



Weekly News Roundup October 23, 2020

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Community News

New VTrans Bicycle and Pedestrian Design Guidance

VTrans published the Pedestrian and Bicycle Design Manual in 2002. At the time, it was considered a state of the art set of guidelines. A lot has happened in the almost two decades since work on that manual began. FHWA has issued numerous planning and design resources to support more walking and bicycling, collaborative organizations like the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) have formed and issued nationally recognized guidance, a new MUTCD came out in 2009, and walking and bicycling has been incorporated into broader movements like placemaking, economic development and health.



With all of the great design guidance out there, it is time to retire the outdated 2002 VTrans Ped/Bike Design Manual. Citizens, planners and designers continue to need design guidance as they work on projects that improve conditions for walking and bicycling. To that end, VTrans has assembled a new web page that collects what they consider to be a comprehensive set of guidance, manuals, design details, and other resources to support walking and bicycling infrastructure projects. You can find this web resource here - <https://vtrans.vermont.gov/highway/local-projects/bike-ped/resources>. Please bookmark this page as your location for “one stop shopping” for walking and bicycling design guidance.

Mediation Program for Landlords and Tenants

The Vermont Landlord Association is offering a free, online mediation program for landlords and tenants to work through and solve disagreements through December 20, 2020. Participants will have access to a free professional mediator who will conduct the mediation online. Details about the program, the application, and a list of participating mediators can be found at the [Vermont Landlord Association website](#).

VTrans Announces New Guidance for Demonstration Projects

VTrans has announced new guidance for municipalities, businesses, and community groups that wish to implement demonstration projects – temporary, illustrative roadway design projects – in State Highway Right-of-Way.

Bicycle lanes, crosswalk markings, curb extensions, and median safety islands are examples of demonstration projects that may be intended to slow motor vehicle traffic or provide better access and safety for pedestrians and/or bicyclists, transit users, or combinations of these. Parklets, pedestrian plazas, and road closures are options that use public sidewalks and highways for temporary public gathering spaces to provide public space to support economic vitality and social interaction.

The [guidance document and application](#) describe the options available, issues that need to be considered, and the state approval process, and also provide links to resources with additional information.

Demonstration projects are part of a concept called placemaking that seeks to improve livability in communities. AOT's new guidance builds on other State efforts underway, such as the Department of Housing and Community Development's Better Places initiative, which offers tools, resources, and technical assistance to help communities reimagine and reconfigure their streets, parking areas, and public spaces during COVID-19 and beyond. Information about Better Places can be found at [the ACCD website](#).

COVID 19 Updates

Vermont COVID Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program Deadline Approaching

November 6, 2020 will be the last day for Vermont homeowners behind on their mortgage payments due to COVID-19 to submit applications to the [Mortgage Assistance Program](#). Funded by the CARES Act through Vermont legislation enacted in July 2020, mortgage assistance grants for up to 6 months of missed payments are available to any homeowner who meets eligibility criteria, even if they have already arranged a forbearance agreement. Information and application materials are available on VHFA's website at www.vhfa.org/map. Vermont Legal Aid's hotline at 1-800-889-2047 is also available to answer questions about the program by phone. The program is open to all eligible homeowners, regardless of whether they have a VHFA mortgage or not.

The Rental Housing Stabilization Program is available for renters and landlords in need of rental arrearage assistance due to COVID-19 through the Vermont State Housing Authority. For information, visit www.vsha.org or call 802-828-2040.

Central Vermont Adult Basic Education Virtual Learning Opportunity

As we have all seen, those most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic have been the vulnerable, low-income populations. Statistically, these people also tend to have low-literacy and/or under-education. It holds them back from long-term employment, careers, college and other post-secondary options. Even as the negative effects of the pandemic drag on, there is a way out of this vicious cycle.

Central Vermont Adult Basic Education (CVABE) provides basic literacy instruction, high school credentialing and English Language Learning services. What many don't know is that CVABE also provides career and college readiness instruction. All services are free and confidential. CVABE works with our students to help them reach their academic and personal goals. CVABE is able to work with many adults who already have a high school credential.

CVABE is offering the option of distance learning, which mitigates the barriers caused by physical distancing, as well as barriers of transportation and childcare. We recognize that technology may also be a barrier for many, and we are able to help to mitigate this. When appropriate, we are able to provide students with Chromebooks/laptops, data minutes, or even help to pay for internet access. Technology, or the cost thereof, doesn't have to be a barrier to education. CVABE can provide the technology necessary to engage in distance learning.

CVABE serves Washington, Orange and Lamoille Counties. If you have any questions about services and programs, how it all works, or about how we CVABE support specific needs, please contact Brian Kravitz (bkravitz@cvabe.org; 802-476-4588).

News from CVRPC

If your community has a need we can assist you with, please contact us at CVRPC@cvregion.com. Previously published editions of [CVRPC's Municipal Updates](#) related to COVID-19 are available on our website. Stay Safe!

RFP's, Grant Information, Applications & Deadlines

Vermont Community Foundation Grant Opportunity

The Vermont Community Foundation is very interested in work happening at the community level to create welcome, safe and equitable spaces for Vermonters from all backgrounds, races and ethnicities. If you have a project that specifically relates to your communities' needs and dialogues

around issues of discrimination, social and racial justice, or systemic racism, they want to hear about it, and would welcome a short outline of your need, your community's project, and the lead entity. They're particularly interested in proposals that follow the [Municipal Engagement for Diversity Equity and Inclusion](#) suggestions, and that come from municipalities or from community-led and grassroots groups with a fiscal agent. To send a project outline to the Vermont Community Foundation, please use grants@vermontcf.org.

Upcoming Meetings

Please note that CVRPC will provide a video or call in option for all meetings

OCTOBER

Oct 27 6:30 pm Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting, Via Technology (See Agenda)

Oct 29 4 pm Project Review Committee Meeting, Via Technology (See Agenda)

NOVEMBER

Nov 2 4 pm Executive Committee Meeting, Via Technology (See Agenda)

Nov 2 7 pm Municipal Plan Review Committee Meeting/Hearing, Via Technology (See Agenda)

Nov 10 6:30 pm LEPC#5 Meeting, Via Technology (See Agenda) - tentative date

Nov 10 6:30 pm Board of Commissioners Meeting, Via Technology (See Agenda)

Nov 11 Veteran Day Holiday - CVRPC Office closed

Nov 12 4 pm Clean Water Advisory Committee Meeting, Via Technology (See Agenda)

TBD Project Review Committee

Nov 24 6:30 pm Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting, Via Technology (See Agenda)

Nov 26 & 27 Thanksgiving Holiday - CVRPC Office closed

STAY CONNECTED

