed to coexist successfully with neighborhoods and natural areas. Places within Center Planning Areas are served by wastewater facilities, other infrastructure, and offer a variety of transportation options, including non-motorized modes

**Metro Planning Areas** are areas where local zoning authorizes places to accommodate jobs and housing in a compact development pattern that supports transit service and encourages pedestrian activity and are within the sewer service area. Commercial land uses found in the Metro Planning Area are intended to serve the nearby residential area. Existing densities within Metro Planning Areas are typically higher than those found in the Suburban, Rural, Village, and Enterprise Planning Areas and generally range between 4 and 20 dwelling units per acre. Future development in the metro area should be encouraged to occur at the higher end of this range to ensure that there are adequate housing and jobs in these areas.

**Suburban Planning Areas** are areas near a Center Planning Area, Metro Planning Area, Village Planning Area, or Enterprise Planning Area where local zoning authorizes future development to occur at scales, densities, and uses compatible with existing development and with general residential densities greater than 1 and less than 4.5 dwelling units per acre. Many parts of the Suburban Planning Area already have been developed, often in suburban styles of development and are predominantly within the sewer service area. Future development and redevelopment in this Planning Area should be publicly sewered, minimize adverse impacts on natural resources, and protect strategic open space.

**Enterprise Planning Areas** are areas where local zoning authorizes a future concentration of employment uses that attract workers from the County and multi-county region. Development in these Planning Areas should have adequate wastewater capacity and access to transit or be near these services. Typically, this area encompasses major employers or a cluster of single employers and has current or planned transit service.

**Village Planning Areas** are areas where local zoning authorizes a variety of future residential and nonresidential development at densities and scales in keeping with the character of a Vermont village, generally between 2 and 12 dwelling units per acre if sewered and between 0.2 and 4 units per acre if not sewered. Village Planning Areas are compact areas of mixed-use activities that maintain the character of a Vermont village. This type of Planning Area is intended to serve its local surroundings as a place where people can live, work, shop and recreate.

**Rural Planning Areas** are areas where regional and town plans promote the preservation of Vermont's traditional working landscape and natural area features. The Rural Planning Area also provides for low density commercial, industrial, and residential development (generally 1 dwelling unit per acre or less) that is compatible with working lands and natural areas so that these places may continue to highlight the rural character and self-sustaining natural area systems. Development in the rural planning areas is typically outside the sewer service area.

### Map 3 – Existing Utilities and Facilities

The Utilities and Facilities Map shows the existing sewer service area, the water supply district, solid waste facilities, natural gas service area, and cellular towers.

### Map 4 - Future Transportation Improvements

The Future Transportation Improvements Map gives an overview of the projects that fit within the funding constraints identified in the ECOS project list in Supplement 5 – the MTP part of the ECOS Plan. These future improvement projects create a multimodal strategy to address the efficient and long-term movement of people and goods, while respecting ECOS goals.

### Map 5 – Preferred Sites for Solar Generation + Existing Renewable Energy Generation Sites

This map shows the location of existing renewable energy generation sites and legislatively-identified preferred sites:

Preferred sites as defined by the State of Vermont include:

- Rooftops and other structures
- Parking lots
- Previously developed sites
- Brownfields
- Gravel pits
- Quarries
- Superfund sites

### Map 6 and Map 7 – Solar Generation Potential and Wind Generation Potential

These maps combine GIS analysis of either solar generation potential, or wind generation potential, respectively, with state and local identified *known* and *possible* constraints. The maps and corresponding data are intended to be used to inform energy planning efforts by municipalities and regions, and provided a basis for CCRPC to estimate solar and wind generation potential and municipal and regional ability to meet the generation targets. For more information on the methodology used to determine solar generation potential, please visit <http://www.vtenergyatlas-info.com/solar/methodology>; and for wind generation potential please visit <http://www.vtenergyatlas-info.com/wind/methodology>. For more information on the constraints, see the discussion of Map 9.

Areas with state and local identified constraints are removed from the Generation Potential maps completely, leaving:

1. Prime Solar or Wind Areas: areas with generation potential and no local or state constraints, and
2. Base Solar or Wind Areas: areas with generation potential and possible local or state constraints.

