



CIRC Task Force Meeting #5 Notes (Approved 12/8/11)

SERVING THE MUNICIPALITIES OF

Bolton
Buels Gore
Burlington
Charlotte
Colchester
Essex Junction
Essex Town
Hinesburg
Huntington
Jericho
Milton
Richmond
St. George
Shelburne
South Burlington
Underhill
Westford
Williston
Winooski

DATE: Wednesday, November 9, 2011
TIME: 6:30 PM
PLACE: Holiday Inn, Williston Road, South Burlington
PRESENT: Please see last page

1) Welcome & Introductions

Cindy Cook of Adamant Accord welcomed everyone and introductions were made.

2) Review & Approval of Meeting Notes

The Task Force approved the meeting notes, without revisions, from October 20, 2011.

3) Summary of How Task Force Recommendations Regarding Implementation Projects will be fit into the FY13 Capital Program

Michele Boomhower of the CCRPC reviewed the history of the Task Force and explained that the group is working on a fast track because the Governor asked for a short list of ready-to-go projects for the 2013 Capital Program and the FY 12 Budget Adjustment. She hopes that the Task Force will agree on a suite of projects to submit to VTrans. VTrans will then determine the readiness of these projects and submit them to the Legislature as part of the Capital Plan. When the projects are ready to receive funding, the package will come to the CCRPC for inclusion in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The Task Force may choose to create a second tier of "on deck" projects in case the top priorities cannot move forward or additional funding becomes available.

Dennis Lutz of Essex asked how additional projects can be added to the fiscally constrained TIP. Michele responded that the Secretary of Transportation said the Task Force package would augment the current TIP. She asked that Amy Bell and Matthew Langham of VTrans bring this issue back to the Agency. Matthew did not see a problem with these additions to the TIP.

4) Review Staff-recommended Package of Phase 1: Short Term Implementation Projects for FY13 Capital Program

Michele provided corrections to Table 2 of the handout (available at: <http://www.circtaskforce.org/public.php?p=0>)

Table 2, Reference 3: For the Crescent Connector, the estimated cost is \$6 million, but on Table 1 it is \$3 million. The discrepancy is between the final scoping study (\$3 million) and the Village of Essex Junction's estimate of \$6 million. The Village has looked at a series of approaches to this project, hence the higher figure. In order to fairly compare projects, the \$3 million figure should be used.

Table 2, Reference 5: Transit shelters for Vermont 15 did not include shelters for Route 2A in Williston. This item should include 10 shelters on Vermont 15 and 6 shelters on Route 2A for a total of \$512,000.

Table 2, Reference 6: The TDM element also includes Transportation System Management (TSM) items, including signal improvements. No Park & Ride projects were ready to go, as described in Table 1. The combined TDM and transit item totals \$932,000.

Table 1 describes the package of staff recommendations. The package includes each community's preferred, high-scoring project, and also includes transit and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) work. CCRPC staff spoke with each community prior to submitting the package to the Task Force. Michele cautioned that this is the beginning of the process; legislative buy-in will be very important to move the package forward.

Meredith Birkett of CCTA offered a correction to the transit shelter item; Route 2/Williston Road shelters area also included in this item.

Cindy framed the discussion by saying that the work of the Task Force for tonight is to craft a consensus recommendation to the Governor and Legislature. The group can approve the staff recommendation, modify it, or start from scratch.

Jeff Nick of the Business Community asked about congestion hot spots in the study area and if these are being addressed with the recommended package. Michele responded that hot spots would likely be addressed as part of the planning projects (the draft list is available on the website). Linda Myers of Essex asked about the land purchased for the Circ. Michele responded that the CIRC right of way purchases to date remain intact.

