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2 **CIRC Alternatives Task Force Meeting #8 Notes**  
3 **Approved November 29, 2012**  
4

5 **DATE:** Wednesday, September 26, 2012  
6 **TIME:** 6:30 PM  
7 **PLACE:** Williston Town Hall  
8 **PRESENT:** Please see attached  
9

10 **1) Welcome & Introductions**

11 Michele Boomhower of the CCRPC welcomed everyone and introductions were made. Cindy  
12 Cook of Adamant Accord reviewed the agenda.  
13

14 **2) Review & Approval of Revised Meeting Notes from February 23, 2012**

15 The group accepted the meeting notes as revised (please see the final version at  
16 <http://www.circtaskforce.org/>). Jeff Carr abstained since he did not attend the meeting.  
17

18 **3) Update: Implementation Projects**

19 Ken Robie of VTTrans provided an update of each implementation project:

20 • **Exit 16 Improvements, Colchester**

21 Preliminary plans for this double crossover diamond project have been finished. Right-of-  
22 way and utility relocation will occur in October. The expected construction time frame is  
23 calendar year 2014-2015.

24 • **VT 2A/James Brown Drive, Williston**

25 A conceptual plan is complete for this signal upgrade and turn-lane project. The draft plan  
26 is being reviewed by the Town and RPC. A public meeting will be held.

27 • **VT 2A/VT289 Interchange – Phase I, Essex**

28 The upgrade and improvement of signals is out to bid and is expected to be undertaken  
29 this fall/winter.

30 • **Crescent Connector, Essex Junction**

31 The Town is negotiating the consultant's scoping fee and holding discussions with the  
32 railroad. Construction is slated for 2015-16. Next steps are to retain a design engineer,  
33 undertake survey work, identify resources, and draft conceptual plans. FHWA will require  
34 an environmental assessment.  
35

36 **4) Update: Crescent Connector Supplemental Scoping Study – Railroad Street, Essex Jct.**

37 Eleni Churchill of the CCRPC explained the study was undertaken in two phases, which are now  
38 complete. The Village Trustees recommended minor revisions to the original alignment and  
39 additional improvements to Railroad Street. The Railroad Street improvements include a partial  
40 sidewalk and eleven on-street parking spaces on the west side; sidewalk and green strip on the  
41 east side; and a designated bike lane. The estimated cost is \$830,000.

1 CCRPC staff and the Village of Essex Junction request that the CIRC Alternatives Task Force vote to  
2 recommend to VTrans the addition of the Railroad Street preferred alternative as part of the Crescent  
3 Connector project.

4 Dave Crawford of Essex Junction shared that he expects to sign an engineering contract on Friday and  
5 he would like to add the Railroad Street improvements to the scope of work. Michele added that the  
6 expanded scope is integral to the function of the Crescent Connector. She also reported that Kate  
7 McCarthy of VNRC, who was unable to attend tonight, advised Michele via email that she is in favor of  
8 advancing this additional component of the project.

9 **Dave Crawford of Essex Junction moved, "To recommend to VTrans the addition of the Railroad**  
10 **Street preferred alternative (Phase II) as part of the Crescent Connector project." There was no**  
11 **further discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.**

### 12

### 13 **5) Update: TDM Implementation Projects**

14 Bryan Davis of the CCRPC made a presentation about Transportation Demand Management (TDM),  
15 which is a behavioral approach to address use (demand) of the transportation system. Benefits of TDM  
16 include: reduced congestion, energy conservation, reduced emissions, improved equity, parking  
17 solutions, safety, and reduced costs as compared to capacity improvements.