The accuracy of information presented in this map is limited due to scale and the accuracy of the original data source. Errors and omissions may exist, including in the analysis of whether a site has generation potential to begin with.

### Map 8 - Water Quality and Safety Map

The Water Quality and Safety Map illustrates the level of impairment for streams and lakes based on the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation 303d List and the 2012 List of Priority Surface



Waters. Additionally, it shows the location of wetlands, fluvial erosion hazard areas, special flood ways, and the 500 year flood hazard area.

## Map 9 - Natural Systems Map

The Natural Systems Map depicts sensitive and protected areas in the County. The resources included on the map are listed below and consolidated into four categories on the map: state known constraints, local known constraints, state possible constraints, and local possible constraints. Development should be located to avoid state and local known constraints, and to minimize impacts to state and local possible constraints. Constraints are based on statewide or local policies that are currently adopted or in effect (as of December, 2017). As with all maps included in the ECOS Plan, the map of constraints is intended to provide a general overview of existing conditions. The accuracy of information presented in the maps is limited due to scale. Errors and omissions may exist. These maps are not sufficient for delineation of features on-the-ground. To determine whether a site has constraints, surveyed information, engineering studies or other site-specific information will likely be necessary.

### Local Known and Possible Constraints

Bolton	Burlington	Charlotte	Colchester
<b>Known Constraints:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surface Water Setbacks</li> <li>• Wetland Buffers</li> <li>• Slopes 25% or more</li> </ul> <b>Possible Constraints:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conservation District</li> <li>• Slopes 15% to 25%</li> <li>• Forest District</li> <li>• Town Owned Land</li> <li>• Flood Hazard Overlay II</li> </ul>	<b>Known Constraints:</b> none identified <b>Possible Constraints:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historic Districts, Historic Neighborhoods (Eligible for Listing)</li> <li>• Mixed Use, Institutional Core Campus and Enterprise Zoning Districts</li> <li>• Designated Downtown and Neighborhood Development Area</li> <li>• Official Map Features</li> <li>• View Corridors</li> <li>• Burlington Country Club property</li> <li>• City-owned parks and Centennial Woods</li> </ul>	<b>Known Constraints:</b> none identified <b>Possible Constraints:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shoreland Setback and Buffer Area</li> <li>• Surface Waters, Wetlands, and Buffer areas</li> <li>• Flood Hazard Areas</li> <li>• Special Natural Areas</li> <li>• Wildlife habitat</li> <li>• Historic Districts, Site, and Structures</li> <li>• Slopes greater than 15%</li> <li>• Land in Active Agriculture</li> <li>• Water Supply Protection</li> <li>• Scenic Views</li> <li>• Significant Wildlife Habitat</li> </ul>	<b>Known Constraints:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slopes 20% or greater</li> <li>• Wetlands and Surface Water Buffers</li> </ul> <b>Possible Constraints:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shoreland Overlay District</li> </ul>
Essex	Hinesburg	Jericho	Milton