Dennis noted that the Essex project, VT2A/VT289 Interchange Improvements, is the town's highest priority and it's ready to go. He hopes the other municipalities feel the same way about their projects. Dennis is concerned that TDM activities do not target the most pressing congestion hot spots. He'd like to see more dedicated bus routes rather than shelters. He supports the CATMA circuit rider and the marketing effort; but doesn't think that CarShare and bicycle commuting have a big impact. He's interested in small park & ride lots where parking spaces are leased from private landowners. He supports the signal improvements, but believes the cost is closer to \$50,000 than \$30,000 per signal. Jason VanDriesche of Local Motion responded that the TDM element represents an expansion of their existing bike commuter training program. Recognizing that taking the first step can be the most difficult one, Local Motion supports individual employees to try bike commuting. Meredith believes that bus shelters are important to attract "choice" riders to transit. She supports small park & ride lots and car sharing that support transit. Those who take transit to work often need a car for an hour or so during the day and can use CarShare rather than bring their vehicle to work.

Michele spoke about CarShare, and the package of TDM elements as being part of a larger TDM effort at the CCRPC. The agency was recently awarded a federal grant to bring together the county's TDM partners to better coordinate and market alternatives to single occupancy travel. The CCRPC is poised to be a national model for rural TDM programs. She also offered to research small "pocket" park and rides for inclusion in the package.

Jason voiced his concern that there are no regional bike/pedestrian projects on the implementation list and hopes that they will be included in the planning project list. He sees an opportunity to make progress with regional linkages as part the CIRC Alternatives Task Force's work.

Bryan Osborne of Colchester noted that the town's highest priority project, Exit 16, is included in the staff recommended package. He asked about TIP projects that are currently listed and are also included in the recommended package. Michele responded that those projects will remain on the TIP and will likely get a boost from being part of the CIRC Alternatives package.

Noelle Mackay of Economic, Housing & Community Affairs asked about the public comment process. Michele noted the public meeting on December 14th and public warnings/processes for the TIP and Capital Program.

George Tyler of Essex Junction noted the connectivity between the Crescent Connector and the James Brown Drive improvements in Williston. These projects are less than a mile apart and individually and collectively will improve traffic flow on Route 2A. The Williston Selectboard put forward the James Brown Drive project due to issues that complicate the implementation of the Industrial Avenue project. Ken Belliveau of Williston noted that the James Brown Drive improvements have been ready to go and awaiting funding for a long time. Dave Crawford of Essex Junction noted that the village has contacted property owners along the Crescent Connector and expects to meet with them soon. The project is close to final design.

Brian Shupe of VNRC expressed concerns that the TDM element isn't very robust. He would like to see small scale park & rides put into place as soon as possible. He's concerned that the Exit 16 improvements will be done prior to the Severance Corners improvements. The latter is a state designated growth center and it should be supported. Sandy Levine of CLF shares this concern. Michele responded that the projects were tied in the prioritization and staff asked Colchester to break the tie. Colchester selected Exit 16, knowing that Severance Corners is currently in design and could be included in the phase 2 implementation list.

Tim Baechle of IBM would like to see improved transit routes as well as bus shelters. It is important that routes consider the location of employment centers and the total travel time for those commuters. In addition, routes need to consider non-traditional work schedules that already support reduced total miles travelled (i.e. 12 hour days or 10 hour days). New routes and shelters should be looked at as part of a system designed to help reduce single-occupancy vehicle use. He also asked about the overall budget. Michele responded that there may be a budget of approximately \$10-15 million for short-term implementation projects, and staff decided to choose one project from each community. Meredith discussed the difficulty of using the funds available to the CIRC Task Force for transit. The funds cannot be used for operations, thereby limiting what CCTA can accomplish with these funds.

Jeff Nick would like to see the TDM effort move forward quickly; it's a small effort in a larger picture. He would like to see the congestion hot spots addressed. He suggests prioritizing our top five projects for the Legislature. Chris Cole of VTrans responded that the agency will take the entire Task Force package through the legislative process. There was discussion about the integrity of the package of projects if only partial funding is available. It is likely that the projects will not all be ready to go at the same time, and the implementation will be phased.

