

# TWO RIVERS-OTTAUQUECHEE REGIONAL COMMISSION

*\*New address under E911 renumbering, same location!*

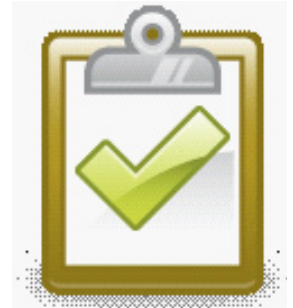


128 King Farm Rd, Woodstock, VT 05091  
Tel: 802-457-3188 Fax: 802-457-4728 www.trorc.org

July 2011

## Town Plan Reviews and Consistency with State Planning Goals

The Regional Commission is tasked by state statute with reviewing Town Plans (if asked) for consistency with state planning goals, plan structure requirements and our own Regional Plan. In the past we have approached this process with a measure of leniency in order to allow our communities to move at their own pace as they improve their planning processes. Changes in administration at the state level have led to a new level of expectation with regard to municipal and regional planning. As a result, Regional Planning Commissions are now expected to “raise the bar” in terms of how we approach our municipal review process.



Over the next two years we will be engaging in an enhanced consultation process that involves Planning Commissioners, Selectboard members and TRORC board representatives. This process will include a review of your municipal plan in which we must use greater scrutiny with regard to consistency with state planning goals and conformance with the requirements of a municipal plan. Staff will provide towns with recommendations on how the plan is or is not consistent with state planning goals and how it can “make substantial progress” toward meeting those goals. If your community is in the process of revising its town plan, or is planning to do so in the near future, now is the time to have us conduct an enhanced consultation! For more information, please contact Senior Planner, Chris Sargent.

## Broadband Update



The Two Rivers’ Regional Technology Team has been busy discussing opportunities that universal broadband access will bring to our member towns. Currently we are brainstorming ways to transform these possibilities into reality. For instance, universal broadband access will allow more employees to ‘telecommute’ (or work from home), enabling them to save money and reduce their ‘carbon footprint.’ While telecommuting is a great opportunity for residents in our region, it also poses some challenges for employers. How does a manager decide if allowing employees to telecommute is right for their business/organization? What factors contribute to a successful telecommuting policy, in which workers are actually more productive than

if working at the office, and more satisfied with their quality of life? These are questions that we’re asking and plan to address in our Regional Technology Plan.

The need for more public access points as a way to combat the ‘Digital Divide’ is another theme. The Digital Divide is a phrase referring to the gap between those who have access to computers and the internet versus those who do not. The Digital Divide is sometimes caused by a lack of service (although, with universal broadband access coming soon to Vermont, this should be reduced), but more often, it results from economic inequality (the inability to pay for internet service). Currently, public libraries are one of the few places that one can get free access to a computer and the internet. Given that more applications for jobs, colleges, and government support are online, it’s critical that we find ways to support libraries and increase public access in the region. Stay tuned to find out our plan for combatting the Digital Divide!

\*Don’t forget to check out [www.BroadbandVT.org](http://www.BroadbandVT.org), a website dedicated to the latest news on broadband service in Vermont. Check out the ‘speed test’ to determine your connection speed, and type in your home or business address to see whether broadband service is available, and by which companies. For more information, contact Emma Zavez.

# Got Business Risks?

In Vermont's climate, businesses are highly vulnerable to interrupted production and losses from extreme weather events. Rivers spill their banks, heavy snow loads collapse roofs, and power outages leave communities in the dark. Just ask Montpelier and Barre business owners, many of whom are still struggling to operate after the storms in May.

You already have a business plan. You know how to stay in business under normal circumstances. But are you ready for emergencies? Can your business afford to stop work for a day, a week, or more after a storm?

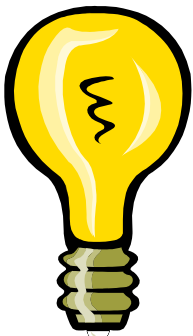


Here's where the Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission comes in. In 2009 we were awarded grant funds from the U.S. Economic Development Administration to support the region's businesses in minimizing economic dislocations resulting from natural or man-made disasters. TRORC aims to meet with 40 small- to medium-sized businesses in the region and help them develop Business Continuity Plans. A Business Continuity Plan prepares a business to stay in business in the unusual conditions a disaster can bring, and provides the guidelines to fully recover operations, services and programs. If your business is in a flood zone or near a river, give us a call. We will develop a free customized Business Continuity Plan for you. Please contact Sally Hull at 457.3188.

