



News

February 2014



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news@trorc.org

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Regional Plan for Sustainable Development

TRORC is working with the East Central Vermont Consortium to develop a vision and plan for a sustainable future.

We want to hear from you!

Share your vision of the future by visiting the website:

www.ecvermont.org

Complete Streets Success Story in West Fairlee

What started off as a typical Class II road grant for Wild Hill Rd, soon turned into a Complete Streets success story. As described by the Town Selectboard Chair, Delsie Hoyt, "There were virtually no road shoulders; the guardrails were at the edge of the pavement. Since the pavement reclamation and underdrain installation necessitated removal of the guardrails anyway, we decided to incorporate aspects of Complete Streets to improve traffic and pedestrian safety on the hill. We were also able to land a Better Back Roads "enhancement" grant which enabled bank stabilization along critical areas above the brook and "build out" of the road shoulders. All in all, we gained four to five extremely critical feet in road and shoulder width. A previously unprotected old, concrete culvert at the foot of the hill also received guardrails."



"The materials TRORC has supplied about Complete Streets and other programs were extremely helpful in being able to structure the overall project (and use the appropriate lingo) and obtain funding for this project. I'm sure we don't express that appreciation enough! Thank you!"

Delsie Hoyt, West Fairlee Selectboard Chair



Note lack of shoulder and narrow road width



Width of shoulder increased by 4-5'

Small changes can make a world of difference for non-vehicular users on roadways. Examples like this, showcase West Fairlee's commitment to all forms on transportation.

To learn more about how to consider and incorporate complete streets into your projects please contact: Rita Seto at rseto@trorc.org



Staff

Bob Ennis
Grant Administrator

Pete Fellows, CFM
GIS Manager

Kevin Geiger, AICP,
CFM Senior Planner

Dee Gish
Finance Manager

Peter G. Gregory, AICP
Executive Director

Brian Hamlin
Planner

Samantha Holcomb
CFM Planner

Loralee Morrow, LEED
AP Regional Planner

Chris Sargent, AICP
Senior Planner

Rita Seto, AICP
Senior Planner

Ellie Ray,
Regional Planner

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Vice Chairperson - Royalton

Paul Haskell
Secretary - Sharon

Gerald Fredrickson
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Corinth

Nancy Jones -
Bradford

Communities Update Plans with Guidance from Enhanced Consultations



Since the completion of the Enhanced Consultation (EC) process in 2010, TRORC has worked extensively with communities to ensure that their Municipal Plans are consistent with state planning goals and contain all of the proper elements. The Enhanced Consultation program was developed in response to concerns voiced by the State of Vermont and Legislature regarding municipal and regional consistency with Vermont’s planning goals, which are intended to guide the pattern of development throughout the state. Through the EC process, RPCs identified areas of concern and inconsistency with state requirements that would need to be addressed in future plan revisions.

The towns of Hartland, Hancock, Randolph, Rochester and Tunbridge have all adopted municipal plans that incorporated TRORC input and have now been approved by the Regional Commission. A number of communities have effectively made changes to their municipal plans that address areas of concern such as patterns of development that encourage sprawl or the allowance of retail development in areas that would degrade village centers. Several communities were able to make changes in land use policy that eliminated major conflicts with the Regional Plan (Hartland and Randolph) while continuing to implement their own local vision for the future of land use in their community.

Vermont’s unique character is one of the most valuable assets this rural state has. The character of our communities has developed, at least in part, due to Vermont’s planning goals and local planning policy. We commend our communities for their continued commitment to good planning and good land use policy.

*For more information on the enhanced consultation process please contact
Chris Sargent at csargent@trorc.org*

TRORC Begins Regional Plan Updates



Several sections of the Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Plan have begun the update process by incorporating knowledge gained from the East Central Vermont HUD project and also insight from the Enhanced Consultation process. The specific elements under review are as follows:

- **The Housing Resources element**
Incorporated new Census 2010 data to reflect new housing trends, incorporated data from the “Housing Needs in East Central Vermont” study, and generally expanded upon and extensively edited the element throughout.
- **A new Childcare element**
Expanded upon the pre-existing discussion of childcare provisions within our region that was previously found within the Economic Development element.
- **A new Flood Resilience element**
Meets the new statutory requirement for a Flood Resilience chapter, as required under 24 V.S.A. § 4302(c)(14) beginning July 2014.
- **The Relationship of Regional Plan to Neighboring and Agency Plans element**
Economic, housing and transportation relationships between the TRORC region and its neighboring RPC’s were analyzed and discussed, including the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee RPC and other organizations within the Vermont/New Hampshire area. The Enhanced Consultation process was added into the chapter’s ‘Municipal Plans with in the TRORC Region’ section.

