



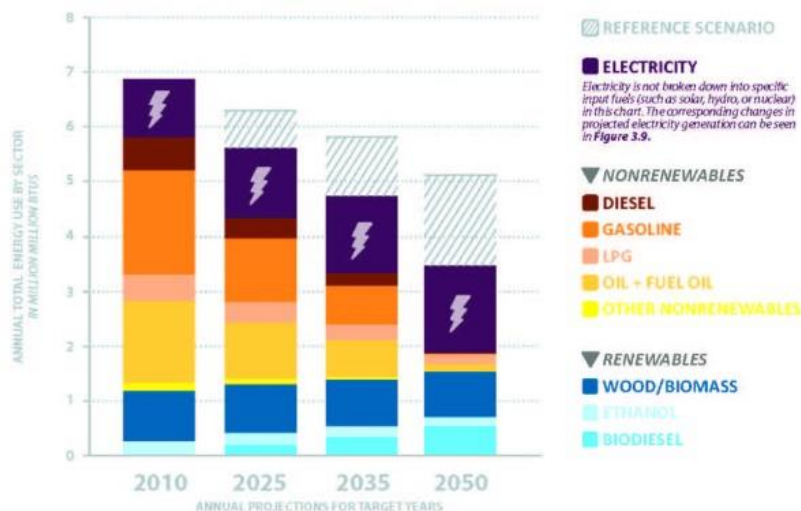
*Bennington County Regional Commission*

## BCRC November Meeting

**Brown Cow Cafe, 139 Main St., Bennington, VT  
Thursday, November 16, 5:30 - 7:45 PM**

Light dinner will be served at 5:30 PM, provided by the Brown Cow Cafe. This month attendees will hear from Maryann Morris, Executive Director of The Collaborative in Londonderry, VT about the Regional Prevention Partnerships Grant and Jim Trimarchi, Director of Planning for Southwestern Vermont Health Care about SVHC's Health Initiatives: Medicaid Capitation and SVMC Trail Improvements. Find the full agenda [HERE](#).

## BCRC Receives Additional Funds to Develop Act 174 Town Energy Plans



This fall BCRC is receiving additional funds to support the development of Act 174-compliant municipal energy plans in the region. Act 174, passed in 2016 by the VT legislature, established regional and town planning standards that – if met – give plans substantial deference in Section 248 proceedings of the Public Utility Commission (formerly the Public Service Board) on siting of energy generation facilities. [Read more...](#)

## Pownal & Bennington Launch Promise Community

Bennington and Pownal have been identified as Vermont Promise Communities under an innovative Federal Early Learning Challenge Grant. The Vermont Promise Communities initiative has been developed to mobilize communities to support a high level of school readiness and success among our youngest citizens while also working toward the transformation of every aspect of the environment. [Read more...](#)



### Benefits of Electric Vehicles

Drive Electric Vermont has produced a video that illustrates how we can all breathe easier with lower emissions, less fuel consumption, and a healthier environment. [Watch the video.](#)

### Interactive Electric Usage Tool

Efficiency Vermont has developed a new interactive tool to help people understand their electric usage and bills – and to help plan to reduce monthly bills! [Access the Electric Usage Tool.](#)



## VTrans Reorganizes Aviation and Rail Divisions

The Agency of Transportation is moving forward with a reorganization of the Aviation and Rail Programs into a new Aviation and Rail Bureau. It was determined that both Programs would benefit from shared resourcing with an emphasis on cross training project delivery staff. Both modes depend heavily on federal discretionary grants for capital projects which improve the infrastructure and build additional capacity of these transportation facilities. Having staff members from Aviation and Rail as part of the same team will strengthen our ability to meet the demands of both programs. Dan Delabruere has accepted the position of Bureau Director of Aviation and Rail.

### Discounted Home Energy Audits



Schedule and audit TODAY and learn how to lower energy bills by:

- Upgrading your insulation
- Air sealing leaks
- Replacing your old furnace
- Installing heat pumps
- Upgrading your water heater

From now until December 1st homeowners can take advantage of a comprehensive health, safety, and energy efficiency audit for only \$100! Additionally, learn how to access up to \$2,500 - \$8,000 in cash rebates now through December 1 when making energy upgrades to your home. Average NeighborWorks HEAT Squad customers complete \$8,000 home energy upgrades (before rebates) that save them \$900 annually in energy costs.

[Schedule YOUR Energy Audit](#)

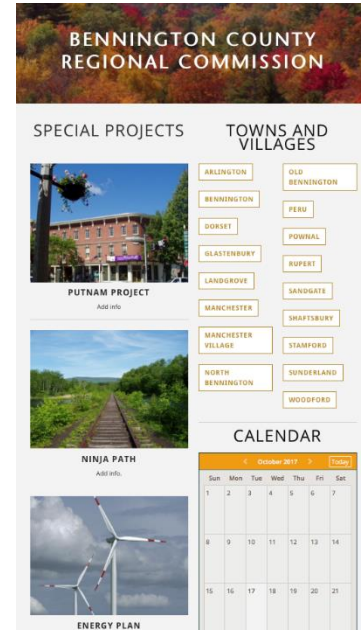
### Mobile Home Park Guidance

The Agency of Commerce & Community Development recently updated the [Mobile Home Park Guidance for Municipalities](#), a resource for town planners working with pre-existing mobile home parks or proposed new developments. The 2017 version was developed jointly by the community planning division and mobile home park program. Visit the Department of Housing & Community Development website for resources to use when considering housing within the greater planning context. Arthur Hamlin, Housing Program Coordinator, [arthur.hamlin@vermont.gov](mailto:arthur.hamlin@vermont.gov) (802) 828-3749.