Noelle would like to see how the projects work together. She appreciates the TDM options. In response to a question from Mary Borg of the Agency of Natural Resources regarding the permitting status of projects in the package, Michele noted that the projects are in different stages, but the permitting needs and constraints have been identified.

Jason offered assistance to staff in summarizing the work of the TDM partners. Michele will distribute the summary to the Task Force before the next meeting.

Mark Landry of Colchester addressed Brian and Sandy's concern about Exit 16 not being a designated state growth center. He believes that the improvements at Exit 16 will support Severance Corners, since so many of the people who live and work there use Exit 16.

Marc Landry of Colchester made a motion that the Task Force approve the staff-recommended package of Phase 1 Short Term Implementation Projects for the FY 13 Capital Program. The motion was seconded by George Tyler of the Village of Essex Junction.

During discussion, Sandy expressed willingness to support the package, recognizing that Severance Corners will likely move up the implementation list next year. She offered a friendly amendment to add park & ride to the TDM element of the package. The amendment was accepted by Marc and George. Michele will provide recommendations for small, leased spaces in the study area. She expects a budget of about \$50-70,000.

The question was called and a vote taken. The motion passed unanimously, with one abstention (VTrans).

5) Next Meeting & Next Steps

The Task Force discussed creating a "B" list of "on deck" projects to submit to VTrans in case the approved package of projects slips or additional funds become available. Amy Bell of VTrans suggested that the group not spend a lot of time on this list; additional funds are very unlikely. The CCRPC staff will work with municipalities to create a "B" list and it will be discussed at the next meeting.

Cindy reminded everyone about the public meeting on December 14th at the Albany School of Pharmacy in Colchester. She suggested that we showcase the projects in the package, with each municipality/partner making a brief presentation regarding "their" project. She suggested including a map, an explanation of proposed improvements, budget, and timeframe.

Michele will prepare a draft report of Task Force activities for the Task Force's review. Once approved, this will be distributed to legislators.

Michele discussed the next step for the Task Force, the prioritization of the planning projects. There is about \$300,000 of dedicated funds available for CIRC Alternative planning projects this fiscal year. For FY 13, we'll have to ask the MPO to "carve out" existing funds for CIRC alternatives planning projects.

Jason would like to see bike/pedestrian projects in the regional section of the planning project list. Michele asked Jason to work with communities to develop a list and he agreed to do so.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 PM.

**The Next Meeting will be held November 30, 2011 from 6:30-9:00 PM
at the Williston Town Hall.**

ATTENDEES

Members Present

Last	First	Title	Organization
Baechle	Tim	Manager of Energy, Environmental	IBM Burlington
Birkett	Meredith	Manager	CCTA
Borg	Mary		VT Agency of Natural Resources
Crawford	Dave	Village Manager	Village of Essex Junction
Carter	Curt		Lake Champlain Regional Chamber
Ingram	Debbie	Selectboard	Town of Williston
Lajza	John	RPC Representative	Village of Essex Junction
Landry	Marc	RPC Representative	Town of Colchester
Mackay	Noelle	Commissioner	Housing & Community Affairs
Myers	Linda	Selectboard Chair	Town of Essex
Nick	Jeff		JL Davis Realty
Roy	Chris	RPC Representative	Town of Williston
Scheidel	Pat	Town Manager	Town of Essex
Shupe	Brian	Executive Director	VNRC
Tyler	George	Village President	Village of Essex Junction
Voegele	Al	Town Manager	Town of Colchester
VanDriesche	Jason	Education & Safety Mgr.	Local Motion