*If you have any questions regarding the Plan updates please contact
Sam Holcomb at sholcomb@trorc.org or Ellie Ray at eray@trorc.org*

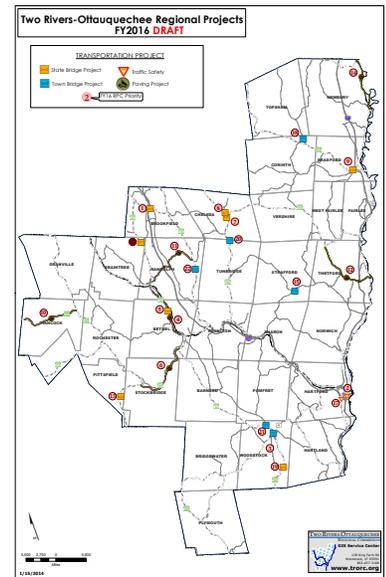
Transportation Project Prioritization - FY' 16

Every year, TRORC's staff works with the Transportation Advisory Committee and town officials to prioritize transportation projects in this region. Each project is ranked by VTrans according to engineering criteria and other technical factors and by TRORC according to economic, historic, and other considerations. VTrans' analysis comprises 80% of the final decision, while TRORC's fills in the remaining 20%. This year Bike Ped and Park and Ride projects are not included in the ranking process because VTrans did not have any new projects identified. TRORC will be encouraging VTrans and the Legislature to invest more in Park and Ride lots.

Many of the region's projects are in design and engineering or front-of-the-book phase (ready to go but waiting for appropriate funding). We have sent the draft list of regional projects to our member towns and comments will be accepted until March 12.

Please visit, trorc.org/transportation-project-prioritization-fy16/ to see the full list.

Please contact Rita (rseto@trorc.org or 457-3188 with inquiries.



Bridge Street Underpass in WRJ Complete!

The Town of Hartford recently completed the Bridge Street underpass construction which included the removal of the center pier expanding the travel lane width. The pedestrian sidewalk was also improved with updated railing.

The completion of this project will greatly improve traffic flow and pedestrian safety. These improvements continue to add to the quality of life in White River Junction.



“Vermont Local Roads would like to recognize Rita for the good work that she has done and the impact it has made in Vermont.”

-Erick Wells from Vermont Local Roads, referring to the hard work and dedication Rita Seto has put forth while working with Towns on their timesheet programs and transportation projects.

Announcements

Upcoming Workshops from TRORC

TRORC is organizing two workshops that may be of interest to your community, one will focus on Vermont's Downtown/Village Center/Vermont Neighborhood program, and the other will focus on tools to address housing needs.



- Vermont's Village Center/Vermont Neighborhood program - This workshop will provide attendees with a brief overview of the Village Center/Downtown Program, as well as a more in depth discussion about Vermont's new "Neighborhood Development Area" designation. The Neighborhood Development Area designation encourages municipalities and/or developers to plan for new and infill housing in the area within walking distance of its designated downtown, village center, new town center, or within its designated growth center and incentivizes needed housing, further supporting the commercial establishments in the designated centers.
- Tools to Encourage Housing - Housing is a key focus of the Vermont Neighborhood Program. This workshop will present attendees with a range of suggested tools that communities can use to encourage housing. It will not only focus on methods to encourage new housing, but also on preserving and improving existing stock. Planners will discuss how communities can utilize the tools to prioritize areas of needs and how to implement housing plans.

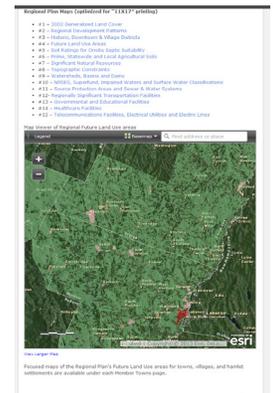
If your community is interested in hosting one of these workshops please contact Chris Sargent at csargent@trorc.org or 457-3188

TRORC Website Updates

Using TRORC's new ArcGIS Online website, Pete Fellows has posted an online version of the TRORC Regional Future Land Use layer here as well as the FEMA NFIP flood layer here. Users can search for an address, zoom into an area, change the base map and print.

Also available on the each of the town pages are links to the latest demographic data from the American Community Survey for most recent 5 year survey period. Click here to head over to the member town pages.

Any questions regarding the TRORC webmapping application please contact Pete Fellows at pfellows@trorc.org



East Central Vermont Draft Plan Elements Presentation

The next ECV consortium meeting is being held Tuesday, February 11, 2014, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., at the Hotel Coolidge, 39 S. Main St., in White River Junction.

We're starting to roll out draft plan elements and we need your input, so please join us!