18  
19 Regional TDM activities include three funding streams:

- 20 • CCRPC FY13 Annual Work Program (\$108,500)
- 21 • Federally Funded Pilot Project (\$407,625)
- 22 • Circ Alternatives (\$592,000)

23  
24 Each of these funding streams brings together the following partners: CarShare Vermont, Local Motion,  
25 CATMA, CCTA, and VEIC. The partners have organized around the Go! Chittenden County (Go! CC)  
26 unified logo that includes a website and call center. The integrated program brings together  
27 multimodal regional transit hubs, bicycle parking, CarShare Vermont "pods," park & ride, and an  
28 informational effort to entice employers and employees to take advantage of alternative modes.  
29 Michele added that CATMA has had phenomenal success with reducing single-occupancy vehicle travel  
30 to the Burlington "Hill" institutions (Fletcher Allen Health Care, UVM, Champlain College) and Go! CC  
31 has learned a lot from their experience. Bryan provided statistics to show that TDM efforts can be very  
32 successful in reducing single-occupancy vehicle travel.

33  
34 Mary Borg of Vermont ANR asked if Go! CC included state employees. Bryan explained that Ross  
35 MacDonald of VTrans has been participating and he expects to bring the model statewide. Noelle  
36 Mackay of the Vermont Agency of Commerce & CD noted that all employees, not just VTrans  
37 employees, can access TDM programs. Michele sees the State Energy Plan as a platform for TDM  
38 efforts beyond Chittenden County.

39  
40 Transportation System Management (TSM) aims to make existing facilities more efficient. Bryan  
41 described these activities, funded by CIRC funds, including ten signal improvements that will  
42 incorporate "smart" travel detection technology.

1 **6) Update: Planning Projects**

2 **VT 127 Intersections: Prim Road/West Lakeshore Drive and Blakely Road/Laker Lane Improvements,**  
3 **Colchester.** Jason Charest of CCRPC explained that this effort focuses on two priority intersections  
4 chosen by the town. The consultant has completed the alternatives analysis. The next steps will be to  
5 meet with VTrans to review the alternatives/draft scoping studies, make draft scoping studies available  
6 on the Town and CIRC websites (with a public comment period), and schedule the alternatives  
7 presentation to the Selectboard (likely in November).

8  
9 **Vermont 2A/289 Interchange – Phase II, Essex.** Jason explained that there is significant congestion at  
10 the VT289 westbound off-ramp and at the Susie Wilson Bypass. There was a Local Concerns Meeting  
11 held on June 21<sup>st</sup>, VTrans has reviewed the Alternatives Analysis, archaeological and historical reports  
12 have been completed, and the Draft Scoping Report is being reviewed by the Town and CCRPC staff.  
13 Recommendations include: adding an off-ramp turn lane and an additional through lane on Susie  
14 Wilson. There will be a presentation to the Selectboard on October 15<sup>th</sup> at the Town Offices at 7PM  
15 and reports will be available for public comment. Construction has not been scheduled. Dennis Lutz of  
16 Essex noted that the signal changes will occur this fall and that will result in some improvement to the  
17 Level of Service (LOS). However, the full LOS improvement will be seen when the lanes are added –  
18 likely one and a half to two years.

19  
20 **VT15 Multiuse Path, Essex Junction/Essex/Colchester.** Christine Forde of CCRPC described the goals of  
21 the project: 1) Provide alternatives to automobile travel; 2) Provide connectivity between existing  
22 bicycle and pedestrian facilities; 3) Increase safety for bicyclists – bicyclists on VT15 must share the  
23 roadway with high traffic volumes traveling at high speeds; 4) Connect land use destinations; and 5)  
24 *The Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan* calls for the development of bicycle and pedestrian facilities  
25 in the study area to promote transportation choice, economic vitality, safe neighborhoods, clean  
26 environment, energy efficiency, better health, and social equity.

27  
28 The Steering Committee has identified three alternatives (all require the acquisition of right of way):  
29 **Alternative 1** – 10-foot path on the south side of VT15; **Alternative 2** – 5-foot bike lanes on VT15,  
30 maintain and possibly expand existing facilities for pedestrians; **Alternative 3** – 10-foot path on the  
31 north side of VT15. This alternative deviates from the edge of VT15 between Johnson Avenue and  
32 National Guard Road, and east of Susie Wilson Road. Michele noted that staff will be asking the Task  
33 Force to choose one of the alternatives at a future meeting.