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## BCRC Gets a New Website

The new website will be more streamlined, making it easier to find information about programs, plans, projects, and upcoming events. Some additions to the new website will be a calendar on the front page with all the trainings and meetings BCRC holds, grant opportunities for municipalities, and town and village information that can be found in just one click. Meeting minutes will also be in an easy to find location. Expect the finished product early in 2018. When it's up, we will let you know so you can take a look and let us know what you think!



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## Events & Opportunities



Vermont Community Development Association

**Fall VCDA Meeting:** *The Changing Face of Retail in Vermont's Downtowns*  
**November 2, Vergennes Opera House**

Retail is the engine that drives Vermont downtowns and many aspects of our rural economy. But the face of retail is changing: increasing online sales, shifting demographics and shopping habits, and the evolving regulatory environment pose both challenges and opportunities. The Vermont Community Development Association's Fall conference will explore these changes and provide a venue for downtown retailers, business organizations, community leaders, financial institutions, and policy makers to discuss the future of retail in Vermont and identify key strategies for ensuring that Vermont's downtowns are vibrant and successful. [Conference Registration](#)

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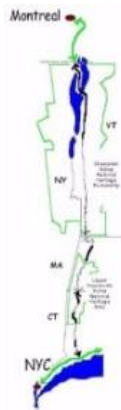
## **Vermont Creative Network Summit 2017 November 8-9, Montpelier**

Join statewide peers and colleagues as they work to identify and develop the critical policy issues to address during the 2018 legislative session. Learn more about best practice models, delve into interesting case studies, and get up to speed with the most recent creative economy research.

[Summit Registration](#)

## **4th Annual Vermont Development Conference, November 14 Hilton Waterfront Hotel, Burlington, VT**

The full day of programming features discussions of economic trends, Act 250, smart growth, development soils and PFAs, permitting, tiny houses, and much more! Participants will have the unique opportunity to network and connect with more than 275 commercial real estate and development professionals with a vested interest in growing Vermont. [Conference Registration](#)



## **Western New England Greenway Conference November 18, 10am-3:30pm Bennington Museum**

Join us as we continue to plan a contiguous bike trail from New York City to Montreal. Preliminary Agenda [here](#). Please let us know if you'll attend, and fill out the registration form [here](#). Refreshments and lunch will be provided. The conference is free of charge.

For more information: call 860-435-9505 or e-mail: [Info@HousatonicHeritage.org](mailto:Info@HousatonicHeritage.org).



## **Vermont Energy & Climate Action Network Annual Conference, December 2 Lake Morey Resort, Fairlee, VT**

This year's VECAN conference will offer insights from experts on a "high impact opportunity" panel, practical, policy-oriented and capacity building workshops, and a fantastic keynote speaker: Gina McCarthy, who served as the head of the Environmental Protection Agency under President Obama. This event also offers unparalleled networking opportunities with local leaders, innovative businesses and utilities, and leading nonprofits. [Read more...](#)

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# Grants & Funding

## Better Connections Grant Program: Due January 31, 2018

As part of an ongoing partnership to revitalize community centers and increase transportation options, the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) and the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD) are pleased to announce the Better Connections (BC) Grant Program. Annually, the program grants approximately \$200,000 in planning funds to help municipalities build more livable, walkable, and strong communities. All applicants required to participate in a pre-application meeting with BC Program Managers prior to December 31, 2017. For more information, contact Richard Amore at (802) 828-5229 or Jackie Cassino, at (802) 272-2368 and visit the grant [website](#).

## Transportation Alternatives Grants

These grant funds are being offered through the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) as part of the agency's commitment to improving the quality of state waters and providing funding to municipalities to assist in their efforts. For further information, please see attached or visit the program [website](#). Contact Scott Robertson at VTrans for more information: [scott.robertson@vermont.gov](mailto:scott.robertson@vermont.gov) or (802) 828-5799.

## Vermont Farm & Forest Viability Program Grants

The Vermont Housing & Conservation Board announced the availability of grant funds for on-farm capital improvement projects. Eligible farmers can apply for Water Quality Grants or Dairy Improvement Grants, both of which allow up to \$40,000 in funding. [Read more...](#)

## USDA Rural Development Community Programs

Applications are being accepted for funding through USDA-RD Community Facility & Water and Environmental Programs. Funds may be used by municipalities and nonprofits to finance improvements to essential community facilities and to invest in water, wastewater & stormwater systems. [Read more..](#)

## Hazard Mitigation Grant Programs

Applications are being accepted for funding through FEMA-VEM HMGP to cover up to 75% of approved project costs. Typical hazard mitigation projects include: mitigation of local roads and bridges, home acquisition (buyout), structural elevations or relocations, replacement of undersized culverts, mitigation outreach and education, etc. Project proposals *do not* need to be directly connected to damages incurred from the most recent declared disaster. [Read more..](#)

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**Our mailing address is:**

Bennington County Regional Commission  
111 South Street  
Suite 203  
Bennington, VT 05201

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