<p><b>Known Constraints:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Slopes Higher than 20%</li> </ul> <p><b>Possible Constraints:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scenic Resource Protection Overlay District</li> <li>Resource Protection District</li> <li>Slopes 15%-20%</li> <li>Core Habitat</li> <li>Habitat Blocks</li> </ul>	<p><b>Known Constraints:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Slopes Higher than 25%</li> </ul> <p><b>Possible Constraints:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Slopes (15-25%)</li> <li>Core Habitat</li> <li>Village Growth Area</li> <li>Industrial Zoning District</li> </ul>	<p><b>Known Constraints:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Well Protection Area</li> <li>Overlay District</li> <li>Natural Areas</li> <li>Natural Communities</li> <li>Primary Conservation Areas</li> </ul> <p><b>Possible Constraints:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secondary Conservation Areas</li> <li>Village Centers</li> </ul>	<p><b>Known Constraints:</b></p> <p>None identified</p> <p><b>Possible Constraints:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Town Forest and Municipal Natural and Rec Areas w/Management Plans</li> <li>Habitat Blocks 8-10</li> <li>Encumbered Open Space</li> </ul>
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Richmond	Shelburne	South Burlington	Underhill
<b>Known Constraints:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Slopes equal to or greater than 35%</li> </ul> <b>Possible Constraints:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None identified</li> </ul>	<b>Known Constraints:</b> <p>None identified</p> <b>Possible Constraints:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant View Areas</li> <li>Lakeshore Buffer</li> <li>Archeologically Sensitive Areas (not mapped)</li> </ul>	<b>Known Constraints:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wetlands and buffer</li> </ul> <b>Possible Constraints:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Source Protection Area Zone 1</li> <li>Habitat Blocks</li> <li>Riparian Connectivity</li> <li>Slopes 20% or greater</li> <li>SEQ Natural Resource Protection Area</li> </ul>	<b>Known Constraints:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Above 1,500 ft. Elevation</li> </ul> <b>Possible Constraints:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Slopes 15% or greater</li> <li>Mt. Mansfield Scenic Preservation District</li> <li>Wetlands and associated buffers,</li> <li>Surface Waters and buffers</li> </ul>
Westford	Williston	State	State
<b>Known Constraints:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Slopes 25% or greater</li> <li>Deer Wintering Areas</li> <li>Ledge Outcropping</li> <li>Flood Hazard Overlay</li> <li>Water Resources Overlay</li> </ul> <b>Possible Constraints:</b> <p>None identified</p>	<b>Known Constraints:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water Protection Buffers</li> <li>Primary Viewshed Areas</li> <li>Slopes 30% or greater</li> </ul> <b>Possible Constraints:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Slopes 15% -30%</li> <li>Conservation Areas/Natural Communities</li> </ul>	<b>Known Constraints</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FEMA Floodways</li> <li>DEC River Corridors</li> <li>National Wilderness Areas</li> <li>State-significant Natural Communities and Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species</li> <li>Vernal Pools (confirmed and unconfirmed)</li> <li>Class 1 and 2 wetlands (VSWI and advisory layers)</li> </ul>	<b>Possible Constraints</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agricultural Soils + Hydric Soils</li> <li>Act 250 Ag. Soil Mitigation Areas</li> <li>FEMA Special Flood Hazard Areas</li> <li>VT Conservation Design Highest Priority Forest Blocks (Forest Blocks – Connectivity, Forest Blocks – Interior, Forest Blocks - Physical Land Division)</li> <li>Highest Priority Wildlife Crossings</li> <li>Protected Lands (State fee lands and private conservation lands)</li> <li>Deer Wintering Areas</li> </ul>

## Map 10 - Opportunity and Race Map

The Opportunity and Race Map combines an opportunity index, developed by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, with U.S. Census data on race. The purpose of this map is to show levels of opportunity in areas where there are the highest concentrations of racial minorities. HUD has

developed a process for analyzing opportunity at the Census Tract level. The opportunity index includes data on poverty rate, school proficiency, homeownership rate, unemployment, and job access. Each tract is ranked relative to the others in the county. Tracts that are low opportunity typically have a higher proportion of rental housing, people receiving public assistance, lower school scores, and more unemployment in comparison to other areas. Opportunity mapping is a way to see where to target investments to address disparities in the County.

## Act 250, Section 248 & Substantial Regional Impact

In accordance with 24 VSA § 4345a(17) a regional planning commission shall, as part of its regional plan, define a substantial regional impact, as the term may be used with respect to its region. This definition shall be given due consideration, where relevant, in state regulatory proceedings. Those proceedings are:

1. Act 250 – Certain proposed developments are required to obtain a permit from one of Vermont’s nine District Environmental Commissions in order to establish that the proposed development will satisfy 10 criteria defined by Act 250 (10 VSA §6086). One of these 10 criteria is that the proposed development be “in conformance with any duly adopted local or regional plan or capital program.”
2. Section 248 – Certain proposed utility facilities are required to obtain a permit from Vermont’s Public Service Board to establish that the proposed facility will satisfy criteria defined by Section 248 (30 VSA §248). One of the Section 248 criteria is that the proposed facility will “not unduly interfere with the orderly development of the region with due consideration having been given to the recommendations of the municipal and regional planning commissions.”
3. In addition, the Secretary of the Agency of Natural Resources may not issue a new Solid Waste Management Facility Certification (10 VSA §6605(c)) unless the facility is “in conformance with any municipal or regional plan adopted in accordance with 24 VSA Chapter 117.”