Staff Present

Bell	Amy	CCMPO Planning Coordinator	VTrans
Belliveau	Ken	Planning Director and Zoning Admin.	Town of Williston
Cole	Chris	Director, Policy, Planning & Intermodal	VTrans
		Planner	Town of Essex
Hoar	Bruce	DPW Director	Town of Williston
Langham	Matthew	STIP Coordinator	VTrans
Lashua	Trevor	Assistant Town Manager	Town of Essex
Levine	Sandy	Senior Attorney	Conservation Law Foundation
Lutz	Dennis	DPW Director	Town of Essex
Osborne	Bryan	Director of Public Works	Town of Colchester

Others Present

Condit	Hillary		Adamant Accord
Cook	Cindy	Process Facilitator	Adamant Accord
Dickinson	Roger		
McCarthy	Kate		VNRC
Meyerhoff	Diane	Process Coordinator	Third Sector Associates

CCRPC Staff Present: Charlie Baker, Michele Boomhower, Eleni Churchill, Christine Forde, Dave Roberts

Proposed Schedule and Process for the Task Force - As of November 1, 2011

**CIRC Alternatives Task Force
DRAFT Schedule
2011-2012**

Phase 1: Determination of Short List of Implementation Projects for FY13 Capital Program

Phase 2: Determination of Short List of Implementation Projects for FY14 Capital Program and List of Planning Projects for Implementation in the CCRPC FY12 and FY13 Work Program Years and Planning Projects for Inclusion in the CCRPC Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) for Consideration in Work Program Years FY14 and Beyond

Date, Time, Location	Topic
November 9, 2011 6:30-9:00 pm Holiday Inn, Williston Rd., S. Burlington	Develop Task Force Phase 1 Recommendations re: Short Term Implementation Projects for FY13 Capital Program Begin Phase 2 - Review CCMPO Scoring of Planning Projects
November 30, 2011 6:30-9:00 pm Williston Town Hall	Phase 2 - Begin Developing Task Force Recommendations re: Planning Projects
December 8, 2011 6:30-9:00 pm Williston Town Hall	Phase 1 - Review and Approve Phase 1 Task Force Report Phase 2 - Finalize Planning Project Scoring and Schedule
December 14, 2011 7:00-9:00 pm Albany College of Pharmacy 261 Mountain View Drive, Colchester	Public Meeting
May 17, 2012 6:30-9:00 pm	Phase 2 - Planning Project Status Update
Oct 11, 2012 6:30-9:00 pm	Phase 2 - Begin Project Prioritization for FY14 Capital Program Phase 2 - Planning Project Status Update
October 25, 2012 6:30-9:00 pm	Phase 2 - Continue Project Prioritization for FY14 Capital Program Phase 2 - Planning Project Status Update
November 8, 2012 6:30-9:00 pm	Phase 2 - Continue Project Prioritization for FY14 Capital Program Phase 2 - Planning Project Status Update Phase 2 - Integration of Remaining Planning Projects into CCRPC Long Range MTP Planning Process
November 29, 2012 6:30-9:00 pm	Complete work on Phase 2 - Review and Approve Phase 2 Task Force Report
December 2012	Public Meeting

Revised November 1, 2011

Table 1: Short Term Implementation Projects for FY13 Capital Program Package of Phase I Projects

Exit 16 Improvements, Colchester (Project CircAlt IMP-03)

- ▶ **Project Description** - Improvements to the US 2/7 corridor between the Exit 16 interchange area and Rathe Road in Colchester to include: a Double Crossover Diamond (DCD) interchange design and additional turn lanes at Mountain View, Hercules and Rathe Road intersections. Under the DCD alternative, traffic on US 2/7 (northbound and southbound) crosses to the left side of the roadway for the short segment between the signalized ramp intersections, and then returns to the right side of the roadway once it passes the ramps.
- ▶ **Expected Benefits** – The US 2/7 improvements will substantially increase capacity and decrease congestion (improved Level of Service and volume /capacity ratio; decrease vehicle queuing) at the five intersections in the study area—especially the closely spaced intersections between the Interstate Ramps and Mountain View Drive. Improvements will also address safety issues—currently there is one high crash roadway segment and one high crash intersection (southbound ramps) in the study area.