## 2011 Basic Emergency Operations Plan (BEOP) Updates

As one of the requirements of the Vermont Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund, each town in Vermont is expected to have a Basic Emergency Operations Plan (BEOP) that has been formally adopted by the Selectboard. This plan can be used as a true municipal response guide; as a planning and notification tool for local emergencies and disasters; and as a reference guide for VEM. This is now multi-use and more comprehensive, becoming a "Basic EOP" which provides a National Incident Management System (NIMS) compliant tool for local municipalities that use it. TRORC staff has sent a draft 2011 BEOP hardcopy to the Town and/or Emergency Coordinator for updates. Please return a signed and adopted copy with any written changes to Emma Zavez.

## Small-Scale Energy Efficiency Implementation Program



With the completion of our 16th audit through our Energy Efficiency and Conservation Program, TRORC is planning to work with our communities to fund small-scale implementation projects. Priority will be given to communities who have conducted energy audits. Due to funding limitations, projects will be limited to a total value (including labor and materials) of \$2000. Specific details about the Small-Scale Energy Implementation Program will be released in late August. Additional funding may also be available for the purchase of energy efficient products for municipalities such as LED light bulbs (interior), smart strips and programmable thermostats.

Municipal officials are encouraged to contact Senior Planner, Chris Sargent at [csargent@trorc.org](mailto:csargent@trorc.org) for more information and to indicate that they have a potentially fundable project for the Small-Scale Energy Efficiency Implementation Program.

## Using the American FactFinder Tool

The American FactFinder of the U.S. Census Bureau is a great resource for municipalities to look up population, housing, economic and geographic data. Updated with 2010 Census data, Vermont information is now available at <http://factfinder2.census.gov/>.



Click **Geographies** on left column and enter your town and state. Click one of the results checkbox and **Add**. Close search window. Select for DP-1 profile and **View**. Vermont Indicators Census 2010 will be available on the FactFinder website and TRORC's website at the end of the summer.



# Transportation Projects

## Field Season is here

Warm weather has finally arrived which also means that road crews are out busy with road maintenance. TRORC staff offers assistance in creating new bridge and culvert inventories or updating existing inventories. Staff is also offering assistance with sign inventories to address new retroreflectivity sign standards. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) rule requires that towns must develop a program to inspect and upgrade roadway signs. All signs along public roads must meet the new retroreflectivity sign standards, which increase the amount of light bouncing off of the signs making them easier to read at night.



Compliance dates include **January 9, 2012** where all street name signs require 6" lettering height for upper case, 4.5" lettering height for lower case (no longer all upper case letters), on 12" aluminum stock of High Intensity Prismatic sheeting grade. Towns must inventory their signs and establish a process to upgrade existing sub-standard signs by **January 22, 2012**. Staff has worked with Vermont Local Roads, VTrans, other VT RPCs and road foremen to develop a simple Excel spreadsheet to manage the inventory. All regulatory, warning and ground-mounted guide signs must comply with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) rules by **January 22, 2015** and street name and overhead guide signs by **January 22, 2018**. Please contact Rita Seto at 457.3188 for assistance.

## Asheville Livability Peer Exchange

In April, Rita Seto joined a small group of transportation, economic development and regional planning professionals from around the country to learn about potential models and noteworthy practices for integrating livability goals into transportation and economic development plans. The group visited two Regional Planning Commissions (Land-of-Sky Regional Council, Asheville, NC and Southwestern Commission, Sylva, NC) learning about how land use and transportation planning integrated with environmental initiatives and economic development strategies in the region's diverse Appalachian communities. The Southwestern Commission presented their Mountain Landscapes Initiative which is a comprehensive how-to guide for promoting sustainable economic development and protecting regional landscapes. This peer exchange was part of a Federal Highway Administration project through the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) to incorporate livability concepts into rural and small metropolitan transportation planning.



*solar panels on Hickory Nut Gap store*

## Woodstock's Full Circle Electric Trolley

The Woodstock Full Circle Electric Trolley that is powered by CVPS's Cow Power program is gearing up for its second trial year. Through a National Park Service grant focusing on providing transportation using alternative fuels in a National Park, a partnership between the Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historic Park, the Village of Woodstock, Advance Transit, CVPS, the Thompson Senior Center, Sustainable Woodstock and the Two Rivers-Ottawquechee RC was able to implement the first trial year as a success with around 3200 riders. This second year started July 4th weekend and operates 11:15am to 5:20pm on Saturdays and Sundays only. Evaluation of the long-term feasibility will be completed at the end of the second trial year.