After two full years of planning, public meetings and lots of workgroup meetings, four elements of the overall East Central Vermont Plan are ready for presentation:

- Energy Use in the Built Environment
- Climate Resilience
- Habitat Conservation
- Our Homes

If you have any questions regarding ECVermont please contact Lorelee Morrow at lmorrow@trorc.org or visit ecvermont.org/category/deliverables/



Announcements

Emergency Relief & Assistance Fund



Following the recovery from Tropical Storm Irene, the State of Vermont modified its standard for managing the State's Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund (ERAF). ERAF provides State funding to match Federal Public Assistance after federally-declared disasters. Eligible public costs are reimbursed by federal taxpayers at 75%. For disasters after October 23, 2014, the State of Vermont will contribute an additional 7.5% toward the costs. For communities that take specific steps to reduce flood damage the State will contribute 12.5% or 17.5% of the total cost.

What is needed?

12.5% - eligible communities have adopted four mitigation measures:

1. National Flood Insurance Program (participate or have applied);
2. Town Road and Bridge Standards (annually certify adopted standards that meet or exceed the standards in the current: 2014-2016 VTrans Orange Book: Handbook for Local Officials);
3. Local Emergency Operations Plan (Adopt annually after town meeting and submit before May 1);
4. Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (The Local Hazard Mitigation Plan requirement can be satisfied if the draft plan has been submitted to FEMA Region 1 for review).

17.5% - eligible communities also need:

5. Protect River Corridors from new encroachment; or, protect their flood hazard areas from new encroachments and participate in the FEMA Community Rating System.

What does my community need to do?

Visit outside.vermont.gov/agency/ANR/FloodResilience to check your towns status. The TRORC region is working diligently to achieve these steps, with nearly every town in the TRORC region adopting the 2013 Road and Bridge Standards, all are in the National Flood Insurance Program and many are currently working on updating their Hazard Mitigation Plans with the help of Two Rivers' staff. The Local Emergency Operation Plans will be worked on in April and last year almost all towns adopted Emergency Operations Plans.

To learn more about the ERAF process please visit, outside.vermont.gov/agency/ANR/FloodResilience or contact: Kevin Geiger at 457-3188

*For all information regarding LEOPs please visit, vem.vermont.gov/local_state_plans/local
To discuss the HMP or LEOP for your town, contact: Sam Holcomb at sholcomb@trorc.org*

TRORC Continues to Assist Towns with Hazard Mitigation Planning



TRORC has begun working with the Town of Granville on drafting their Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Hazard mitigation planning is a process that is strongly supported by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). It is a process through which communities assess risks and identify actions to reduce vulnerability to natural and man-made hazards. Without a FEMA-approved Hazard Mitigation Plan, a town is ineligible for specific FEMA grant funding opportunities. The most well-known example of the use of one of these grants is the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), which is currently being used to buy-out properties in our region and across the state that were damaged during Tropical Storm Irene.

If you would like to know more about Hazard Mitigation Plans, please contact Samantha (Sam) Holcomb at sholcomb@trorc.org

Upcoming Events

TRORC's mission is to advocate for the needs of our member towns, and to articulate a vision for building a thriving regional economy while enhancing the region's quality of life.

The Commission's staff provides technical services to local, state and federal levels of government and to the Region's non-profits and businesses.

To learn more, visit our website: www.trorc.org.

February 20 - LEPC #12 Meeting

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Bethel Barracks, Royalton

For more information, contact Rita Seto at 457-3188 x13

February 25 - Facility Compliance for a Highway Department

7:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Lake Morey Resort

The Vermont Local Roads Program is hosting a Roads Scholar Supervisory Workshop. The workshop is designed to provide procedural guidance and to identify all the necessary resources a Highway Department will need to have a fully compliant facility.

For more information and to register, please visit <http://www.vermontlocalroads.org/>

March 13 - Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)

9:30 AM - 11:00 AM

Bradford Academy Building

For more information, contact Rita Seto at 802-457-3188 x13

April 16/17 - ICS 100 Training

5:30 PM - 9:30 PM

Chelsea Fire Department

For full course announcement and registration forms please visit the Criminal Justice Training Council website vcjtc.vermont.gov/training/current_courses

Participants must attend both sessions for credit.

April 30 - Upper Valley Energy Committee Roundtable

5:30 PM - 9:30 PM

Bugbee Senior Center, White River Junction

More information will be available soon, but for now mark your calendars!

Grants / Funding Opportunities

EDA Publishes FY2014 Economic Development Assistance Grant Opportunities

The U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) has released a notice of grant opportunities for its economic development assistance programs for FY2014. EDA is soliciting applications for construction, non-construction, technical assistance, and revolving loan fund projects under its Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance programs. Grants and cooperative agreements made under these programs are designed to leverage existing regional assets and support the implementation of economic development strategies that advance new ideas and creative approaches to advance economic prosperity in distressed communities. Head to grants.gov to learn more.

USDA Rural Enterprise Grant Program

APPLICATIONS DUE APRIL 1, 2014.

USDA Rural Development anticipates the availability of \$177,000 for the fiscal year 2014 Rural Enterprise Grant program. Eligible applicants for grant funds include non-profits, municipalities, development corporations, & state agencies. To learn more about the program and apply, please go to <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>





Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission
128 King Farm Rd
Woodstock, VT 05091