The DCD design allows for left turners from and to the interstate ramps to enter or exit the corridor without crossing opposing traffic—it eliminates one of the most dangerous traffic movements; that of left turns across oncoming traffic. It also makes the traffic signal operation at the ramps more efficient by eliminating the left turn phase of the signal cycle which provides more green time for the remaining two signal phases. Transportation improvements are also expected to support economic development and employment growth in the Exit 16 area.
- ▶ **Estimated Project Cost** - \$5,000,000 (2011 Scoping Study)
- ▶ **Weblink to Study** - <http://www.ccmppo.org/l89/Exit16/>

VT2A/VT289 Interchange Improvements, Essex (Project CircAlt IMP-06)

- ▶ **Project Description** - Interchange improvements at the VT2A/VT289 interchange to include new controllers, video detection equipment so signals can automatically respond to directional changes in traffic demand, integration of both signals (if deemed necessary), additional lane on Susie Wilson Bypass and change from cable signals and supports to mast arms (new signals).
- ▶ **Expected Benefits** - The VT2A/VT289 intersection was not intended to be the permanent terminus of the Circ Highway. In its current configuration traffic routinely backs up in the peak periods. The intersection currently has 20 year-old controllers with no automatic traffic controls (loops or video detectors). Upgrades to the current signal hardware will improve traffic flow through this intersection and will improve safety.
- ▶ **Estimated Project Cost** - \$780,000 (2011 Staff Estimate)
- ▶ **Weblink to Study** - <http://www.ccmppo.us/library/VT15/index.php?rept=3>

Crescent Connector Road, Essex Junction (Project CircAlt IMP-11)

- ▶ **Project Description** – Construction of a new local road connecting VT 2A (Park Street) and VT117 (Maple Street) in the Village of Essex Junction. Project includes sidewalks, bike lanes and street trees.
- ▶ **Expected Benefits** – The new road will open up 6 1/2 acres of underutilized designated Village Center sites to economic development while increasing traffic efficiency and creating the potential for a multimodal transportation system. In addition to the sites directly improved by the creation of this new (complete streets) road,

adjacent sites will also garner benefits from the ability of drivers to get to and from their destinations in a less congested environment that creates less greenhouse gases.

- ▶ **Estimated Project Cost** – \$3,000,000 ((2011 Scoping Study)
- ▶ **Weblink to Study** - http://www.ccmpto.us/library/scoping/ejct_crescent_connector/

VT2A/James Brown Drive, Williston (Project CircAlt IMP-19)

- ▶ **Project Description** – Traffic signal at VT2A/James Brown Drive with crosswalks and pedestrian phasing, 2-way left turn lane between River Cove Road and Eastview Drive, sidewalk on the east side of VT2A, road connection from River Cove Road to James Brown Drive via Shirley Circle.
- ▶ **Expected Benefits** – The proposed improvements at VT2A/James Brown Drive will improve the functioning of this heavily congested area identified in the Circ FEIS. It will help manage and reduce turn conflicts along the VT 2A corridor, and allow motorists entering and exiting VT 2A to more safely move through traffic.
- ▶ **Estimated Project Cost** – \$1,500,000 (2009 Scoping Study)
- ▶ **Weblink to Study** - http://www.ccmpto.us/library/scoping/james_brown_drive/

Transportation Demand Management (TDM)/Transportation Systems Management (TSM), Regional

- ▶ **Project Description** – Transportation Demand Management (TDM) and Transportation Systems Management (TSM) programs offer strategies to reduce travel demand, specifically that of single-occupancy private vehicles, and to redistribute this demand in space or in time to improve the efficiency of our transportation system. The proposed suite of TDM/TSM measures will directly address vehicle miles traveled, energy use, air quality and other public benefits including increased access of low-income persons to good jobs, inexpensive reduction of roadway and parking congestion, and cost-effective incentives for timely and convenient travel.