34  
35 Christine will be working with the Steering Committee to develop a preferred alternative after further  
36 refinement of the alternatives and estimates of cost. The preferred alternative will be reviewed by the  
37 towns, the public, and the Task Force. Funding sources will also be identified.

38  
39 Jason VanDriesche of Local Motion stated this is an important regional project that addresses basic  
40 safety issues on Route 15. There is a large pool of potential riders who would use this corridor if there  
41 was a viable and safe route. Done right, a facility in this corridor could be a regional attraction on par  
42 with the lakeshore bike path – with views of the mountains, river, and rock wall gorge.

43  
44 Dennis feels the Steering Committee is working well. He sees this corridor as an opportunity to serve  
45 pedestrians too. The Steering Committee will try hard to agree on a preferred alternative. This is a  
46 regional project that needs to be built by the region. He supports implementation of the path by

1 VTrans. George Tyler of Essex Junction agrees that there is a large population who could benefit from  
2 this path.

3  
4 Amy Bell of VTrans asked if there is potential for a consortium approach to project management. She  
5 suggested that local people are generally more successful at acquiring right-of-way than is VTrans. She  
6 would be glad to attend the next Steering Committee meeting to talk about project management  
7 options. Bryan Osborne of Colchester has been successful working collaboratively with VTrans for right-  
8 of-way acquisition; however, he thinks a consortium approach to project management would be  
9 challenging. Colchester may also be interested in using earmark funds to move this project forward in  
10 their town.

11  
12 Christine will be working with the Steering Committee and municipal boards (Christine will notify the  
13 Task Force about municipal meeting dates). She will likely bring the project to the CIRC Alternatives  
14 Task Force to choose the preferred alternative and consider the project for funding (likely November  
15 29). Michele explained that it is very difficult to put together multi-community projects like this and  
16 align the communities' funding streams; CIRC funding is likely the most efficient funding source. Dennis  
17 noted that the plans and maps are available at CCRPC for review by Task Force members and others.

18  
19 **Pearl Street/Post Office Square Intersection Improvements and Post Office Square to Five Corners**  
20 **Streetscape and Bike Improvements.** Christine described the issues with this project:

- 21 • Pedestrian Facilities – Inadequate width in many locations, deteriorated, not ADA compliant.
- 22 • Bicycle Facilities – No on-road or shared use facility for bicycles. Existing roadway lanes are 12-foot  
23 wide with no shoulders.
- 24 • PO Square Intersection – Eastbound and northbound approaches experience some delay and  
25 congestion which is expected to worsen. Numerous reported rear end crashes occur .
- 26 • Corridor Consistency/Compatibility – Recent improvements in adjacent locations have included  
27 bicycle lanes, new sidewalk, new curbing, drainage improvements, new street lighting, and new  
28 landscaping. All these are contributing elements to a multimodal corridor that promotes TOD. The  
29 2500 feet is the one unimproved section of Pearl Street.
- 30 • Traffic Calming/Gateway: Improvements need to consider providing a corridor design and context  
31 that promotes mixed use development and creates a gateway to the Village.

32  
33 Christine described the roadway alternatives under consideration: **Alternative A** – Three 11-foot lanes,  
34 4-foot shoulders; **Alternative B** – Three 10-foot lanes, 4-foot shoulders; and **Alternative C** – Two 13-  
35 foot outside lanes, 10-foot center lane. For the Pearl Street/Post Office Square intersection  
36 alternatives: traffic signal upgrades (\$375,000) and a roundabout (\$790,000). She described these in  
37 detail.

38  
39 The next steps are to seek public input, develop a preferred alternative, and seek endorsement of a  
40 preferred alternative by the Essex Junction Trustees in October.

