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Quarterly Newsletter – Autumn 2018

Transportation is Changing Make it Work for You!



Transit for All

If you are an older adult, person with disabilities, or a caregiver to someone who is an older adult or person with disabilities, we want to hear from you.

The Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC) recently received an Inclusive Transportation Planning Framework Grant. We now, in partnership with the Vermont Center for Independent Living (VCIL), the Central Vermont Council on Aging (CVCOA), Barre Project Independence, VT Agency of Transportation, and Green Mountain Transit (GMT) are working together to study how a Paratransit System should operate in the Barre–Montpelier area.

Why this study matters is because this will be a change to the existing transit system and it is change that can be both exciting and worrisome. Because while it has the potential to provide better service, it also will bring change and it is change that can be challenging for any of us. To address this change the study will develop an outline for what a rural paratransit service is and outreach to the potential users of this service.

Additionally the study is focuses on building a more knowledgeable and informed transit ridership by engaging directly with existing public transit users and potential users of our rural transit system. We are engaging with these users through community events, one on one conversations, and surveys.

What is Paratransit you may ask? It is a public transit option for persons who are unable to use the fixed route bus system due to a disability. These services are provided within three-quarters of a mile on either side of the fixed route bus service, during the operating hours of the fixed route.

Currently, GMT uses deviated fixed route service to accommodate people with disabilities. GMT's plan is to switch from deviated fixed routes to a separate paratransit service for users that qualify.

“Many older adults in the Barre–Montpelier area rely on GMT to get them to medical appointments and elsewhere. Their concerns need to be heard and addressed whenever there are any changes to the system and service delivery,” stated Jeanne Kern, CVCOA Director of Community & Volunteer Services.

If you have any questions about the survey or the project, please contact Daniel Currier; 802–229–0389 or currier@cvregion.com at CVRPC.

If you would like to complete our survey online: Go to:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TH9MQ7W>

Water Wise Woodlands

On a brisk Saturday morning in mid–October Marshfield resident Steve Fiske welcomed approximately 20 people on a woodland walk. Interested folks gathered at the Old Schoolhouse Common parking lot to car pool up to a large–scale maple, beech and birch



sugarbush. The walk was co-hosted by the property owner and participants chatted about water wise woodland practices, sugaring operations, and forest management activities.

Water Wise Woodlands is new initiative designed to raise awareness of the interconnected relationship between retaining forestland, protecting water quality and weathering flood-related damages. As extreme weather events are forecasted to become more frequent and intense, maintaining wooded areas along waterways can be one way property owners in rural communities can help decrease flood-related damages.

Intact blocks of forests and woodlands help stabilize slopes and soils, absorb the rain, and slow down flood waters. Maintaining wide vegetative buffers alongside streams and rivers of all sizes help prevent erosion and increase bank stability, this prevents sediment and other pollutants from reaching waterways and also helps keep temperature cool for healthy fish. Maintaining a variety of tree and shrub species of various ages can also provide better habitat for birds and other wildlife, plus can better withstand damage from storms, pests and other threats.

CVRPC received grants funds from the High Meadows Fund to promote the initiative and is working in partnership with Friends of the Winooski (particularly with their Upper Winooski Collaborative), Vermont Woodlands Association and local representatives from the Winooski headwater towns of Cabot, Marshfield, and Plainfield.

Steve Fiske (Marshfield), Gary Gulka (Cabot) and Bram Towbin (Plainfield) volunteer on the project steering committee and are helping to spread the word about Water Wise Woodlands in their respective towns. Additional walks were also held in Cabot and Plainfield. Community-based participation is a valuable and critical component of any initiative which aims to have local impact.