In accordance with 24 VSA §4348 (h), in the above three proceedings, in which the provisions of a regional plan or a municipal plan are relevant to the determination of any issue in those proceedings, the provisions of the regional plan shall be given effect to the extent that they are not in conflict with the provisions of a duly adopted municipal plan. To the extent that such a conflict exists, the regional plan shall be given effect if it is demonstrated that the project under consideration in the proceedings would have a “substantial regional impact.” **That is, the issue of whether a proposed development has a “substantial regional impact” is important only when there is a conflict between the regional plan and municipal plan.** CCRPC will attempt to reduce the potential for such conflicts through its municipal plan review and approval process.

The following is the required definition of “substantial regional impact,” as this term is to be used with respect to Chittenden County:

***A proposed development has a substantial regional impact if it is not consistent with the Future Land Use Policy (Strategy 2) and associated Map 2 of this Regional Plan.***

This definition puts the emphasis on the Planning Areas – and stipulates that if a development proposal is not consistent with the Planning Areas, then the Regional Plan will take effect in the State proceedings (as described above) if there is a conflict between the regional plan and the municipal

plan. The Planning Areas form the basis for the appropriate areas for growth in the next 20 years as shown in the Future Land Use Plan.

The Planning Areas are consistent with current municipal plans and zoning, so only developments that are NOT consistent with municipal zoning and the planning area definitions would likely prompt the SRI definition. Further, developments that push beyond these defined areas are more likely to have a significant impact on our region, than developments within the defined areas for growth. Upon request by a municipality to make a change to the Planning Areas as a result of a municipal plan, zoning and/or infrastructure service area change, CCRPC will review the request for consistency with the Planning Area definitions prior to any action.

The CCRPC has a role in development review outside of the very limited circumstances in which the substantial regional impact definition will come into play. RPCs “shall appear before district environmental commissions to aid them in making a determination as to the conformance of developments and subdivisions with the criteria of 10 VSA § 6086” (24 VSA § 4345a(13)). Both Act 250 and Section 248 require the permit applicant for a project that is proposed to be located in Chittenden County to submit a copy of the application to CCRPC. CCRPC is a party in any such application for an Act 250 permit and may apply to be a party in any such application for a Section 248 permit.

CCRPC’s current policy, *Guidelines and Standards for Reviewing Act 250 and Section 248 Applications*, guides its participation in the permit review procedures of Act 250 and Section 248. Currently under this interim policy:

- CCRPC’s Executive Committee considers whether an applicant’s proposal is in conformance with the Regional Plan, with specific attention given to the Planning Areas of this Plan (for the same reasons described above for the SRI definition), and the criteria dealing with traffic and other criteria within CCRPC’s expertise.
- Staff initially reviews each Act 250 application (with specific attention given to those applications going to a hearing as the CCRPC contract with the Agency of Commerce and Community Development requires that the CCRPC review and comment on Act 250 and Section 248 applications if a hearing is held).
- CCRPC staff will discuss potential Act 250 and Section 248 projects with Planning and Zoning staff and members of the Planning Advisory Committee to identify emerging development proposals to assess their conformance with the Regional Plan. The intent is that this proactive, collaborative approach attempts to work out any concerns about Act 250 and Section 248 applications prior to their submission.

The Planning Advisory Committee may recommend to the CCRPC revised procedures for participation in Act 250 and Section 248 proceedings to better achieve the goals of this Chittenden County 2013 ECOS Plan. These revisions will be established through formal amendments to the *Guidelines and Standards for Reviewing Act 250 and Section 248 Applications*, and if appropriate, as amendments to this Plan as well. Changes in the review of transportation impacts and CCRPC policies will be coordinated with VTrans and the District Environmental Commission as appropriate to seek consistency in Act 250 reviews.