41  
42 **Williston-Essex Network Transportation Study (WENTS).**

43 (<http://www.ccrpcvt.org/corridors/williston-essex-network-transportation-study/>). Eleni explained the  
44 need to conduct a comprehensive planning study to address multimodal transportation and land  
45 use issues within the former CIRC EIS study area. The goal of the study is to develop a  
46 comprehensive plan that includes a coordinated list of highway, transit, bicycle and pedestrian,

1 and land use recommendations that satisfy an overall vision and goals for the study area. She  
2 described the study phases:

- 3 • Phase 1: Evaluation of two major network strategies (complete)
- 4 • Phase 2: Analyses of existing and future transportation and land use conditions and issues;  
5 development of goals and objectives; and performance measures (underway)
- 6 • Phase 3: Evaluation of multimodal strategy packages
- 7 • Phase 4: Development of a network-wide Implementation Plan (*Final Strategy Package*)
- 8 • Phase 5: Development of Draft and Final Report

9  
10 Phase 1, the evaluation of two major network strategies, looked at Major Network Strategy (MNS) 1:  
11 I-89 Connector to Mountain View Road and Major Network Strategy (MNS) 2: Redmond Road  
12 Connecting to a New Bridge and VT 289. In June, the Williston and Essex Selectboards voted to advance  
13 MNS2 for further analyses in the WENTS Study. MNS2 will compete with other strategies and  
14 evaluated based on network-wide goals and objectives developed for the study area.

15  
16 For Phase 2, three tasks have been identified:

- 17 • **Task 1:** Assessment of existing conditions in the study area & development of performance  
18 measures (Land Use, Transportation Network Conditions & Traffic Performance, Performance  
19 Measures: Average vehicle speed and travel time, intersection delay, v/c ratio, vehicle queues,  
20 multimodal LOS and accessibility)
- 21 • **Task 2:** Establish network-wide goals and objectives (Regional Accessibility, Local Access, Economic  
22 Vitality, Sustainability)
- 23 • **Task 3:** Future year traffic performance (2035)

24  
25 Phase 3 will provide quantitative analyses for the three Strategy Packages to determine a Preferred  
26 Strategy Package, which will likely to be a hybrid of all three. Strategies could include:  
27 Capital Investments for all Modes, ITS solutions (Adaptive Signal Control), Land Use (Access  
28 Management, Zoning), and Management Tools/Processes (Traffic Calming Guidelines). Strategies will  
29 be evaluated relative to: goals & objectives, performance measures, right-of-way impacts, impact on  
30 sensitive resources, and cost estimates.

31  
32 Phase 4 will develop a Network Implementation Plan based on the final multimodal strategy package.  
33 It will include an overview, timeline, partners, financing options, and cost estimates. A draft and final  
34 report will be completed.

35  
36 Next Steps:

- 37 • Evaluation of three Strategy Packages
  - 38 - Review by Steering Committee (October & November)
  - 39 - Presentation to Williston and Essex Selectboards (December/January)
- 40 • Development of the Implementation Plan (January 2013)
  - 41 - Public Meeting, Steering Committee Review, CIRC Alternatives Task Force Presentation
- 42 • Finalize the Plan & Report, Including Public Comment Period (February/March 2013)

43 Jeff Carr asked how the strategies would be woven together; Eleni responded that it's a complex task  
44 that was started yesterday by the Steering Committee. She also noted that there is a list of "core  
45 improvements" that will be included in all strategy packages (close the walk/bike gaps, increase transit,

1 etc.) Jeff Carr is pleased that the microsimulation model is available to this study and agrees with the  
2 approach; he feels that quantitative data is very important.

3  
4 Jason is also pleased with the microsimulation model, however, one of its inherent limitations is that it  
5 only deals with vehicle traffic. There is no way to quantify mode shift within the model. Jeff Carr would  
6 like to minimize the judgment and let the facts speak in the development of the preferred alternative.

7  
8 Dennis asked about the feasibility of visiting municipal boards in December/January, due to budget  
9 planning. Michele offered to hold a special meeting because visits need to be held before the January  
10 31<sup>st</sup> Task Force meeting. The Task Force will be prioritizing projects for scoping to begin in February in  
11 order for projects to be ready for prioritization for inclusion in the FY '15 Capital Program.