Getting out for a walk in the woods with a friend or neighbor

and sharing observations about the surrounding landscape is one way the Water Wise initiative aims to build awareness about solutions to today's challenges. Regardless of a property owners plan for their woodlands, simple techniques can be employed that are water wise. For additional information on this project please go to: [Water Wise Woodlands](#)

The Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission Assists with Development of Tactical Basin Plans

Since 2016, the [Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission](#) (CVRPC) has been an active partner with the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) in the development of Tactical Basin Plans. In 2016, CVRPC assisted with the Lamoille River Tactical Basin Plan by providing outreach to the one member town that is included in the Lamoille Basin, Woodbury; and by providing the ANR comments on the plan. In 2017, CVRPC began two Basin Planning efforts in coordination with the ANR: the Winooski River Tactical Basin Plan (Figure 1) and the White River Tactical Basin Plan (Figure 2). Both of the final drafts for these plans have been released to the public. The draft plans can be accessed via the following links:

[Winooski River Tactical Basin Plan](#)

[White River Tactical Basin Plan](#)

[Story Map for White River Tactical Basin Plan](#)

[Story Map for Winooski River Tactical Basin Plan](#)

The public comment period for both plans ends on October 31, 2018. All CVRPC member municipalities are within the Winooski River Basin and three municipalities (Roxbury, Williamstown and Washington) are within the White River Basin. To effectively engage municipalities within the Central Vermont region on the Basin Plans as well as to establish a forum for discussion of water quality issues and collaboratively resolving those issues, the CVRPC formed a Clean Water Advisory Committee (CWAC). The purpose of the CWAC is to oversee the CVRPC's water quality planning program, to act as a

liaison between local communities and ANR, to provide local and regional input regarding water quality issues important to the region, and to guide CVRPC staff on grant development for projects. In the past five months the CWAC has been hard at work providing comments on the Basin Plans. The Basin Plans contain priorities and goals as well as implementation strategies specific to protecting and remediating surface waters in Central Vermont. Municipalities have a specific interest in these strategies as they relate to initiatives they are working on such as stormwater remediation.

The Basin Plans were extensively reviewed by CVRPC staff to ensure that goals and strategies set forth in the Basin Plans conform to the Central Vermont Regional Plan. The review included the assurance of no direct conflicts with municipal plans and the regional plan and that strategies address the water quality problems of CVRPC member communities. The CVRPC also drafted comments and recommendations based on the review and comments from the CWAC to be sent to the Secretary of ANR. These comments and recommendations have been approved by the Regional Planning Committee and will be presented to the CVRPC Board of Commissioners prior to submission to the ANR. Partners, staff, and the ANR all appreciate the dedicated commitment of the CWAC, Regional Planning Committee, and the Board of Commissioners for their assistance in development of the basin plans for water quality improvement in the region and for Lake Champlain.

Figure 1: Winooski River Basin and Land Cover (2011)



Figure 1. Winooski River Basin and sub-basins with landuse and landcover identified (2011 National Land Cover Database).
DRAFT WINOOSKI RIVER BASIN PLAN



Figure 4. Rivers and streams in the White River basin. The boundary between the blue and grey shaded areas marks the Richardson Memorial Contact.

Figure 2: White River Basin

Emerald Ash Borer Preparedness & Management



Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) is a destructive and invasive forest pest that feeds on and kills all species of ash trees. The presence of EAB has been confirmed in Orange, Washington, Caledonia, Bennington, and Grand Isle Counties.

Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC) in partnership with the Vermont Urban & Community Forestry Program recently facilitated a workshop at the UVM Extension office in Berlin regarding EAB.

The workshop was attended by tree wardens, tree board members, municipal representatives and forest pest detectors. It was led by staff from Vermont Urban & Community Forestry Program and educated participants about EAB. Information shared included management options and strategies, budgeting, as well as risk assessment and planning tools. Participants left the training with action steps to take back to their communities with regard to strategizing an approach to EAB management that best meets their needs. Additional details on EAB are available at the following websites: [Vermont Forestry](#) and [Vermont Invasives](#).

Also noted was the availability of Municipal Planning Grants for EAB management. Grant applications are due **January 31, 2019** and details are available here: [Municipal Planning Grants – EAB](#).

As part of the ongoing effort to combat EAB, CVRPC will be assisting two communities in our region to train community volunteers to conduct ash tree inventories. CVRPC will also assist these communities to prepare management plans. More information on the dates of these community volunteer training opportunities will be released in the coming weeks.

