

MEDIA ALERT – November 16, 2011

CIRC Alternatives Task Force Announces FY13 Short Range Projects for Governor’s Consideration

On May 20th Governor Shumlin announced that the Chittenden County Circumferential Highway - as originally conceived - would not be built, the Governor asked the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) to coordinate a process to identify short, mid and long range projects and planning activities to address mobility, congestion, transportation demand, safety, livability, and economic development in the region. The CCRPC and VTrans convened the *CIRC Alternatives Task Force*, consisting of representatives of the Towns of Colchester, Essex, Williston, the Village of Essex Junction, state agencies, CCTA, the bicycle and pedestrian community, environmental groups, and the business community.

On Wednesday, November 9th the Task Force unanimously voted to forward a list of five short range projects to the Governor, via VTrans Secretary Brian Searles, for consideration and potential inclusion in the State’s FY 13 Capital Transportation Program. The projects total just over \$11 million and include activities in the four “CIRC” communities as well as Transportation Demand Management (TDM) projects which will span multiple communities and are designed to reduce vehicle trips and create system efficiencies which will result in reduced congestion, reduced emissions, and enhanced safety.

“I appreciate the hard work of the task force and the leadership of the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission,” said Gov. Peter Shumlin. “The short-term projects they have chosen will provide real and targeted solutions to traffic problems at a much lower cost than the Circ. I look forward to seeing the mid and long-term recommendations of the group over the next year.”

Structural projects ready for final design and construction include a Double Crossover Diamond interchange upgrade at Exit 16 in Colchester, interchange improvements at Vermont Routes 2A and 289 in Essex, the Crescent Connector Road linking Vermont Routes 15, 117, and 2A in Essex Junction and intersection upgrades at Vermont 2A and James Brown Drive in Williston. The TDM projects will implement a combination of complimentary strategies including increased transit infrastructure investments, traffic signal optimization, increased car share options, increased transportation management services to businesses, and enhanced bike-pedestrian-commuter promotion. The projects and activities were selected from projects which have already been through a planning process and were ranked utilizing an agreed to project prioritization system designed to complement the State’s annual prioritization process with additional focus on CIRC alternative service features.

A public meeting will be held on **Wednesday, December 14, 2011, 7:00 p.m.** at the **Albany College of Pharmacy & Health Sciences**, 261 Mountain View Drive, Colchester to discuss the ongoing CIRC Alternatives planning process and the short term implementation projects selected by the Task Force.

The *CIRC Alternatives Task Force’s* website (<http://www.circtaskforce.org/>) has detailed information about the Task Force and its recommendations. The public is encouraged to submit comments via the website. Sign up for CIRC related meeting notices through the website or contact Diane Meyerhoff of Third Sector Associates at 802.865.1794.

For additional information, contact CCRPC Assistant/MPO Director, Michele Boomhower (mboomhower@ccrpcvt.org) 802.660.4071 x15.

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