Subsequent to Plan adoption, the CCRPC anticipates three potential changes to the *Guidelines and Standards for Reviewing Act 250 and Section 248 Applications*:

- **Measures and thresholds used to evaluate allowable congestion in Planning Areas Designated for Growth** - Currently, Level of Service (LOS) is the predominant measure used to

quantify traffic congestion of the transportation system and often determines whether or not mitigation is required for specific development proposals. LOS measures quality of service of a transportation facility from a driver's perspective. Alternatively, LOS will not be used as the predominant measure of congestion when reviewing overall intersection performance in traffic impact studies as part of Act 250 applications. For Planning Areas Designated for Growth (excludes Rural Planning Areas), the CCRPC will use both LOS and volume-to-capacity (v/c) measures to evaluate congestion. Rather than focusing on incremental and often inconsequential changes between different levels of service, the v/c measure provides information on whether capacity of an intersection is being fully utilized. Applying both LOS and v/c measures will more effectively assist in reaching the land use and transportation goals of the region. The CCRPC will work with VTrans and other stakeholders to develop LOS and v/c thresholds that will allow for higher levels of congestion within non-Rural CCRPC defined Planning Areas than currently defined in the VTrans LOS Policy.

- **Development Constraints** – Resources have been identified in Strategies 3 & 4, and illustrated on Map 9 as development constraints. Development should be located to avoid state and local known constraints, and to minimize impacts to state and local possible constraints. Constraints are based on statewide or local policies that are currently adopted or in effect. CCRPC will amend their policy to include a review of these development constraints within their Act 250 and Section 248 development proposal review. Because these constraints are protected at the state and local level already, CCRPC will defer to the relevant municipal or agency review of the constraint unless a review or permit has not been issued by those authorities.
- **Preferred Sites for Solar Generation Facilities** – Net metering projects in Vermont are capped at 150 kW, unless they are located on a preferred site. Vermont's net metering rules (5.100 Rule Pertaining to Construction and Operation of Net-Metering Systems) allows for net metering projects to be up to 500 kW if they are located on a structure, a parking lot canopy, a previously developed site, a brownfield, a landfill, the disturbed portion of a gravel pit, a specific location designated in a duly adopted town plan, or a specific location identified in a joint letter of support from the municipal legislative body and the municipal and regional planning commission. Upon request, CCRPC will review both the development constraints in Strategies 3 & 4, and the suitability statements in Strategy 2 to determine what sites qualify as a preferred site.

## Statement of Compatibility and Consistency

Pursuant to 24 VSA 4302 (f), 4345a (5), 4348a (a), and 4348a (a)(8), CCRPC has reviewed the approved plans of its member municipalities and of its adjoining regional planning commissions and concluded that this *ECOS Plan* is compatible with those plans (that is, this *ECOS Plan*, as implemented, will not significantly reduce the desired effect of the implementation of the other plans).

Chittenden County is bordered to the north by Grand Isle and Franklin Counties, which are served by the Northwest Regional Planning Commission. The ECOS Plan is compatible with the NRPC 2015 Regional Plan. Most bordering areas are designated as Rural in the ECOS Plan and as Agricultural Resource, Rural or Conservation and Forest Resource in the NRPC 2015 Regional Plan. There are two areas near the border with Franklin County that should be monitored in the future. Any development near around Exit 17 on Route 2 in Colchester may have an impact on Grand Isle County. Additionally, there is an area in Milton planned for Enterprise in the ECOS Plan near, but not bordering, an area planned for Conservation in Georgia in Franklin County. Development in the future should be monitored to ensure no adverse effects.

Chittenden County is bordered to the east by Lamoille County (served by the Lamoille County Regional Planning Commission) and Washington County (served by the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission). The ECOS Plan is compatible with the Lamoille County Regional Plan: 2014-2022. The Lamoille County Regional Planning Commission's Future Land Use Map designates the areas bordering Chittenden County as Rural Residential, Forest Conservation or Agricultural Conservation. This is compatible with the ECOS Plan's designation of adjoining municipalities as Rural Planning Areas. The ECOS Plan is also compatible with the 2015 Amendment to the Central Vermont Regional Plan. The Plan's future land use map designates areas bordering Chittenden County as Resource and Rural areas. This is compatible with the ECOS Plan's designation of adjoining municipalities as Rural Planning Areas.