12  
13 Linda Myers of Essex suggested that a special board meeting would be best for her community and  
14 Michele suggested that perhaps a joint meeting of the boards could be arranged.

15  
16 Chris Roy of Williston is concerned about "downstream" impacts of the various WENTS strategies.  
17 Michele responded that projects need to complete scoping prior to consideration for construction. The  
18 WENTS will examine all reasonable and viable solutions prior to moving to scoping. Scoping projects  
19 will begin in February with CIRC funding. When done, projects move to prioritization for the FY '15  
20 Capital Program. The "big impact" projects, like those from WENTS, will be ready in FY '15 and we  
21 expect that year to be our largest funding request.

## 22 23 **7) Economic Development in the CIRC Alternatives Area**

24 Frank Cioffi of the Greater Burlington Industrial Corporation (GBIC) made a presentation of provided  
25 future economic development land base considerations that our region will be facing and the  
26 relationship of access to industrial properties via the region's transportation network. Frank outlined  
27 a vision for expanding use of the IBM facility assets for the development of other business activities  
28 through the Champlain Valley Technology Park which would be located on the IBM campus.

29  
30 Jeff Carr noted that the two Selectboards (Essex and Williston) understand the linkage of  
31 transportation to the IBM site and the importance of crossing the Winooski River. He wondered if we  
32 could make use of the private bridge crossing (at IBM).

33  
34 Frank did not advocate for any particular transportation solution, rather he deferred to the experts.  
35 Industrial developers prefer direct Interstate connections for movement of both people and product.  
36 The community is lucky to have IBM, especially with the ability to use a land asset that we already have  
37 available to us. A build-out of the IBM site would require improvement of the existing road network; he  
38 encouraged the group to work on this important network.

## 39 40 **8) Next Steps**

41 Michele reviewed upcoming meeting topics from the draft schedule (see attached).

42  
43 The meeting was adjourned at 9:04PM.

## ATTENDEES

### Members Present

Last	First	Title	Organization
Baechle	Tim	Manager of Energy, Environmental	IBM Burlington
Birkett	Meredith	Dir. of Planning & Marketing	CCTA
Carr	Jeff	RPC Representative	Town of Essex
Carter	Curt	Vice President	Lake Champlain Regional Chamber
Crawford	Dave	Village Manager	Village of Essex Junction
Landry	Marc	RPC Representative	Colchester
Macaig	Terry	Selectboard Chair	Town of Williston
Mackay	Noelle	Commissioner	VT Agency of Commerce & CD
Myers	Linda	Selectboard Chair	Town of Essex
Nick	Jeff	Co-Owner	JL Davis Realty
Pierce	Robin	Development Director	Village of Essex Junction
Roy	Chris	RPC Representative	Town of Williston
Scheidel	Pat	Town Manager	Town of Essex
Tyler	George	Village President	Village of Essex Junction
VanDriesche	Jason	Director of Advocacy and Education	Local Motion
Voegele	Al	Town Manager	Town of Colchester

### Staff Present

Bell	Amy	CCMPO Planning Coordinator	VTrans
Belliveau	Ken	Planning Director and Zoning Admin.	Town of Williston
Borg	Mary	Senior Attorney	VT ANR
Hoar	Bruce	DPW Director	Town of Williston
Lutz	Dennis	DPW Director	Town of Essex
Osborne	Bryan	Director of Public Works	Town of Colchester
Robie	Ken	Project Manager	VTrans

### Others Present

Bayner	Luke	Williston Observer
Dane	Paul	Essex Junction
Oman	Michael	Underhill Center
Pond	Andrew	Bolton
Urie	Marcia	Williston

**CCRPC Staff Present:** Charlie Baker, Michele Boomhower, Jason Charest, Eleni Churchill, Christine Forde, Sai Sarepelli

