This plan combines the Regional Plan, the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), and the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) into one integrated plan. For a healthy, inclusive, and prosperous community.

Adopted 6/19/2013

Chapter 2.1
2.1 REGIONAL CONTEXT

Chittenden County is located in northwestern Vermont between Lake Champlain and the highest peaks of the Green Mountains (see Figure 1-1). The County’s nearly 350,000 total acres have a rich diversity of landscapes: forests, farms, water bodies, small cities, suburban areas, and villages.

Founded in 1787, Chittenden County has about 156,000 residents living in 19 municipalities that range in size from 20 to almost 40,000 residents. The County is the heart of the Burlington – South Burlington Metropolitan Statistical Area (the economic engine of Vermont); home to the State’s largest higher education institution, health care facility, and private sector employer; and nationally recognized as having an outstanding quality of life.

Unlike many rural regions which have experienced population decline in the past 30 years, Chittenden County is growing, and at a rate higher than the rest of Vermont, higher than the New England region, and higher than the U.S. as a whole. Indeed, residents who were born in Vermont now constitute only half the population of the state. And the influx is increasingly diverse: Chittenden County’s diversity is growing at a higher rate than the rest of the state.

The challenges of a growing population and growing diversity are many, and will touch on every aspect of our quality of life. This ECOS Plan aims to address those challenges in a holistic, integrated way.

Information about the people in Chittenden County helps us to understand the nature of our community and how we are changing. It can help decision makers anticipate potential pressures on the wider social, economic and physical environments. Factors such as population growth (it is important to note that college students are counted by the Census and are therefore included in our population numbers), age, ethnicity, migration and household makeup are often key determinants of conditions across a whole range of issues affecting quality of life.
FIGURE 4 - POPULATION GROWTH RATE COMPARED TO VT AND NEW ENGLAND

Source: US Bureau of the Census

FIGURE 5 - PERCENT OF RESIDENTS BORN IN VERMONT IN CHITTENDEN COUNTY AND VERMONT, 1960 - 2010

- **Age**

**FIGURE 6 - PERCENT OF RESIDENTS UNDER 18, PERCENT OF RESIDENTS OVER AGE 65, 1960 - 2010, AND MEDIAN AGE IN CHITTENDEN COUNTY, 1960-2010**

![Graph showing percent of residents under 18, percent of residents over age 65, and median age in Chittenden County from 1960 to 2010.](image)

*Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Characteristics of the Population*.**
- Families and households

**FIGURE 7 - PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS THAT ARE SINGLE PERSON HOUSEHOLDS IN CHITTENDEN COUNTY AND VERMONT, 1960 - 2010, AND AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE IN CHITTENDEN COUNTY 1960 - 2010**

![Graph showing percentage of single person households and average household size in Chittenden County and Vermont from 1960 to 2010.](image)

*Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census.*

**FIGURE 8 - PERCENTAGE OF NON-WHITE HOUSEHOLDS IN EACH MUNICIPALITY**

![Bar chart showing percentage of non-white households in each municipality.](image)

*Source: 2010 Census*

*This percentage is high because there are very few households in Buel’s Gore.*
Race/Ethnicity

FIGURE 10 - PERCENT OF RESIDENTS WHO ARE NON-WHITE OR HISPANIC IN CHITTENDEN COUNTY, VERMONT AND THE U.S., 1960 - 2010

Source: U.S. Census
Disabilities

Disability status of Chittenden County residents (relative to VT and US)

About 14,000 people in Chittenden County were identified as having a disability in 2010. Income of people with disabilities is far below that of people without disabilities, reducing their ability to afford housing and further limiting their housing choices.