If you are interested in this opportunity for your community, please

Brownfields Round Up

The end of September marks the end of CVRPC’s EPA brownfields grant period. Over the last 3 years the RPC has provided funding for environmental site assessments at 9 sites. Below provides a summary of the environmental site assessment work which was accomplished – paving the way for redevelopment opportunities in our regions downtowns and villages.



Site: 51 Prospect Street, Barre City

Assessment Activity: Phase 2 Environmental Site Assessment

Total Cost: \$13,651.49

Redevelopment Outcomes: Creation of parking area necessary for future occupants of adjacent renovated office building in downtown.

Site: Ayer Autobody, Barre City

Assessment Activity: Phase 2 and Supplemental Phase 2;
Environmental Site Assessments plus Corrective Action Plan

Total Cost: \$37,379.93

Redevelopment Outcomes: Building and site renovations for expansion of locally owned business.

Site: Bonacorsi Property, Barre City

Assessment Activity: Phase 1 and 2 Environmental Site
Assessments

Total Cost: \$55,911.41

Redevelopment Outcomes: Facilitation of property transfer to maintain operations at current facility.

Site: Keith Avenue & Pearl Street Lot, Barre City

Assessment Activity: Partial Corrective Action Plan

Total Cost: \$26,494.65

Redevelopment Outcomes: Construction of parking area to

serve affordable housing complex and downtown redevelopment projects.

Site: Granite Works Property, Montpelier

Assessment Activity: Phase 2 and Supplemental Phase 2 Environmental Site Assessments plus Evaluation of Corrective Action Alternatives

Total Cost: \$78,932.00

Redevelopment Outcomes: Facilitation of property transfer, potential development to include commercial development along bike path corridor.

Site: Union Elementary School Playground, Montpelier

Assessment Activity: Targeted soil investigation with Corrective Action Plan (including site redesign)

Total Cost: \$66,816.82

Redevelopment Outcomes: Implementation of sustainable stormwater solutions and playground renovations.

Site: Town of Whiting Fire Station Property

Assessment Activity: Supplemental Phase 2 Environmental Site Assessment

Total Cost: \$10,995.00

Redevelopment Outcomes: Definition of site conditions for village area planning study.

Site: Former Woodbury Store, Woodbury

Assessment Activity: Phase 2 Environmental Site Assessment and soil disposal and remediation planning

Total Cost: \$46,347.63

Redevelopment Outcomes: Facilitation of FEMA Buy Out process by the town to restore stream floodplain and develop green space.

Site: Yellow Barn, Hardwick

Assessment Activity: Phase I

Total Cost: \$2,135.00

Redevelopment Outcomes: Facilitation of property transfer for food hub incubator space.

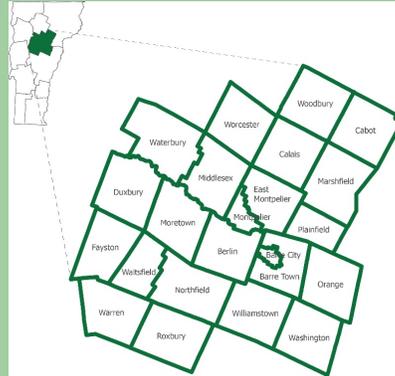
Combined Total: \$338,663.93

CVRPC Commissioners

Barre City – Janet Shatney
Barre Town – Byron Atwood
Berlin – Robert Wernecke
Cabot – Amy Hornblas
Calais – John Brabant
Duxbury – Alan Quackenbush
East Montpelier – Julie Potter
Fayston – Karl Klein
Marshfield – Melissa Seifert
Middlesex – Ron Krauth
Montpelier – Kirby Keeton
Moretown – Dara Torre
Northfield – Laura Hill–Eubanks
Orange – Lee Cattaneo
Plainfield – Bram Towbin
Roxbury – Gerry D’Amico
Waitsfield – Don La Haye
Warren – Camilla Behn
Washington – Peter Carbee
Williamstown – Richard Turner
Woodbury – Michael Gray
Worcester – Bill Arrand

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