

29 Main Street, Suite 4
Montpelier, VT 05602
P: 802-229-0389
F: 802-223-1977
E: cvrpc@cvregion.com



Quarterly Newsletter – Winter 2020

CVRPC is a member of the Vermont Association of Planning & Development Agencies (VAPDA). The 2019 VAPDA brochure can be viewed [HERE](#).



Vermont Transportation Resilience Planning Tool

The Vermont Transportation Resilience Planning Tool ([TRPT](#)) is a web-based application designed to help integrate climate risk and transportation resiliency into VTrans' planning process and ultimately create a more resilient transportation network in Vermont. Since early last fall, the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC) has been working with Barre City, Barre Town, Berlin, Northfield, Orange, Plainfield, Washington, and Williamstown on a collaborative effort with the VTrans to help communities increase resilience in their transportation infrastructure.

Using a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) based tool called the Transportation Resiliency Planning Tool, the CVRPC is determining vulnerability of infrastructure failure in the event of a large flood event. The CVRPC has presented vulnerability information to the participating municipalities, and plans to present the data developed by the University of Vermont showing the criticality of each road/structure to the transportation network. This information will be accessible to all the towns in an online application that will help towns prioritize and plan future improvements to roads, bridges, and culverts; and is anticipated to be available later this spring.

If you would like more information on this tool, please contact Zach Maia – maia@cvregion.com or Pam DeAndrea – deandrea@cvregion.com at CVRPC.

Community Transit Week Planned

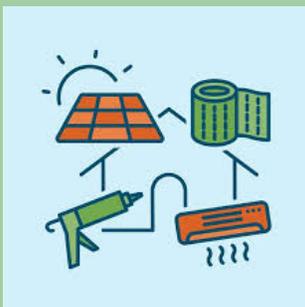
We are pleased to announce Community Transit Week, a collaboration of Central Vermont transit providers and advocates that will take place Saturday May 2nd—Friday May 8th. Our goal is to

spread awareness of public transit options across the region, and help connect potential riders to routes that serve their needs. The week will feature:



- An **Opening Day Celebration** on Saturday, May 2nd at the Montpelier Transit Center will focus on accessibility, including a stationary demo bus providing an opportunity to try many GMT accessibility features like wheel-chair lifts and bike racks. Our transit partners and advocates will also be tabling there with more information and transit opportunities.
- A **Free Ride Day** on Monday, May 4th when all GMT rides in the Central Vermont region will be free of charge
- A week-long **On-Board Raffle** for bus riders who can enter their name for a drawing of free bus passes and other prizes
- An **Elected Officials Ride the Bus Day**, where constituents will have an opportunity to connect with their legislators and municipal officials on the bus
- A **Ride-the-Bus Photo Competition** where you can upload your picture to the Community Transit Week Instagram and/or Facebook page
- ...and many other events!

Help us by spreading the word about the event in your local community and by urging local leadership to support the initiative. Any questions, comments or concerns can be directed to Grace Vinson at vinson@cvregion.com.



Energy Planning in Central Vermont

Photo Credit: Efficiency Vermont

Over the past few years, CVRPC spent time assisting municipalities in the drafting of enhanced energy plans. This year, CVRPC has been working with Efficiency Vermont to assist municipalities in the implementation of their energy planning efforts. CVRPC is coordinating a series of public events to engage energy committee members, municipal officials, and general energy stakeholders in the topics of weatherization, energy efficiency, and thermal fuel sources.

In October of 2019, CVRPC hosted a regional transportation energy roundtable in conjunction with the Vermont Energy Committee Action Network (VECAN) and the Vermont Council on Rural Development (VCRD). Topics included electric vehicles, public transit, and walk/bike initiatives, and speakers included Dave Roberts of Drive Electric Vermont, Phoenix Mitchell of the Hitching Post, and Claire Tebbs previously of Addison County's Walk/Bike Council. After this event, stakeholders collaborated on a public transit week campaign to increase ridership, and created a multi-modal network of people and groups working on this very issue in Central Vermont. Phoenix's Hitching Post has since expanded and is catching on across the State!