Funding for TDM/TSM programs in the Circ project area would complement and enhance county-wide TDM efforts funded through a recently awarded FHWA Transportation, Community and Systems Preservation (TCSP) Grant. This TCSP-funded program brings together numerous regional transportation partners to establish a TDM pilot program and directly change transportation behavior within the county. The project is a comprehensive and collaborative effort to achieve regional transportation goals outlined in the CCMPO's Metropolitan Transportation Plan, as well as to address national policy objectives including the need to conserve energy, reduce reliance on energy imports, lessen congestion, and clean our Nation's air.

The following are complementary TDM/TSM projects that would target the Circ project towns as part of the overall countywide TDM pilot program:

VT15 and VT2A Transit Shelters – Construction of 10 solar shelters along VT15 with bicycle racks in Colchester and Essex and 6 solar shelters with bicycle racks in Williston. Transit shelters are an important passenger amenity that increase the attractiveness and convenience of transit, which helps build ridership. Transit shelters provide a seated waiting area and protection from the elements, and lighted shelters offer a greater sense of security for those traveling at night. Shelters also serve as a type of marketing tool, making people aware that transit serves a particular area, and by including schedule information at shelters, individuals can easily access specific route information. Estimated Cost: \$512,000

Signal Improvements in the Circ Study Area (10 Signals) – Signal optimization can improve traffic flow through existing signalized intersections and can increase the capacity of the intersection. Updated signal equipment can also improve capacity through existing intersections and thus reduce delay and improve level of service. Estimated Cost: \$300,000

Conduct a CarShare assessment analyses in Colchester, Williston, and Essex to determine the best locations for two CarShare Vermont pods; open new locations accordingly and support operations for one year. Estimated Cost: \$75,000 (\$15,000 for pod assessment analysis and \$60,000 to purchase and operate two cars).

Expand and enhance the TDM Circuit Rider role in the region with a focus on major employers in the Circ project area. CATMA will meet and present employers with information on TDM and provide a TDM Toolkit consisting of a variety of incentives, services and programs that can be implemented at their workplace. Estimated Cost: \$10,000

Create a TDM marketing and outreach effort targeted at the Circ study area to focus on carpooling/ridesharing, transit where available, walking and bicycling, and encouraging employers in the area to consider telecommuting or more flexible work schedules. Estimated Cost: \$20,000

Enhance Local Motion's bike commuter EAP (Employee Assistance Program) by creating a TDM challenge fund. This fund would be used to match employer funds to provide one-on-one bicycle commuting mentoring for employees to help them translate interest into action. A flat fee charged per employee covers the costs to work with them for however long it takes to get them to their first bike commute. This would directly result in 100+ additional bike commuters getting on the road, and would leverage another 100+ bike commuters whose training would be funded by the employers themselves. Estimated Cost: \$15,000 over two years.

- ▶ **Expected Benefits** – Together the components of this project will:
 1. Improve the efficiency of our transportation system by reducing the number of single occupant vehicles (SOV) on our roadways, increasing public transportation ridership, allowing families to downsize vehicle ownership by providing short-term car-share vehicles, and converting SOV commuters to bicycle commuters;
 2. Reduce the impacts of transportation on the environment by decreasing the number of SOVs on the roads, lower auto-derived greenhouse gas emissions by decreasing VMT, and reducing auto-derived pollutants from entering our waterways by encouraging walking, biking, transit, and use of fuel efficient car-share vehicles;
 3. Reduce the need for costly future investments in public infrastructure by creating a mode shift to non-SOV travel. A combined effort to reduce VMTs and SOVs means less wear and tear on our roadways, and reduced traffic congestion decreases demand for additional roadway capacity.
 4. Provide efficient access to jobs, services, and centers of trade by making it easier to combine modes, improve access to public transit, and reduce the reliance of private automobiles to reach employment destinations.

- ▶ **Estimated Project Cost** – \$932,000