**Ride Free!**  
Every Thirty Minutes  
11:15 AM to 5:20 PM  
SATURDAY & SUNDAY  
July 2 through October 16, 2011  
ADA Complementary Paratransit  
(802) 457-3277  
[www.fullcircletrolley.info](http://www.fullcircletrolley.info) or [www.townofwoodstock.org](http://www.townofwoodstock.org)

The Trolley project was also recently chosen to receive the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) 2011 Excellence in Regional Transportation Award. NADO is a Washington, DC-based association that promotes programs and policies to strengthen local governments, communities and economies through regional cooperation, program delivery and comprehensive strategies. The Excellence in Regional Transportation Awards showcase organizations with noteworthy projects and practices in rural and small metropolitan transportation planning. Award winners will receive national recognition at the 2011 National Rural Transportation Peer Learning Conference late August in Washington, DC. Please contact Rita Seto for more information.



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

### Staff Members

Peter G. Gregory, AICP - Executive Director  
 Pete Fellows, CFM - GIS Manager  
 Kevin W. Geiger, AICP, CFM - Senior Planner  
 Sally M. Hull - Regional Planner  
 Chris Sargent, AICP - Senior Planner  
 Rita Seto, AICP - Regional Planner  
 Emma Zavez - Planner

### FY 2012 TRORC Representatives

Barnard - Gerald Fredrickson, Gerry Botha (Alt.)  
 Bethel - Yaroslav Stanchak, Olena Stanchak (Alt.)  
 Bradford - Nancy Jones, Bobette Scribner (Alt.)  
 Braintree - Mark Bannon  
 Bridgewater - Nelson Lee, Jr., Norman Martin, II (Alt.)  
 Brookfield - Dee Montie  
 Chelsea - Carl Pepperman, Cherylanne Linaris (Alt.)  
 Corinth - Frank Roderick  
 Fairlee - Ken Gulick  
 Granville - No representative  
 Hancock - No representative  
 Hartford - Lori Hirshfield  
 Hartland - Richard Waddell  
 Newbury - Larry Scott, Scott Labun (Alt.)  
 Norwich - Jamie Hess, Jeff Goodrich (Alt.)  
 Pittsfield - Jerry Drugonis  
 Plymouth - Jim Allen  
 Pomfret - William Emmons  
 Randolph - Del Thompson, Ken Hafner (Alt.)  
 Rochester - Larry Straus  
 Royalton - David Brandau, Walter Hastings (Alt.)  
 Sharon - Paul Haskell, Deborah Jones (Alt.)  
 Stockbridge - Mark Doughty, Bill Edgerton (Alt.)  
 Strafford - Steve Campbell, Guy Denechaud (Alt.)  
 Thetford - Tara Bamford, Jim Masland (Alt.)  
 Topsham - Thomas Flannigan  
 Tunbridge - Michael Sacca  
 Vershire - Bill Baylis  
 West Fairlee - Skip Brown  
 Woodstock - Charles Wilson  
 Members-At-Large:  
 - Christine Walker (UVLSRPC)  
 - Jennifer Colby (Agricultural Advisor)

## News & Upcoming Events

### TRORC Annual Meeting

Thanks to all who came out and joined us for the TRORC Annual Meeting on June 29. We were fortunate to have the weather cooperate and enjoyed a pleasant evening with good food and good company. Our guest speaker Chris Graff, Vice President of the National Life Group, a former journalist with The Associated Press and author of Dateline Vermont, a memoir of his 30 years in journalism looked back on things that haven't and have changed in Vermont.

### FY'12 Municipal Planning Grants

There will be a round of 2012 Municipal Planning Grants this fall. Online applications are now available. If your town is interested in applying and/or requires assistance with this process, please contact us. Visit the program's website at: <http://www.dhca.state.vt.us/Planning/GMS/OnlineApplication2012.htm>.

\*LEPC 12's August meeting will be at the Thetford Fire Station and will double as a workshop on disaster recovery. Selectboards, road foremen and emergency managers are all invited to take part in this facilitated discussion of steps towns can and should take before, during and after a disaster (in this case a flood) in order to ensure effective recovery operations. The meeting is from 6-8 pm and food is served, so please RSVP by calling 457.3188 or emailing [kgeiger@trorc.org](mailto:kgeiger@trorc.org) or [rseto@trorc.org](mailto:rseto@trorc.org) if you plan to attend.

**July 28** - Next Orange/Windsor County Road Foreman meeting, Norwich Garage, 9:30am

**Aug 11** - Next TAC Meeting, Randolph Municipal Office - 9:30am

**Aug 18** - Next LEPC12 meeting, Thetford Fire Station, 7pm

**Sept 28** - Next TRORC Board meeting, The King Farm, 7pm

**Sept 30** - FY'12 Municipal Planning Grant applications due.

For more information, please visit our website:

**[www.trorc.org/events.html](http://www.trorc.org/events.html)**

**Digital Newsletter Option**  
 Email us if you prefer  
 receiving a digital newsletter.