In December of 2019, CVRPC collaborated with the Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation (FPR) and the Vermont Clean Energy Development Fund (CEDF) to host a Modern Wood Heat Workshop in Barre City. In the preceding months, CVRPC had multiple discussions with municipal

Planning Commissions regarding the role of wood heat in the energy transition to 2050. Staff decided to host an information event to clear up misconceptions, advertise incentives, and provide for a general learning opportunity for interested stakeholders.

In 2020, CVRPC has numerous events planned from workshops to roundtables focused on energy efficiency, weatherization, and thermal fuel-switching. Save the date of Thursday March 26, 2020 at 5:30pm in Middlesex, where CVRPC will be joined by Capstone Community Action and Waterbury LEAP to discuss home efficiency! We look forward to your attendance!

For more information on CVRPC's energy planning efforts, please contact [Zach Maia](#).

Childcare in Vermont

Building Bright Futures recently released its *2019 How are Vermont's Young and Families Report*. The report is a data-driven assessment of the state of young child and family well-being in Vermont. It notes progress on selected indicators and outcomes for the early care, health, and education system, and recommendations on how best to improve child and family well-being. The Report is available online at through the Building Bright Futures [website](#).



The Report offers regional snapshots of the data. While the number of children under age 9 living in poverty *decreased* by 7% statewide since 2012, it *increased* by 36% in Central Vermont. This dramatic decline for Central Vermont is one reason that the Barre Region [Working Communities Challenge](#) team chose its focus of increasing and stabilizing employment for single women with children by providing supports to both the employee and the employer. CVRPC acted as a neutral facilitator for the multi-sector Working Communities team as it developed its focus.

Why should municipalities read the report? The report contains information that can assist municipalities to address VT's childcare goal - *To ensure the availability of safe and affordable child care and to integrate child care issues into the planning process, including child care financing, infrastructure, business assistance for child care providers, and child care work force development* [24 V.S.A. § 4302(b)(13)]. The report suggests that strategies to increase family economic well-being and to insure healthy childhood development should be priorities for Vermont.

Municipalities frequently ask CVRPC staff what they can do to address the goal. We can provide coaching now. In 2020, we're also building an "idea guide" for municipal and regional actions, partnering with other regional entities on a childcare access analysis, and hosting roundtables and making presentations to encourage conversation and increase action. If you are interested in scheduling a presentation/discussion for your community, please contact Clare Rock at rock@cvregion.com

Land and Water Conservation Fund Grants

The Land and Water Conservation Fund Program (LWCF) provides funds to acquire land for parks and public outdoor recreation or to develop new facilities and/or renovation of existing facilities for outdoor recreation. LWCF grants provide up to 50% matching assistance to state and local governments for project applications addressing an identified need within the [State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan \(SCORP\)](#) and or local and regional needs. Municipalities must agree to dedicate

the park or area where the project is located for public outdoor recreational use in perpetuity. Eligible applicants are municipalities and state agencies only (i.e., towns, cities, regional park districts, school districts and state agencies).

The next grant round begins in Fall 2020 with awards made in 2021. Learn more at <https://fpr.vermont.gov/land-and-water-conservation-fund>. Contact Jessica Savage for information at 802-249-1230 or jessica.savage@vermont.gov.

CVRPC staff can assist with grant application writing and project development. If your community is interested in applying for this grant, we encourage you to begin exploring the grant's requirements now. This grant is best used for projects costing more than \$10,000.

Recent press releases published by CVRPC – [Read More >>](#)

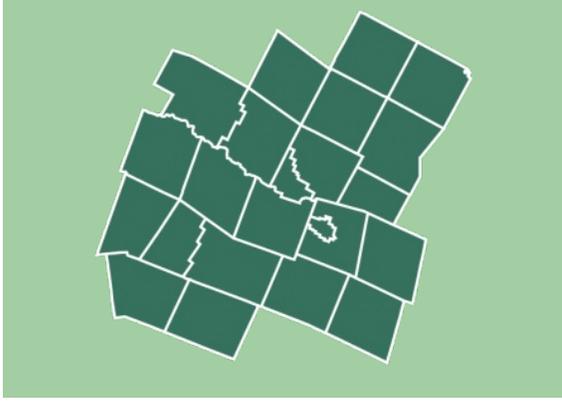
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29 Main Street, Suite 4, Montpelier, VT 05602.



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