**Consultants Present:** Cindy Cook, Adamant Accord; Diane Meyerhoff, Third Sector Associates

**CIRC Alternatives Task Force  
DRAFT Schedule  
2012-2013**

*Objectives: Determination of Implementation Projects for FY14/15 Capital Program and Planning Studies for Implementation in the CCRPC FY13, FY14, & FY15 Work Program Years*

Date, Time, Location	Topic
<b>September 26, 2012</b> 6:30-9:00 pm Williston Town Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- FY13 Planning Study and Implementation Projects' Status Updates</li> </ul>
<b>November 29, 2012</b> 6:30-9:00 pm Williston Town Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Complete Project Prioritization for FY14 Capital Program</li> <li>- FY13 Planning Study and Implementation Projects' Status Updates</li> </ul>
<b>January 31, 2013</b> 6:30 -9:00 pm <b>Task Force Meeting at 6:30</b> <b>Public Meeting at 7:30</b> Location TBA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Complete Planning Study Prioritization for balance of FY13 and FY14 CCRPC Unified Planning Work Program</li> <li>- FY13 Planning Study and Implementation Projects' Status Updates</li> <li>- Public Meeting</li> </ul>
<b>June 6, 2013</b> 6:30-9:00 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- FY13 Planning Study and Implementation Projects' Status Updates</li> <li>- FY14 Capital Program Implementation Project Recommendation Outcomes</li> </ul>
<b>September 19, 2013</b> 6:30-9:00 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- FY14 Planning Study and FY13/14 Implementation Projects' Status Updates</li> </ul>
<b>November 21, 2013</b> 6:30-9:00 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Complete Project Prioritization for FY15 Capital Program</li> <li>- Complete Planning Study Prioritization for FY15 CCRPC Unified Planning Work Program</li> <li>- Transition of CIRC Alternatives Task Force process to CCRPC regional transportation planning program</li> <li>- Review and Approve Phase 2 Task Force Report</li> </ul>

**Revised September 7, 2012**



## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** CIRC Alternatives Task Force  
**FROM:** Eleni Churchill, CCRPC  
**DATE:** September 26, 2012  
**RE:** **Crescent Connector Implementation Project, Essex Junction – Phase B**  
*Upgrades to the Railroad Street from VT 117 to VT 15*

### **Background**

Following the selection of the Crescent Connector as one of the CIRC Alternatives Implementation Projects, the Village of Essex Junction requested changes/additions to the original scope of work for the *Crescent Connector Road Scoping Study* (August 2011) to address issues they felt were critical to the successful implementation of the project. Additional work included the following:

- Phase A: Slightly revise the original Crescent Connector preferred alignment, provide updated costs, and develop an evaluation matrix of the revised alignment.
- Phase B: Evaluate additional improvements to Railroad Street to accommodate expected increases in vehicle and truck traffic and improve bicycle travel.

Phase A is complete and the minor revisions to the preferred Crescent Connector alignment were accepted by the Village Trustees on May 22, 2012. These revisions were incorporated into the Crescent Connector project.

The Phase B supplemental work, evaluating benefits and impacts of Railroad Street improvements, has been completed and a preferred alternative was selected by the Village Trustees on June 12, 2012.

The preferred Railroad Street alternative (Figure 1) includes complete reconstruction of Railroad Street; a partial sidewalk and eleven on-street parking spaces on the west side of the street; sidewalk and green strip on the east side; and a designated bike lane. Estimated costs for the Railroad Street preferred alternative are \$800,000.

The Railroad Street alternative is not a separate project but an integral part of the Crescent Connector project which is currently in the design stage. The inclusion of Railroad Street upgrades in the existing project will allow the Village to proceed with design and construction of this important regional connection linking VT 2A with VT 15.

### **Task Force Action**

CCRPC staff and the Village of Essex Junction request that the CIRC Alternatives Task Force vote to recommend to VTrans the addition of the Railroad Street preferred alternative as part of the Crescent Connector project.