Chittenden County is bordered to the south by Addison County (served by the Addison County Regional Planning Commission). The ECOS Plan is compatible with the Addison County 2011 Regional Plan. The Addison County 2011 Regional Plan designates areas bordering Chittenden County to the south as Rural and Agricultural or Forestland and Conservation/Floodplain areas, which is generally compatible with the designation of bordering areas in the ECOS Plan as Rural Planning Areas. There are two possible points of conflicts between future land uses. In Hinesburg, a designated Enterprise Zone is Hinesburg borders a Rural and Agricultural area in Starksboro. In Ferrisburgh, a designated Village and Commercial/Industrial area borders a Rural Planning Area in Charlotte. Development in the future should be monitored to ensure no adverse effects.

Beyond the abutting land designations as described above, it is likely that there is housing pressure on the surrounding regions based on a lack of housing within Chittenden County. This is evidenced by a low vacancy rate in Chittenden County, and the number of commuters from outside of the region.

County	Percent of Primary Jobs held by County Residents located in Chittenden County (2013)	Number of Primary Jobs held by County Residents located in Chittenden County (2013)
Grand Isle County	57.50%	2,009
Franklin County	42.30%	9,538
Lamoille County	19.80%	2,279
Washington County	16.20%	4,105
Addison County	26.90%	4,160

Source: <http://onthemap.ces.census.gov/>

While some of these commuters may prefer to live outside of Chittenden County for reasons other than the housing expense within the County, continued efforts to increase the housing stock within the areas planned for growth in the County will hopefully minimize this pressure on the surrounding regions.

Due to the amount of commuting traffic from the surrounding regions into Chittenden County, there is a demand for transportation services and infrastructure to get residents to their places of work and home again. All four regional plans include a similar sentiment as this one from the Northwest Regional Plan: "As this demand increases, efforts to combine infrastructure capacity improvements with increased public transportation services should be examined at every possible opportunity." A recent example of this type of improvement, selected by the Circ Alternatives Task Force, is the CCTA Jeffersonville Commuter bus route on Route 15. The Plans are consistent in calling for access management, and concentrated development to maintain these arterial corridors for mobility and preservation of



character. Concentrated development of jobs and housing that is affordable in the areas planned for growth is a major tenant of the ECOS Plan and a critical component in addressing some of the cross regional pressures on transportation networks. Particular roadway improvements and corridor plan recommendations identified in the surrounding regional plans are consistent with the ECOS Plan.

Also, hazard mitigation and emergency services are regional issues as responders cross municipal and county boundaries. All four regional plans include a similar sentiment as this one from the Addison County Regional Plan: “To maintain a strong and effective response system that is built on the concept of cooperation and mutual aid.”

CCRPC has also reviewed the goals of 24 VSA 4302 and concluded that this *ECOS Plan* is consistent with those goals (that is, implementation of this *ECOS Plan* will result in substantial progress toward attainment of the goals established in 24 VSA 4302).

### **Municipal Plan Review & Compatibility**

In determining whether the Municipal Plans are compatible with this Regional Plan (upon request by the Municipality and in accordance with VT Statute 24 VSA 4350b), the CCRPC will refer to the Planning Areas depicted on the Future Land Use Map, the goals and the strategies. In conducting these reviews and determining compatibility CCRPC’s Planning Advisory Committee will use the *Guidelines and Standards for Confirmation of Municipal Planning Processes and Approval of Municipal Plans* and when needed seek guidance from community partners with expertise in subject areas outside of CCRPC’s realm.

Decisions for how we create denser mixed use communities are made at the local municipal level of government. Therefore, municipalities are encouraged to apply ECOS strategies in their development decision making process. Specific implementation of the ECOS strategies will vary throughout the County as municipalities consider their own unique needs and relationship to the region as a whole.

Upon receipt of a Certification of Energy Compliance from the Department of Public Service for this energy enhanced ECOS Plan, CCRPC will have the authority to grant Certificates of Energy Compliance to our municipalities as they amend their municipal plans to meet the enhanced energy standards of Act 174. CCRPC will amend the *Guidelines and Standards for Confirmation of Municipal Planning Processes and Approval of Municipal Plans* to add this procedure. Local development constraints are folded into this ECOS Plan based on current adopted municipal policies or ordinances, and we anticipate those may change as local municipalities work on their individual enhanced energy plans. To ensure consistency with the Regional Plan, CCRPC will review those local constraints in light of the energy generation targets before approval of the local Certificate of Energy Compliance.